

An Environmental Affair

Volume 14, Issue 5

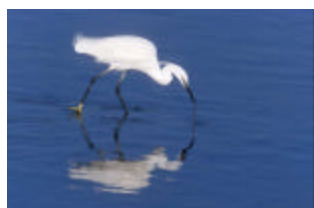
Celebrate Wetlands, Clean Air, and National Bike Month!

May 2003

The City of Los Angeles Environmental Affairs Department was established in 1990 to advise the city on environmental issues and provide a centralized source of environmental information. The Environmental Affairs Department seeks to protect and enhance the environmental quality of life for residents, workers and visitors in the City of Los Angeles.

Month of May Pays Tribute to a Vibrant Ecosystem

The month of May is "Wetlands Month!" Gather up the family and friends and visit our local coastal wetlands for bird watching, fish watching, and butterfly watching, walking, exercising, relaxing, learning, volunteering and having an all around wonderful time! In Los Angeles and surrounding regions, you may experience Ballona Wetlands, Los Cerritos Wetlands, Newport Wetlands, Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge, Bolsa Chica Wetlands and more! Read on to find out location and contact information for these and other wetland organizations.



Approximately 6% of the earth's surface (3.5 million square miles) is classified as wetland. Wetlands are defined by three characteristics: *hydrologic conditions*, which refer to water cycling through the environment, *hydric soils*, soils that are flooded and create oxygen-free environments, and *hydrophytic vegetation*, referring to plants that grow in fresh and salt water environments. They are transition zones between land and water, supporting unique and dynamic communities of plants and animals that are adapted to living in a watery environment (either fresh water, salt water or brackish). Wetlands are often known by other names, such as marshes, lagoons, sloughs, bogs and vernal pools, and are found throughout the coast and far inland.

(May is Wetlands Month...continued on page 3)

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Clean Air in Schools Works for Young Minds

Indoor air quality is an increasingly important issue in schools. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) reports that poor indoor air quality can cause or exacerbate illnesses in children and adults, which in turn leads to absence from school. Further, poor indoor air quality can cause health symptoms that decrease performance while at school. All types of schools—whether new or old, big or small, elementary or high school—can experience indoor air quality problems.

Good air quality contributes to a favorable learning environment. Schools that prevent, identify and resolve indoor air quality problems can: reduce indoor air quality-related health risks and triggers for asthma; identify sources of mold; improve comfort and performance levels; avoid costly repairs; avoid negative publicity and loss of parent and community trust; and avoid liability problems. Many times, solutions are low-cost or no cost and can be com-



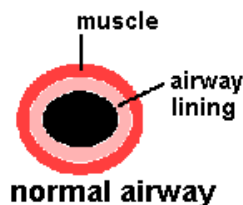
(Clean Air...Continued on page 6)

An Environmental Affair is produced monthly by the EAD to inform residents about environmental issues and activities in Los Angeles. For questions, or to update or cancel your free subscription, call the Environmental Information Center Hotline at (213) 978-0888, send an e-mail to: eadinfo@mailbox.lacity.org, or visit our website at <http://www.lacity.org/ead>. TDD (213) 978-0899. You can also reach us by fax at (213) 978-0893. As a covered entity under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Angeles does not discriminate on the basis of disability and upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation to ensure equal access to its programs, services and activities.

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Asthma & Air Quality: Making the Connection

As medical professionals are beginning to learn more about asthma, the link between this lung disease and air pollution is becoming clear. Asthma is a growing public health concern as new cases of asthma among Americans are increasing rapidly. In fact, today an estimated five-percent of the population suffers from asthma, with that percentage increasing to ten-percent when speaking solely about children. Moreover, asthma is increasing at a rate faster than all other chronic diseases and causing 5000 deaths per year. Asthma affects us all as it is the number-one condition causing absenteeism in school children, the highest ranked cause of pediatric hospitalizations in the United States, and currently costs taxpayers \$11 billion per year to treat. In light of these facts, both medical and environmental professionals are beginning to work together to find ways to mitigate the impact of poor air quality on asthma sufferers.



Asthma is a chronic disease characterized by inflammation of the airways and lungs, which causes episodes or "attacks" characterized by wheezing and shortness of breath. In other words, in response to a "trigger" (something that irritates the lungs), the air tubes of the lungs become narrower or completely blocked due to inflammation thus restricting normal breathing. In severe cases, this inflammation can be fatal, with approximately 14 people dying each day from asthma attacks. There are many kinds of triggers, ranging from viruses and allergies to tobacco smoke and air pollution. Scientists now know that air quality can have a tremendous affect on asthma. On poor air quality days, especially those with high particulate readings, emergency room visits for asthma increase, and studies have shown that children with moderate to severe asthma are 40% more likely to have an attack on high pollution days than on normal days.

