

SANTA FE DAM NATURE CENTER NEWSLETTER



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Clean Your Room!

By Terry Young, M.S

BELLOWED a mom, somewhere everywhere it seems, in the millions of households across our nation. And at some point during the week, but more likely on the weekend, this activity ruins a teen's thought of escape. And, in those households, millions of children and teens begin the tradition of throwing out their trash under the watchful eye of mom and dad who have great lung capacity. If you listen to your neighborhood, a mom, somewhere, just might be bellowing, right now!

But there are children in this Great Country of ours who have never had the privilege of being taught how to throw away their trash in this method. I know my mom was never taught this and so, I too, never really learned the skill.... of bellowing about trash. But I can learn!

I watched the other day, as I waited in my car in the left turn lane, a woman with long red nails, opened her car door to set her trash in the road. I did not bellow!! I sat there, quiet. And then, I saw another person, but in the grocery store parking lot, let several white plastic bags flow out of her trunk and she never bothered to pick them up. OH!! There, too, I did not bellow. I need help! Badly! OH, THE HUMILIATION!

The unfortunate people who never learn to put their trash in the right container or those who never learned to bellow are part of the great problem we face, today. Helping those unfortunate ones who can either not see the mess they make or those who cannot yell loud enough to stop it is something we need to learn. Oh! The humanity! OH! The mess!

So, today, as of this moment, right now....

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I am bellowing..... Can you hear me????

COME PICK UP THE TRASH IN THE SAN GABRIEL RIVER!!! The Great San Gabriel River Clean-up at the Whittier Narrows Nature Center and Dam! It will be held on October 30, 2010, from 9 am to 1 p.m. If it rains, however, we have a backup rain date on Sat/October 16 at the same time and place. For parking, there are two locations: Golfland Parking Lot across the street, or Los Angeles County Parking Lot above Lexington-Galliton Road.

The County will graciously have a Van to get you closer to the site, if you need it. Do bring a hat, sturdy work shoes, working gloves, water, and perhaps some sun block.

Children will need to be signed in and accompanied by an adult. ALL must sign in at the desk! When you put your bag of trash

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Calendar of Events

Oct 2, Sat 10:00am - Guided nature walk

Oct 16, Sat 8:00am - Guided bird walk

Oct 23, Sat 10:30 - Leadership team meeting

October 30, - River Clean-up

Nov 6, Sat 10:00am - Guided nature walk

Nov 20, Sat 8:00am - Guided bird walk

Fourth Wednesdays monthly: Environment Roundtables - "Prep for Natural Disasters" (TBD/ask for Info)

Nature Center News Update

By Thomas Chang

National Public Lands Day

On Saturday, September 25th, more than 40 volunteers got their hands dirty and participated in National Public Lands Day clean-up at Santa Fe Dam Nature Area.

Working side by side with the Nature Center volunteers, members and coaches from the Westminster High School Field Hockey Team pulled invasive plants and weeds, removed trash, watered plants, and had a lot fun getting back to nature. The team started from the Nature Center's future drought tolerant garden site, and worked their way to the California Native Plant Garden.

On the Nature Trail, Girl Scouts, ranging in grades from 4th to 7th, from Greater Los Angeles Area Troop 3274 and Parents were busy cleaning up weeds and picking up trash. The Girl Scouts and the Field Hockey Team have volunteered at the Nature Center before, and they plan to be back next year!

The Park Office supplied the trash bags, gloves, tools, and snacks, and the Nature Center provided ice cold bottled water to volunteers who work in close to 100 degree temperatures.

National Public Lands Day was created in 1994 to promote enjoyment and volunteer conservation of public lands. It is America's largest hands-on volunteer effort



Westminster High School Field Hockey Team



Taking a break in the shade

to improve the country's national parks, national forests, urban parks, and other public lands. This year, it is estimated, 150,000 volunteers around the country took part in this nationwide service endeavor.

Thank you, volunteers, for helping out on National Public Lands Day and devoting part of or all of your day to make Santa Fe Dam Nature Area better and cleaner.



