

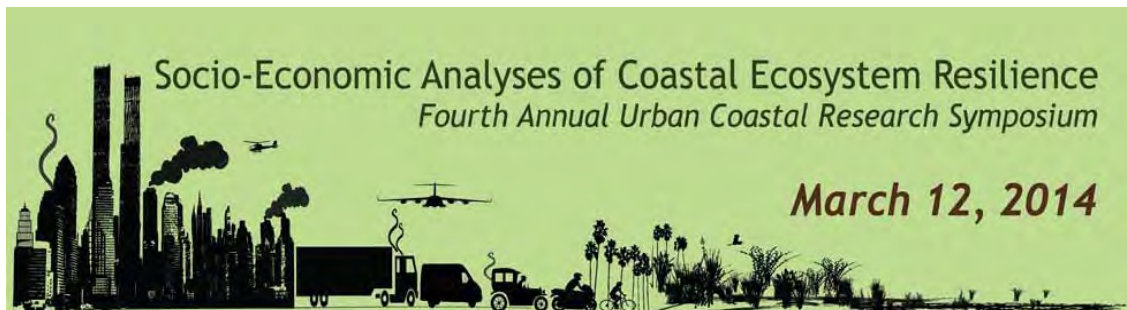


Winter 2013/2014 Newsletter

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Save the Date for Our 4th Annual Symposium!



Please join us for our 4th annual urban coastal research symposium entitled "*Socio-Economic Analyses of Coastal Ecosystem Resilience (SEACER)*," at Loyola Marymount University (LMU) on March 12. This event will highlight current and pressing issues, taking a deeper scientific look at the social and economic benefits of resilient coastal systems. Presenters from throughout California will discuss a diverse array of topics from wetland restoration to Marine Protected Areas, green building, and

watershed-level greening efforts.

A selection of the distinguished speakers includes Dr. Matthew Kahn, UCLA Professor and environmental economics book author; Shelly Backlar, Executive Director of the Friends of Los Angeles River; architect/speaker/author Eric Corey Freed of Organic Architect; Tom Ford, The Bay Foundation's Director of Marine Programs; Dr. Amanda Zellmer, Occidental College fisheries researcher; Dr. Richard Shope, LMU Professor of environmental education; Dr. Ryan Vaughn, California State Fullerton; and Dr. Christine Whitcraft, California State University Long Beach.

Submit a Student Poster!

The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, the Center for Urban Resilience, and Loyola Marymount University invites students and recent post-graduates to submit poster abstracts for our upcoming symposium. Posters should address a scientific question relating to urban estuaries.

Deadline to Submit: February 15th

Submission link [HERE](#)

Symposium [Details](#) (423k PDF) and [Website](#)

The logo for 'URBAN COAST' features the words in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font. The text is set against a dark blue rectangular background, which is itself centered within a larger light green rectangular frame.

We would like to proudly share with you the most recent issue of URBAN COAST, our annual scholarly journal highlighting research that informs the most pressing issues of our day.

URBAN COAST is a product of the Center for Santa Monica Bay Studies, a partnership of Loyola Marymount University's Seaver College of Science and Engineering and The Bay Foundation. We are grateful to SMBRC's Deputy Director Guangyu Wang for his work as Editor of this issue.

The contributing researchers, agencies, advocacy groups, and other science and policy leaders have gone above and beyond to bring thoughtful discussion across several articles about 'Los Angeles River revitalization'. We also explore the science of restoring wetlands, protecting streams, greening highly urbanized areas, and changing people's behaviors. We even have a new book review section in this issue. This diversity in our content reflects the diversity of habitats, issues, priorities and people in our coastal urban watersheds.

We hope this will be your bedside reading for a few weeks, and we would be thrilled to hear your comments, or engage in any discussions inspired by our talented contributors. Enjoy.

Check it out! [URBAN COAST](#) (PDF 13.9MB).



World Wetlands Day, February 2nd!

The Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) -- called the "Ramsar Convention" -- is an intergovernmental treaty that embodies the commitments of its member countries to maintain the ecological character of their Wetlands of International Importance and to plan for the "wise use", or sustainable use, of all of the wetlands in their territories ([source](#)).

To learn more about Ramsar and the importance of wetlands, please visit Ramsar.org.

This photo is from the Upo Wetland Ramsar site in Kyongsangnam province, Republic of Korea.

(Photo: Ramsar.org/courtesy Ha U Yeon)

Outreach & Education News



In the Field with Students from St. Bernard High School

Last October, students from St. Bernard High School AP Environmental Science/Lab Biology class came to the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve for science-in-action demonstrations. The class was divided into three groups and each was introduced to techniques of water quality monitoring, vegetation surveys, and the tools of temporal environmental measurement.



Karina Johnston (left), Director of Watershed Programs, takes a student to a Ballona Wetlands channel to collect a water sample for onsite testing. Students measured pH, salinity, and dissolved oxygen.

(Photo Credit: TBF)



Students enjoyed learning about the methods of vegetation monitoring. From a distance Ballona vegetation looks like an undifferentiated mosaic, but up close you'll find a wealth of intermixed natives, and sadly, invasives. The SMBRC's ongoing monitoring program is the most comprehensive assessment of Ballona flora.

(Photo Credit: TBF)



Sometimes researchers need to measure environmental conditions or spatial dimensions as part of their field work. Environmental conditions such as temperature, relative humidity, or wind speed are quickly measured with a handheld device such as Kestrel 4300. Far distances are determined with a range finder. Transects are located and tracked by GPS. Other times a good old fashioned compass is used.