Now that we're learning so much more about asthma and its causes, we must continue to develop ways to effectively reduce its impact on individuals' health and on our society at large. One way is to educate the public about asthma, its causes, prevention, and solutions. The EAD, along with community, non-profit, and medical research partners, participated in a demonstration program to teach community members about environmental triggers to asthma and how to control them. The "KICK Asthma L.A." program worked directly with LAUSD students with asthma and offered home visits to help families identify and reduce triggers in their homes.

Just as important, we need to continue to improve the quality of our air to improve the health of those dealing with asthma. The City has implemented a number of measures to reduce emissions from stationary and mobile sources, including replacing heavy-duty diesel vehicles with alternative fuel vehicles and installing particulate traps on the remaining diesel vehicles. Please make the connection and do your part to help everyone breathe easier. Check the "Air Quality Tips" section in future issues for simple ways that you can help reduce air pollution. For more information about asthma and air quality, contact the American Lung Association of Los Angeles County at (323) 935-5864 or by e-mail at www.lalung.org, or the Sierra Club at www.sierraclub.org.

(May is Wetlands Month...continued from page 1)

While wetlands are often perceived as useless and dead "swamps" that breed pesky insects and accumulate trash, they are remarkably productive and alive and play an important and valuable role in the entire global ecosystem. Numerous amphibious and aquatic species rely on estuaries and lagoons as nurseries and retreats from wave action and other disturbance. It is estimated that over 75% of commercially important fish and invertebrates harvested annually in the U.S. rely upon coastal wetlands during some part of their life cycle (Chambers 1992). This habitat is coveted by species throughout the biological community for needs such as feeding, nesting, breeding, growing, roosting, migrating, and safety. Wetlands also provide certain functions in the environment including flood prevention, erosion reduction, and improving water quality. Several plant species in wetlands are able to filter the water of toxins, sort of a natural wastewater treatment plant.



Numerous endangered species from invertebrates to fishes to birds depend on these habitats for species survival. Birds such as the California least tern-*Sterna antillarum browni*, the California brown pelican-*Pelicanus occidentalis* and the peregrine falcon-*Falco peregrinus* and endangered plant species such as salt-marsh bird's beak-*Cordylanthus maritimus ssp. maritimus* often disappear in areas that no longer retain historical wetlands.



Unfortunately, it was only widely recognized in last 30 years that wetlands provide such beneficial resources to humans and the rest of the biological community. Many have been lost completely or severely degraded by encroaching urban environments, harvesting, pollution, alteration, watershed degradation and various other causes. In California, it has been estimated that at least 90% of our original wetlands are lost and the remaining are heavily degraded. Current wetland efforts include preservation of existing wetland habitats, restoration and remediation of degraded and lost wetlands, species conservation and overall watershed environmental management.

Contact Information

- EPA Surf Your Watershed, www.epa.gov/surf2/
- The Bolsa Chica Conservancy, www.bolsachica.org or call (714) 846-1114
- Friends of Ballona Wetlands, www.ballonafriends.org or call (310) 306-5994
- Friends of Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge, www.seal-beach.org or call (562) 626-7215
- Friends of the LA River, www.folar.org or call (323) 223-0585
- Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, www.santamonica-bay.org or call (213) 576-6615
- San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, www.rmc.ca.gov or call (626) 458-4315.
- Ballona Wetlands Foundation, www.ballona-wetlands.org.

Local AQMP Update

The 2003 Update to the South Coast Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) and associated Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) have been released and are available for public review on line at <http://www.aqmd.gov/aqmp/AQMD03AQMP.htm> and www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/aqmd.html or by calling (909) 396-2039.

Comments on the plan are due to the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and may be e-mailed to zpirveysian@aqmd.gov, faxed to (909) 396-3128, or mailed to 21865 E. Copley Dr., Diamond Bar, CA 91765. Comments on the Draft PEIR must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 22, 2003. The SCAQMD Governing Board is scheduled to consider the AQMP at their regular meeting on July 11, 2003.

Contact the SCAQMD or see the March 2003 issue of An Environmental Affair for additional information about the AQMP.

Brownfields Environmental Supervisor Maxine Leichter Retires

The day has finally arrived of Maxine Leichter's retirement and move to Salt Spring Island in Canada. Although it's been in the works for years now, this is a bittersweet time for us at EAD. We hate to lose someone so valuable and dear to us yet we're excited that she is realizing her retirement dream of building an eco-friendly house with her husband in an amazing natural setting.