Girl Scouts Troop 3274 from the Greater Los Angeles Area

CRV Items

Bring your CRV items (i.e.: plastic water bottles and aluminum cans). We recycle these items and then use the money for the care and feeding of our Nature Center animals.

Nature Center 2011 Bird Calendar Is Here!!!

By Thomas Chang

*** On Sale October 16th ***

The long-awaited Nature Center 2011 fundraising Calendar is here! The theme of this year's calendar is Birds of the San Gabriel Valley. Southern California is a paradise for people who love bird watching. Diversity in habitat is extreme from the open ocean to the desert and mountaintops, and everything in between, which gives So Cal a wide selection of birds.

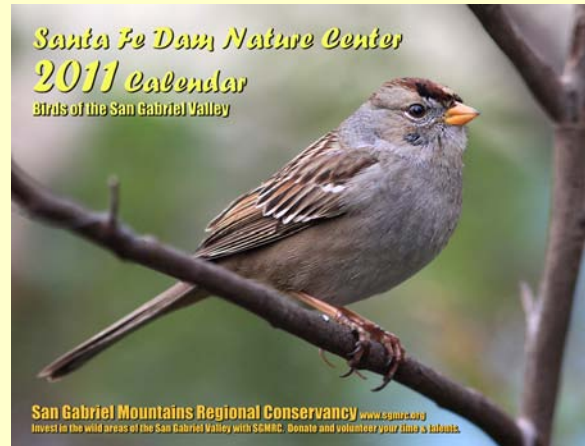
Native birds such as California Quail, Cactus Wren, and House Finch, can be easily seen year-round at Santa Fe Dam Natural Areas. California Quail, our state bird, lives in groups called coveys. These groups of up to 200 are comprised of parents and young. A quail's call sounds like "Chi-ca-go," and is often given while resting on a low perch. When the covey is feeding, one bird will act as a lookout to warn of approaching dangers.

The rare Cactus Wren is commonly found nesting in Valley Cholla Cactus. It builds many nests, but lives in only one. The rest of the nests are decoys. The Cactus Wren is a true bird of the desert - surviving without freestanding water.

White Crowned Sparrows appear each winter. Some travel more than 2600 miles from Alaska to winter in Southern California. White Crowned Sparrows forage on the ground or in low vegetation, feeding on seeds and small insects.



American kestrel



White Crowned Sparrow, Calendar Front Cover

The Canada Goose, native to arctic and temperate regions of North America, was once in serious decline of numbers. In recent years, its populations have grown substantially in some areas. During migration season, Canada Geese can travel 1000 km per day flying in large, V-shaped, noisy flocks.

The Wood Duck is one of the most beautiful native ducks found in our local ponds and lakes. Unlike most other ducks, the Wood Duck nests in cavities or nesting boxes in trees close to water.

The Mandarin Duck, a close relative of the Wood Duck, also nests in trees. This non-native bird from China is a symbol of happiness in love, with thoughts of romance, devotion, and affection in Chinese culture. Unlike other species of ducks, Mandarin drakes reunite with their mates and offspring after the eggs have hatched. They even share scouting duties after the ducklings have

NATURE CENTER 2011 BIRD CALENDAR

Jan	<i>California Quail</i>	Feb	<i>Lesser Goldfinch</i>
Mar	<i>Cactus Wren</i>	Apr	<i>House Finch</i>
May	<i>Western Blue Bird</i>	June	<i>American Kestrel</i>
July	<i>Killdeer</i>	Aug	<i>Great Blue Heron</i>
Sep	<i>Wood Duck</i>	Oct	<i>Mallard Duck</i>
Nov	<i>Lesser Scaup</i>	Dec	<i>Canada Goose</i>
Jan	<i>Burrowing Owl</i>		
Front Cover			<i>White Crowned Sparrow</i>
Back Cover			<i>Mandarin Duck</i>

hatched, watching their young closely.

The Great Blue Heron, commonly found near the lake shores and marshes, uses its long legs to wade through shallow water, and spears fish or frogs with its long, sharp bill.

The American kestrel, also known as the Sparrow Hawk, is a small falcon often seen hovering in the air or perching and scanning the ground for prey. Its diet consists of grasshoppers, lizards, mice, and small birds.

* * * * *

These are some of the many beautiful and interesting birds featured in the Santa Fe Dam/Nature Center 2011 Bird Calendar. Every time you turn a page of our Bird Calendar a new and different bird greets you!

The high quality, educationally and artistically collectable calendar makes a great gift for bird enthusiast and people who want to learn the common birds of the San Gabriel Valley, or anyone who wishes to experience the beauty of nature at its best. It is ideal for use in home or office.

The 2011 Bird Calendar is priced at \$10 and available from the following locations:



Wood Duck

- Santa Fe Dam Nature Center, Irwindale
- Galster Park Nature Center, West Covina (626)919-0715
- Glendora Conservancy Nature Center
- SGMRC Office, Glendora (626)335-1771
- Village Book Shop, Glendora (626)335-5270
- Powell Camera, Covina (626)332-1253
- SGMRC Website Store www.sgmrc.org

Or, you can send \$10 plus \$5 shipping to

SGMRC Calendar
P.O. Box 963
Glendora, CA 91740

Please provide a shipping address and an Email. We will notify you when the calendar is shipped.

All proceeds from the sales of the Calendar will be used to promote nature education, and feed the birds and other animals at the Center. The Santa Fe Dam Nature Center is entirely operated by volunteers, donations, and fundraising projects.

Sponsorships of the Calendar are also welcomed. For \$100 donation, your name, family, business, or group will appear on the Calendar Insert.

If you are interested in helping sell the calendars to your school and organization, please contact us at glcroissant@csupomona.edu

This is the second year the Nature Center has published a calendar. Our 2010 Calendar received a lot of positive feedback and praise. With your continued support, our 2011 Bird Calendar will be a success too.

Thank you.



Santa Fe Dam Nature Center 2011 Bird Calendar features 15 common birds of the San Gabriel Valley

San Gabriel River Big Clean-up Continued from page 1...

in the dumpster, you will be getting some SHWAG! There will be things for young people to do, too - like coloring and such.

I will be working alongside of everyone. I PROMISE I will BELLOW at the plastic bag parts hanging from the trees. I will HARANGUE the black plastic garbage bags and other plastic hoo-hah's, and iddy-biddy plastic things that did not make it into recycling!

And! I will point with great disappointment at the shopping carts that left their grocery stores... You know how sad grocery stores get when the carts wander off and get lost in the wilderness! This will be a GREAT DAY for the RIVER, and the OCEAN too!!!

NOTE too that NOW is the time to do a river cleanup before the rains come and wash the trash to the ocean.

Contact me NOW to REGISTER yourself, as a Volunteer, or your Family, Group, Business, or be as a Sponsor! We need the headcount ASAP! One of the BIGGEST EVER River Cleanups is planned for our San Gabriel River!! Help us get "our room" (San Gabriel Valley) cleaned up! Register NOW for the Great San Gabriel River Cleanup by emailing me at tardigrade@speakeasy.net, before I BELLOW! Get your copy of the River Cleanup flyer and help recruit www.sgmrc.org.

Terry Young, M.S., Chair & Coordinator
San Gabriel River Cleanup Committee

Letters from Readers

"I saw a horned lizard on one of my recent

Nature Center Hours

Tuesday to Thursday: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Friday to Sunday: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Closed on Monday, holidays or rain

Saturday Programs

1st Saturday: Guided Nature Walk
2nd Saturday: Nature Talk
3rd Saturday: Bird Walk (8 a.m.)
4th Saturday: Habitat Rangers
5th Saturday: Bugs / Special Projects



Horned Lizard seen on the nature trail

hikes in the San Gabriels. I was pleasantly surprised because I do not recall seeing one in a long time, and I do a lot of hiking. Your article shed some light."

Dan Simpson, Azusa CA

"The Nature News, pictures and comments are informative. Your Newsletters are great for a person who lives in Ontario Canada... Thanks for the insight into what others are doing for God's creation. Please keep all the newsletters and info coming."

Ross, Ontario Canada

"Great, outstanding job, and well done."