Over her 11 years with EAD, Maxine has brought her expertise, wisdom and diligence to myriad challenging projects within the Materials and Waste Resources Division. Foremost is the Brownfields Program, where she has been integral to revitalizing environmentally impaired sites throughout the City through developing sub-programs, securing much needed grant funding, and providing key technical assistance and coordination. In particular, the Gas Station Program will continue as one of her strongest legacies.

Maxine also has provided valuable contributions in the areas of environmental purchasing, recycling, special waste projects, green business, green building, and legislative review.

In retirement, Maxine intends to continue her focus on the environment. We wish her all the best and hope to hear from her soon and often!

Clean Air Tips

Minimize the use of car air conditioning. Air conditioners can increase your fuel use by up to 10-12% in stop-and-go traffic and 3-4% at highway speeds. They also release ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) into the atmosphere. An alternative in stop-and-go traffic is to open windows or the sunroof, although this increases aerodynamic drag and fuel consumption. At higher speeds, open up your flow-through vents.

Look for water-based paints labeled "zero-VOC" when painting your home. The lower the VOC (volatile organic compound) content, the better for the air quality.

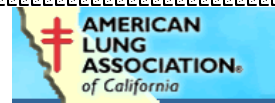
Fire up your barbecue briquettes with an electric probe or chimney instead of starter fluid. Or use a barbecue fueled by natural gas or propane. Barbecue starter fluids sold in Southern California have been reformulated to emit fewer smog-forming gases, but still need to be used in moderation. Protect yourself from high smog levels by reducing outdoor activity when unhealthy episodes are forecast. Find out about smog forecasts from a local paper, TV newscast, or by calling the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) at 1-800-CUT-SMOG.

Congratulations!



Congratulations to the General Services Department Fleet Services Division and the EAD's Air Quality Division for achieving the "Best in Class" Award from the City of Los Angeles Quality and Productivity Commission! Their winning project, "A Breath of Fresh Air," involves the use of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel and the installation of particulate traps on heavy-duty fleet vehicles, reducing particulate emissions by over 85 percent. Stay tuned for details and a photo from the May 8 event in our next newsletter!

May is the American Lung Association's Clean Air Month!



The American Lung Association of California is encouraging the public to support available hybrid-electric vehicles and to demand that car companies make hybrid-electric vehicles in more models, including SUVs. A list of recommended cleaner-fueled vehicles can be found on its website at <http://californialung.org/spotlight/vehicles.html>.

Motor vehicle exhaust from gasoline and diesel-powered engines is a major source of air pollution. The City of Los Angeles is helping to reduce pollution by switching its heavy duty and light-duty fleets to cleaner-fueled vehicles. Angelenos can make a difference in the fight for good air quality by carpooling, biking to work, walking more, and using mass transit whenever possible.

For more information on doing your part, please see Clean Air Tips on page 4 of this issue.

Clean Air and Your Health

The quality of the air we breathe is important to all of us. Pollutants in the air, such as carbon monoxide and particulate matter, can make us sick. Health problems from air pollution can include respiratory problems, heart or lung disease, and even premature death. Some pollutants can also have adverse effects on aquatic life, vegetation, and animals.

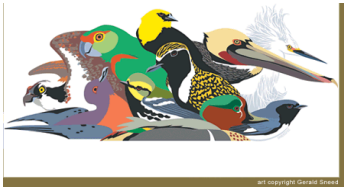
Some of what makes living in Southern California so desirable, such as the sunny weather, warm climate, and topography, also contributes to our smog problem. The average wind speed for Los Angeles is the lowest of the nation's ten largest urban areas. Our gentle ocean breezes carry pollution from urban centers where it is trapped by the surrounding mountains. Thermal inversions occur when the air in the upper atmosphere is warmer than the air below it, acting like a lid over the basin. This limits the upward movement of pollution because the warmer air acts as a barrier. If there is no dispersing wind, pollution can accumulate to dangerous levels. Bright sunshine and warm temperatures cause some pollutants to react with each other, forming even more pollution.

From 1940 through 1990, the population in the Los Angeles area has more than tripled from 4.8 million to nearly 16 million and the number of vehicles on the road has quadrupled from 2.5 million to 10 million. Despite these figures, much progress in air quality has been achieved, thanks in large part to strict regulations and the cooperation of businesses and individuals. In 1976, there were 102 Stage 1 smog alerts and in 1999, 2000, and 2001 there were none. Accomplishments such as these are due to businesses, industry, government and individuals because without their help and cooperation none of these achievements would have been possible.