Nancy Begg

Bitten by a Snake

By Mike Hoare

As the caretaker of our two live exhibits, the California Kingsnake and the Gopher Snake, I have extensive experience with these two. Even though the gopher snake is practically twice the size of our Kingsnake, he is much more docile. However, the Kingsnake can have a very bad attitude which leads to my experience on Sunday, August

Wish List

The Nature Center needs aquarium tanks, heating pads, heating rocks, heating lamps, bird feeders, bird seeds, and bird houses. Bring your donated items to Nature Center. We also need volunteers to pull invasive plants along the Nature Trail.

29th.

On the last Sunday of the month, I was handling the Kingsnake to allow our visitors to gently pet him. I continued to handle the Kingsnake long after they left, but I didn't keep a very close eye on him as I have much trust in our live exhibit when they allow me to pick them up. When I glanced at the Kingsnake, he had his mouth wide open which is very odd, but I didn't think too much of it.

Since he was on my left arm, I decided to try to pick him up from my arm with my right hand, but that's when he instantly snapped at my right index finger! After his initial bite, he immediately began to wrap around my index finger with his entire body. A Kingsnake does this to his prey, therefore he must have mistaken my finger as his usual diet: a mouse. A Kingsnake only has a row of small teeth and is not venomous. However, this single row of small teeth was initially very painful as they had no trouble in penetrating the skin.

Nevertheless, after a few minutes it became less painful as the snake did not move. I had no idea what to do in this situation; therefore I merely called our Lifeguard of the park over to the Nature Center to help me out. Two Lifeguards arrived at the Nature Center and began to slowly peel off the Kingsnake from my finger. One Lifeguard would unwind the snake while the other would try to prevent the snake from rewrapping around my finger.

After successfully removing the constriction of my finger, one of the Lifeguards took a small metal rod with a very thin edge to pry the snake's bottom jaw from my finger. After successfully removing the bottom jaw, I was able to slide my finger away from the top of his mouth. Afterwards, we thoroughly cleansed the bite wound with distilled water and wrapped it up with gauze. The Kingsnake was unharmed and placed back into his cage as well. Thanks to the Lifeguard First Responders at Santa Fe Dam!

Mike Hoare has been a volunteer at the Nature Center since 2009. He is a student at the Citrus College.

Photographer's Corner

The Photographer's Corner showcases photos from Santa Fe Dam natural area taken by our readers. Please send your photograph and subject line to sfdnews@yahoo.com



A Western Fence Lizard soaking up the sun



A western tiger swallowtail sips nectar from a thistle



Springtime Mallard ducklings by the lake.

Argentine Ants in Your Kitchen?

By Terry Young, M.S.

Fall brings nights that can be hot, and now, the Brown Marmorated Stink bugs from Asia are crawling into the nooks and crannies of my house for the winter with the ladybird beetles. This time of year when the brown leaves of my sycamore tree are filling up the driveway, and as the lawn develops Drought Pattern Baldness, the Argentine ants march across my kitchen floor in great numbers to eat the crumbs left by my cat, Mouse, and even he hates this. In all of that, I can at least DO something - ANTS!

Yes! I can deal with the Argentine Ants without bad stuff like RAID !! Basically, I follow the trail to where the ants come in, and then make a mixture of talcum powder with a drop of rubbing alcohol. Mix a tablespoon of talc with a few drops of alcohol into a paste and squish it into the area where the ants came in from the outside (or underneath)!

I clean up the ant trail and the ants using Windex or my window cleaner which I mix in a spray bottle; a tablespoon of detergent (Dawn), water (enough to almost fill my spray bottle), rubbing alcohol (top the bottle off). I keep the talc/alcohol in a closed container in the fridge (I don't have

toddlers but those that do should find a way to keep this up and away in a hard to open container) and I clean up around the area of my "squishing" of the mixture in the floor/wall/window but leave the crack filled. And VOILA. No more ants... at least from that crack!

I have seen Argentine ants take up residence in potted plants inside the house, but mostly they live under rocks. Argentine Ants *Linepithema humile* do not have just one queen. They can be several queens in one nest. All Argentine ants recognize each other and cooperate with each other for food and to overtake native ant species... because... Argentine ants in the US are a Super Colony! To read more go here:

http://news.ucdavis.edu/search/news_detail.lasso?id=9613

The Santa Fe Dam Nature Center Newsletter is a bi-monthly publication promoting the preservation and enjoyment of the Santa Fe Dam Natural Area. Please come, enjoy, Learn and volunteer.

To receive a newsletter via email, Contact Thomas Chang at

sfdnews@yahoo.com.

All past issues of the Newsletter can be found at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sqvnaturecenters/files/>

Volunteer Needed!

Volunteers play an essential role in the Natural Area, operating the Nature Center at Santa Fe Dam. If you want to help preserve the environment and promote conservation, we offer a multitude of opportunities to volunteer. Please email SGMRC for volunteer information.

5 Easy Steps to Become a Volunteer

1. Attend orientation
2. Review the Docent Training & Protocols
3. Complete application and fingerprinting
4. Build skills by shadow-training with docents
5. Attend ongoing education classes and outings offered throughout the year

Contribution & Sponsorship

Many big thanks to those wonderful people who thought of the Santa Fe Dam Nature Center when giving their donations.

Did you know our Nature Center is entirely operated by volunteers and money donations from the public? All donation and sponsorship of projects are welcomed. Your tax deductible contribution will benefit the environment, promote nature education, and keeps the Nature Center open. Thank you.

Volunteer Now: San Gabriel River trash cleanup

By Linda Fields Gold, Pasadena Star-News Staff Writer
Working with the Army Corps of Engineers, L.A. County Public Works, San Gabriel Mountain Regional Conservancy, The Friends of the Whittier Narrows Natural Area, The Sierra Club Urban Park and Urban Environment Committee Angeles Chapter, and Surfrider Foundation ... Whew! Enough names involved?

These people will be working from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Oct. 30 to join in the cleanup of trash at the San Gabriel River in the Whittier Narrows Natural Area.

This part of the river has not been cleaned in more than six years. Much trash, especially plastic bags, is snagged by vegetation and that trash affects the river. Not only is plastic trash bad for people but it is also bad for birds, bugs and assorted animals. Did you know that huge clumps and clusters of plastic trash are accumulating in the Pacific Ocean?

This volunteer opportunity is open to any and all over 12 years old, but anyone under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Volunteers of any age must sign a waiver if they are going into the river.

Park at the Golfland on Durfee Avenue, west of Peck Road, off of the 60 Freeway or at the L.A. County lot, on Santa Anita, north of Lexington which deadends into Durfee Avenue. Walk to the river along the pathway toward the bikepath. Be sure to wear hats, sturdy shoes, work gloves, sunblock, and bring your own water or other beverage. There will be sign-in tables at the Green Gate, a brief training and trash bags for collection and proper disposal will be provided.

If you are interested in spending a morning helping the community in this way and feel you need more information, please call the Whittier Narrows Nature Center at 626-575-5523 and ask for Joyce or Colleen.

Send information about your organization to features@sgvn.com or call 626-962-8811, ext. 2252, or fax to 626-856-2758.

This article was originally published in the Pasadena Star-News, Whittier Daily, and San Gabriel Valley Tribune of the San Gabriel Valley News Group.

Nature Center Volunteers

Alex Begg
Nancy Begg
Nate Benesi
Thomas Chang
Taylor Chen
Juan Cuevas
Dr. Ann Croissant
Dr. Gerald Croissant
Carolyn Echeverria
Fred Echeverria
Jerry Elizalda
Judy Elizalda
Michael Hoare
Dee Dee Hussey
Ray Jillson
Carolyn Laskowsky
Ray Lowe
Charlotte Luna
June Luna
Cathie Lou Parker
Shaun Molyneux
Janet Rodriguez
Terry Young

The Santa Fe Dam Nature Center would like to thank all the volunteers for their hard work, dedication, and hundreds of hours donated each year.

Thank you!

Santa Fe Dam Nature Center Newsletter

Editor: Thomas Chang
Photos by: Thomas Chang

If you have an article you feel would follow the interests of this publication, please feel free to submit it. The deadline is the 24th of January, March, May, July, September, and November. All comments are welcomed.

Email your article and comments to:
sfdnews@yahoo.com