Scientists are still studying the health consequences of air quality. Current research topics include fine particulate matter, diesel exhaust, and children's health and brain cancer. Local leaders in this research endeavor include USC and UCLA. The Children's Environmental Health Center (CEHC), which is funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the Environmental Protection Agency, is a joint effort marshalling the multidisciplinary talents of both USC and UCLA faculty with the goal of improving the respiratory health of children through research and education. Information on the program can be found at http://www.usc.edu/schools/medicine/research/centers_programs/cehc/. Occidental College, Communities for a Better Environment, the California Endowment and The Liberty Hill Foundation have partnered to form the Environmental Justice and Community Health Research Project. You can learn more by visiting the Project's website at <http://departments.oxy.edu/ess/>.

(Your Health...continued on page 6)



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International Migratory Bird Day—Saturday, May 10

International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) is an annual event created by the nonprofit organization Partners in Flight (PIF), formed by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. The partnership celebrates the wonder of migratory birds as well as raises awareness of their needs and the threats they face. This year's theme — "Catalysts for Conservation" — explores how birds have been the catalysts for many of the most significant conservation actions in the Americas. To celebrate the event, naturalists worldwide are encouraged to increase awareness of birding through hikes, bird watching, public events and educational outreach.

Migratory birds have long been a catalyst for conservation, especially since the last Passenger Pigeon died in 1914. In fact, the national wildlife reserve system was created by United States President Theodore Roosevelt who preserved Pelican Island, Florida. Today international, federal, state, local and volunteer officials work together to protect our precious and exciting migratory birds. To find out more, visit the Partners in Flight website at <http://www.birdday.org>.

(Your Health...continued from page 5)

Being healthy is the best thing you can do to maximize your body's ability to defend itself. Exercising regularly, eating right, and obtaining regular medical care are three important things you can do. Avoiding cigarettes also keeps your lungs healthy. Try to avoid going outside or participating in rigorous outdoor activities on high smog days. When using products that might contain toxic fumes, such as paints or abrasive cleaners, be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions for proper product use. For more tips like these or general information on healthy lungs, visit the Los Angeles chapter of the American Lung Association at www.lalung.org.

(Clean Air...continued from page 1)

pleted using in-house staff. The major recommendations from the U.S. EPA are to gather available information, test for radon, and evaluate or improve ventilation, humidity, and product use (e.g., cleaners, pesticides). Parents can also play an important role in understanding the issues and becoming involved with their children's school.

- ◆ The U.S. EPA has information available on indoor air quality in schools, mostly free of charge. For an introduction to indoor air quality topics you can visit the EPA's fact page at: <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/ia-intro.html>.
- ◆ For school related indoor air quality FAQs visit <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/scfaqs.html>.
- ◆ For a downloadable brochure called "*Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Program: Benefits of Improving Air Quality in the School Environment*" please visit: http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/images/tfsprogram_brochure.pdf.
- ◆ EPA's Tools for Schools Indoor Air Quality Program also has a toll free Indoor Air Quality Technical Hotline - 1-866-837-3721 and an Indoor Air Quality Information Clearing House - 1-800-438-4318.
- ◆ The California Department of Health Sciences also has a site on Indoor Air Quality, including links to school issues that can be found at: <http://www.cal-iaq.org/>.
- ◆ The American Lung Association of California has information on Indoor Air Quality available at: <http://www.californialung.org/support/indoorair.shtml>.

\$ \$ \$ FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES \$ \$ \$

Visit <http://www.lacity.org/ead> for more grant opportunities.

Surdna Foundation seeks to prevent irreversible damage to the environment and to promote more efficient, economically sound, environmentally beneficial and equitable use of land and natural resources. Please visit www.surdna.org for application information or call (212) 557-0010.

California Integrated Waste Management Board Recycling Market Development Zone Revolving Loan Program provides direct loans to eligible businesses that use post-consumer or secondary waste materials to manufacture new products or that reduce the waste resulting from the manufacture of a product. For more information call (916) 341-6530 or visit www.ciwmb.ca.gov/grants.

Captain Planet Foundation funds and supports hands-on environmental projects for children and youths interested in solving environmental problems in their neighborhoods and communities. Please visit www.captainplanetfdn.org for details and an application, or write to Captain Planet Foundation, One CNN Center, Suite 1090, Atlanta, GA 30303.

Home Depot — Community Grant Program provides assistance to non-profits that direct efforts toward forestry, ecology, green building design, clean-up, recycling, and lead poisoning prevention. This grant is for non-profits only. For more information contact your local Home Depot store manager or visit www.homedepot.com and search for "community involvement" or call 1-800-430-3376.

Reuse Assistance Grants Program has been developed by the California Integrated Waste Management Board to help local public agencies promote reuse activities at the local public agency level. All local public agencies in California are eligible to apply. For more information, call Sarah Weimer at (916) 341-6613 or email sweimer@ciwmb.ca.gov.

The California Community Foundation accepts grants year-round for projects that seek to revitalize low-income neighborhoods. Funds will support the development, rehabilitation and beautification of affordable housing and living areas, and will support the establishment or maintenance of safe recreation areas and parks, including community gardens. Please visit www.calfund.org or call (213) 413-4130.

FMC Corporation Bird and Habitat Conservation Fund

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and FMC Corporation have formed a multi-year partnership to fund habitat conservation programs benefiting birds, with a particular focus on prairie species and waterfowl. The pre-proposal due date is **June 1, 2003** and the final proposal deadline is **July 15, 2003**. Open to governmental and non-profit organizations. For more information, contact Peter Stangel at (404) 679-7099.

Leaf-It-To-Us Tree Planting Grant Opportunity for Schools

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection is introducing the tree-planting program Leaf-It-To-Us, designed to motivate kids to care for and improve their educational environment. The purpose of the program is to distribute funds for community school tree-planting projects initiated and undertaken by school kids in partnership with school volunteers. For more information call (909)782-4140 x6123 or e-mail eric.oldar@fire.ca.gov. For online information and applications visit <http://www.ufe.calpoly.edu> and click on "News and Announcements." Application deadline is **September 1, 2003**.

Environmental Justice Grants in Transportation

This program promotes the participation of underserved communities in transportation planning to prevent or mitigate negative impacts of transportation plans and projects while improving their mobility, access, equity and quality of life. Eligible applicants are cities, counties, metro planning organizations, regional transportation planning agencies, Native American tribal governments, universities, transit agencies, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, local transportation commissions, port authorities and airport commissions. Funds are awarded annually by state fiscal year. The grant is funded through the State Highway Account (Local Assistance) Funds. For more information contact Norman Dong at (916) 651-6889 or by e-mail at norman_dong@dot.ca.gov. For more information on this grant visit <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/grants.htm>.

MAY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EACH MONTH:

Down-by-the-River Walks



Friends of the Los Angeles River and the Sierra Club are sponsoring monthly walks along the banks of the LA River. Join them at 4:30 pm on the third Sunday of each month for an informal, leisurely, hour-long walk. The walk is canceled if it rains. For more information, visit the FoLAR website, www.folar.org, or call Joe Linton at (213) 381-3570.

Japanese Garden Tours

Docent-led tours of the Japanese Gardens at the D.C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant in Van Nuys are offered during the day on Monday through Thursday and again on Saturday. Reservations are required. For more information or to make reservations call (818) 756-8166.

Hyperion Wastewater Treatment Plant Tours

Free public tours of the facility (located near El Segundo in Los Angeles) are available Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday starting at 9 am. For more information, please contact Felcie Kidd at (310) 648-5363 for details or to schedule a tour.

Habitat Restoration Days



Help restore wildflowers, trees and shrubs that were once here 200 years ago at the Madrona Marsh Preserve. You are invited to help in planting, weeding and collecting and growing seeds every second Saturday of the month. Morning maintenance is done from 9 am-noon every Tuesday and Wednesday. For more information on this event or events for youth, please call (310) 32-MARSH.

Afternoons in the Lab



Cabrillo Marine Aquarium's education staff and volunteers are available every Wednesday from 3-5 pm to answer questions and involve students of all ages in exploring local marine life in the hands-on Discovery SEA Lab. Activities cover a wide range of scientific fun. The science education afternoon is free and opens with a different theme each week. Groups should make reservations. For more information, call (310) 548-7562 or visit www.cabrilloaq.org.

Satwiwa Saturdays

From 10 am to 4pm at Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa. Meet guest hosts, watch demonstrations and share the experiences of the Native American LA Community. Call (805) 370-2301.

Smart Gardening Workshops



The Los Angeles Countywide Yard Waste Program hosts Smart Gardening workshops year-round. Topics covered include backyard and worm composting, grass recycling, and water-wise gardening. For more information, call (888) CLEAN-LA or visit www.smartgardening.com. For more information call the Bureau of Sanitation at (213) 473-8228.

Amigos de Bolsa Chica



offer free public tours of the wetlands for individuals the first Saturday of each month. Visitors who arrive between 9 and 10:30 am will be led on a 1 1/2 hour tour which makes 5 stops along the walkbridge and loop trail. Trained tour guides discuss bird identification, ecology, endangered species, early history and current status. For more information, visit <http://www.amigosdebolsachica.org> or call (714) 840-1575.

The EAD website, located at www.lacity.org/EAD, contains updated information on this month's events. To ensure your event is included in our monthly newsletter, submit information to the editor by the 10th of each month prior to publication. After the 10th, events can be entered into our website calendar only.

The EAD reserves the right to edit all submittals and does not necessarily endorse the events listed. All events are subject to change, so call listed event contacts to verify information.

Baldwin Hills Hikes are held by the LA Audubon Society on the 3rd Saturday of each month at Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area. For more information call (323) 876-0202 or visit www.LAAudubon.org.



Augustus F. Hawkins Natural Park

offers youth activities including day-long trips to destinations like Point Mugu, Franklin Canyon and Malibu Creek. These trips are held each Saturday and transportation is provided. For information, please call (323) 585-3205.

Join the Friends of Madrona Marsh for a day of **Habitat Restoration and Enhancement** at the Madrona Marsh Preserve located at 3201 Plaza Del Amo in the city of Torrance from 8 am to noon on the first Sunday and second Saturday of the month. Learn about the native plants and other eco information. If you enjoy being outdoors, then this is an event you won't want to miss! For more information, call (310) 326-3840.

THIS MONTH:

(EAD recommends contacting event sponsor prior to event)

Fri and Sat, May 2 and 3

La Gran Limpieza

The 14th Annual Great LA River Clean Up takes place two days from 9 am to noon to restore more than 10 LA River sites stretching from San Fernando Valley to Long Beach. Sponsored by the Friends of the Los Angeles River. Join Mayor Jim Hahn and Councilman Ed Reyes for celebration, contribution, and appreciation at Friday's site, Fletcher Drive. Free. For location information and more, visit FoLAR's website at www.folar.org or call clean up coordinator Jill Hill at (562) 591-5980, or call FoLAR at (323) 223-0585.

Fri thru Sun, May 2-4

Environmental Writers and Book Festival

at the Aquarium of the Pacific. The Festival commences with a keynote address by Carl Safina on Friday evening, May 2. On Saturday, May 3, the Festival will feature various panels and workshops and an environmental book sale and book signing in the Aquarium's Great Hall. An additional writers' workshop will be held on Sunday, May 4 at the Aquarium. For more information, contact the Aquarium at (562) 590-3100 ext. 0 or visit their website at www.aquariumofpacific.org.



Monday, May 5

Cinco de Mayo Celebration



A celebration of Mexico's victory over French forces in Puebla, Mexico with popular traditional music, cultural presentations, dance and food booths for everyone to enjoy. Takes place all weekend at El Pueblo Historical Monument, Placita Olvera, 125 Paseo de la Plaza in Los Angeles from 10 am to 10 pm. Free. Sponsored by the Olvera Street Merchants. For more information, call (213) 485-9769 or visit the event's website at www.cityofla.org/elp/olvera.html.

Friday, May 9

Global Green USA presents its sixth annual Sustainability Symposium, entitled *How Cities and Businesses Can Lead the Way Toward Sustainability*. The event will



be held from 1:00 to 4:00 PM in Los Angeles, details available when you RSVP.

Top leaders from business, government and the non-profit sectors will present strategies and technologies available today to improve our planet. Reservation required by May 7. E-mail dlofman@globalgreen.org or call 310.394.7700.

Saturday, May 10

Hike the Peacock Flat/Rattlesnake Trail



This moderate-to-strenuous 2.5-walk begins at Del Cerro Park at the very south end of Crenshaw Boulevard, crosses above the Portuguese Bend com-

munity—affording great views over ocean and hills—and climbs the Rattlesnake Trail through spectacular Altamira Canyon. Sponsored by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy. Hike begins at 9 am. For more information, call the Palos Verdes Land Conservancy at (310) or visit their website at www.pvplc.org.

Ballona Stewards Project: Celebrate the Earth



Come see the beautiful Ballona Wetlands!

The Ballona Stewards Project promotes stewardship

of one of the last remaining wetlands in Southern California. Volunteers are invited to help remove debris and go on guided eco-tours offered by local biologists and ecologists. Healthy refreshments, vegetarian snacks and free raffle prizes also available. Takes place from 10 am to 2 pm. Meet along the Ballona Creek bike path just East of Lincoln Boulevard. For further directions or more information, please contact Gaelle at 310-264-9468 or go to www.ballona.org and click on "Ballona Stewards."

Thursday, May 15

Bike to Work Commute Day

California Bike Commute 2003 is a project of the California Bicycle Coalition—a non profit organization that advocates increased bicycle use, access, safety, and education, by promoting the bicycle as an everyday means of transportation and recreation. For information on morning "buddy rides," pit stops, energizing stations and noon-time rallies, visit www.bike2workday.org



THIS MONTH:

(EAD recommends contacting event sponsor prior to event)

labikecoalition.org or call them at (213) 629-2142.

Fourth Annual Ballona Wetlands Symposium at Loyola Marymount University. Researchers and wetland restoration experts will discuss the present and future of this urban coastal wetland. Takes place from 7 am to 8 pm. For more information, call (310) 342-0100 or visit www.ballona-wetlands.org. Presented by the Ballona Wetlands Foundation.

Saturday, May 17

The First Annual Korean Garden Festival will be held at the L.A. County Arboretum from 9 am to 4:30 pm. This all day cultural event will highlight the Korean culture in a garden setting, sharing with the community at large, Korean traditional gardens and more. Several Korean Garden displays, designed by local Korean landscape designers, informal demonstrations and lectures on gardening will highlight the festival. For more information, call the Arboretum at (626) 821-3222 or visit their website at www.arboretum.org.



Sat and Sun, May 17-18

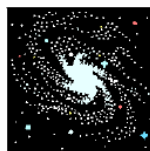
19th Annual Country Garden Faire will feature garden clubs, plant societies, and nurseries offering plants and gardening supplies, and advice for anyone who has an interest in creating a home garden. Takes place from



9 am to 5 pm at the Sepulveda Garden Center at 16633 Magnolia Boulevard in Encino. Sponsored by the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. Free. For more information, call (888) 527-2757 or visit the Recreation and Parks website at www.laparks.org.

The Jet Propulsion Laboratory Annual Open House

This event celebrates JPL's accomplishments with exhibits and demonstrations about the Laboratory's ongoing research and space exploration. Many of the Lab's scientists and engineers will be on hand to answer questions about how spacecraft are sent to other planets, how scientists utilize space technologies to explore Earth and how researchers are now searching for planets beyond the solar system. Visitors will see exhibits, displays, demonstrations and presentations about new technologies, solar system exploration, spacecraft communication and much more. Admission and parking are absolutely free, so make plans now to visit JPL and experience the thrill of space exploration! For more information, please call (818) 354-0112.



Sunday, May 18

Third Annual Los Angeles River Ride!

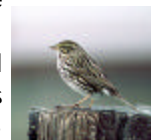
Take a leisurely bike ride along the LA River. The event will take place from 7 am to 5 pm. Sign up for the kids' ride (one mile, ages 2-8), the family ride (15 miles, ages 8 and up) or the Turf to Surf ride (70 miles roundtrip, for experienced cyclists from River Bike-



way to Long Beach and back). Presented by the LA Bike Coalition. Cost is \$25 before May 1, or \$30 afterwards. Scholarships are available. Join in on this fun, non-competitive ride. To learn more about the River Ride, visit the LA Bike Coalition's website at www.labikecoalition.org or call (213) 629-2142.

Saturday, May 24

Restoration Party Come help the Friends of the Ballona Wetlands restore the last coastal wetland habit in Los Angeles County. Volunteers from all parts of Los Angeles have participated in this crucial project. Volunteers get a hands-on experience planting native plants and removing invasive, non-native vegetation, while learning about wetland ecology. Enter the wetlands behind Gordon's Market at 303 Culver Boulevard in Playa del Rey. Walk through the gate and join the team at the trailer. Friends provide gloves and tools. For more information, call (310) 306-5994 or visit their website at www.ballonafriends.org.



Saturday, May 31

Worms: A Love Story Author Amy Stewart will talk about promising new research on the role of earthworms and their castings in improving plant growth, reducing plant diseases and preventing some pest infestations. Worm composting bins will be available for purchase at this Descanso Gardens lecture. Talk begins at 10 am. Cost is \$13. To register, call (818) 949-7980. For more information on Descanso Gardens, visit their website at www.descansogardens.org.



May is National Bike Month

Join Bicyclists on Bike to Work Day held Thursday, May 15



Each weekday, 100,000 bicyclists all over Los Angeles County pedal their way to work for economic and health reasons. This year, cities across the state will promote the benefits of bicycling during the Ninth Annual California Bike Commute Week 2003.

Los Angeles will also be promoting bicycling as a viable form of transportation to the work place with Bike to Work Day that will be held on Thursday, May 15. On Thursday morning the City will host a kick-off event for bike commuters on the steps of City Hall. Look for more details on this event by visiting the EAD's website at http://www.lacity.org/EAD/EADWeb-NewsEvents/Announcements_Page.htm or call the EAD office at (213) 978-0888.

Participating in this year's Bike Commute Day will be the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which will be offering incentives such as free bus rides to bike commuters all day Thursday. Riders must have a bicycle or bike helmet with them. For more information on MTA's Bike to Work Day incentives on buses, visit http://www.mta.net/trans_planning/CPD/bikeway_planning/default.htm or call 1-800-COMMUTE. For rules regarding bicycles on the Metro Rail System, visit http://www.mta.net/metro_transit/metro_rail/ride/mr_bicycle.htm.

Go all the way to work on your bike or go a part of the way. Bicycling is also twice the fun if you pair up with a friend. Mark the date on your calendar, and join Angelenos on Thursday, May 15 when they ride to decrease traffic congestion, improve air quality, and promote safe bicycle commuting.

For more information on Bike to Work Day, such as morning "buddy rides" and energizing stations throughout Los Angeles, call the Los Angeles Bicycle Coalition at (213) 629-2142 or visit their website at www.labikecoalition.org.

The Los Angeles Bicycle Coalition will also host its Third Annual Los Angeles River Ride on Sunday, May 18, which introduces cyclists and their families to parks, bike paths, and other improvements along the Los Angeles River. The ride is non-competitive. For more information on the Los Angeles River Ride, please see the Calendar of Events on page 10.



EAD Bicyclist and Commuter Gaby Winqvist

Environmental Affairs Department Project Coordinator Gaby Winqvist has been a transportation cyclist for over ten years. Three years ago she began bicycling to work here in Los Angeles, and since working with the EAD has incorporated public transit into her bike commute. She bikes less than a mile from her home in West Hollywood to the Red Line, which she takes to the Civic Center. From there it's an easy ride to City Hall. Her commute takes about 45 minutes each way.

Gaby's tip to first-time bike commuters who are comfortable on a bike is to ride predictably with the traffic, and she says that biking to work is a lot safer than people think. She recommends riding the way people are taught to drive, which is defensively and with awareness and respect for other drivers. "Fear and perception keep people away from bicycling to work," Gaby says. "Once they ride they'll say, 'Hey! That was pretty fun.' It's a great way to start and end the work day energized and oxygenated."





HOTLINE CONNECTION

The Environmental Information Center (EIC) serves as a referral source to the community. Our hotline connection offers a list of the most frequently requested numbers. If the number you need is not listed, please contact the EIC at **(213) 978-0888**, or toll-free in Los Angeles only at **(800) 439-4666**. You can also visit our website at <http://www.lacity.org/ead> and click on *Environmental Information Center*.

Air Quality

Calidad del aire
South Coast Air Quality Management District
(800) 288-7664

Asbestos

Asbestos
Environmental Hygiene
(626) 430-5440

Bulky Item Pick-up

Recogida de articulos grandes
L.A. City Bureau of Sanitation
(800) 773-2489

Hazardous Waste Disposal

Desembolso de materiales peligrosos
L.A. County Dept. of Public Works
(888) 253-2652
L.A. City Bureau of Sanitation
(800) 988-6942

Housing and Building Complaints

Las quejas del construccion y albergar
Housing Code Enforcement
(213) 367-9411

Illegal Storm Drain Dumping

Depositos en los drenajes de desagües
Stormwater Management
(800) 974-9794

Indoor Air or Mold Concerns

Aire interior ó preocupaciones de moh o
Environmental Hygiene
(626) 430-5440

Lead Poisoning

Veneno del plomo
National Lead Information Center
(800) 424-5323

Leaf Blowers

Sopladores de hojas
Leaf Blower Complaint Line
(800) 996-2489

Mosquitoes

Infestaciones de mosquitos
L.A. West Mosquito Abatement
(310) 915-7370

Recycling

Reciclaje
City of L.A. Public Works Dept.
(800) 773-2489

Smoking Violations

Infracciones de fumar
Office of the City Attorney
(888) 333-0730

The City of Los Angeles
Environmental Affairs Department
200 N. Spring Street, Suite 2005
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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