The students especially like playing with these important field "toys." In the photo, a student is determining distance with the range finder.

(Photo Credit: TBF)

In the Field with MRCA's Junior Rangers



Last December, we met Carolyn Everhart, Interpretive Naturalist with the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority ([MRCA](#)) and several of their Junior Naturalists in the Ballona Wetlands for a hour-long field methods demonstration.

(Photo Above: Carolyn Everhart/MCRA)

Carolyn asks questions as students examine the local vegetation and discuss its place in the local ecology.



(Photo: TBF)

An assessment of the Ballona Wetlands wouldn't be complete without reptile monitoring. Behind lead field researcher Ivan (with black backpack) is a "herp board" that offers a warm haven for lizards and snakes. Researchers flip the board and are able count and identify the species.



(Photo: TBF)

During the reptile monitoring demonstration, a lizard was found, measured, and released.



(Photo: Carolyn Everhart, MCRA)

Here students handled a number of environmental measuring devices including a compass, range finder, infrared thermometer, and Kestrel 4300 which measures wind speed, temperature, and relative humidity.

(Photo: Carolyn Everhart, MCRA)



State and Local Agencies Team Up for Ballona Trash Cleanup!



In early December, the Department of Fish and Wildlife with the help of Caltrans and Beaches and Harbors hauled off almost 700 bags of trash, over 20 large piles of too-large-to-bag items, and over 20 syringes from the Ballona Wetlands off of Culver Blvd. L.A. County Sheriff's Department provided security.

(Photo: Department of Fish & Wildlife)

News from the Friends of the Ballona Wetlands



A Day in the Life of an Intern at the Ballona Wetlands

By Ian Bernstein, Friends of Ballona Wetlands Intern

There is never a dull moment working for the Friends of Ballona Wetlands. You will always find me either out on the reserve giving tours, or in the office working on curriculum for future classroom use. However, as much fun as I have, the most rewarding experience as an intern is seeing kids go home with a big smile on their face. Out on the saltmarsh viewing platform, some days are full of excitement and some days are less eventful. To the kids, however, it doesn't seem to matter! Being out of the classroom and in the reserve, surrounded by nature, seems to give them a rush of energy. The monthly Open House days have the same effect but with adults. There is something magical about the saltmarsh and dune ecosystems that bring about awe and wonder.

As an intern, you have good days when all the wildlife comes out to play, and days when nothing shows up. A recent Open House could not have been quieter. One hour in and only 2 people had come through the gate. While stationed at the entrance, I got a call from Patrick who was at the dune station. "A coyote just ran by me headed your direction - it was maybe 15 feet from where I was sitting." I thought to myself "Whoah, I should look out for it" when mid thought, there he was, casually trotting past the ki-ish (a model of the homes used by the Tongva). I quickly pulled out my phone again to take a picture. Just at that moment as I take his photo, he turns and looks at me, then trots off east toward Culver Blvd. and disappears from sight. It's encounters like these that make Ballona so special, and that speak to the need for more restoration work!

(Photo credit: Ian Bernstein)



What is so special about pickleweed at Ballona? Pickleweed is the sole habitat for the endangered Belding's Savannah Sparrow. This sparrow feeds and nests in the pickleweed. (Credit: [Friends of the Ballona Wetlands](#))

The Friends of the Ballona Wetlands hosts many guided and self-guided tours

- Guided Salt Marsh and Dunes Tour: second Sunday of each month, 1:00-3:00 pm. *An informative nature tour of the salt marsh and dunes. Learn about our coastal ecosystem and explore the wonders of nature right in the middle of urban Los Angeles.*
- Self-guided Salt Marsh and Dunes Tour: second Saturday of each month, 2:00-4:00 pm. *A self-guided tour of the salt marsh and dunes where visitors are free to walk on trails unescorted, with docents at various stations to explain sights.*
- Freshwater Marsh Tours: second and fourth Saturdays of each month, 10:00-11:00 pm. *An informative tour of the Freshwater Marsh. See a wonderful variety of birds, learn about native plants and how the freshwater system works.*
- Habitat Restoration Volunteer Days: fourth Saturday of each month, 9:30-Noon. *Come help the Friends restore the last coastal wetland habitat in Los Angeles County. Volunteers get hands-on experience while learning about wetland ecology. The Friends provide gloves and tools. Children under 15 must be accompanied by an adult.*

Where to Meet: Parking lot behind Gordon's Market at 303 Culver Blvd., Playa del Rey

For more details and parking: [HERE](#) (PDF) and [Website](#)

L.A. Audubon Ballona Wetlands Bird Walk



3rd Sunday of the month

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Leaders: **Bob Shanman and Friends**

Join us for a walk through L.A.'s only remaining saltwater marsh and the adjacent rocky jetty. Meet at the Del Rey Lagoon parking lot. Three hour walk. Scopes are helpful.

Contact: Bob (310) 326-2473; wbutorrance@gmail.com

Photo: Snowy Egret, preening under its wing, at Ballona Creek. (Photo by Don Sterba)

Featured at the Mar Vista Farmer's
Market **Green Tent!**



We had the privilege to showcase our work at the Mar Vista Farmer's Market on January 21. Michelle Staffield, Water Quality Programs Manager, discussed our Clean Restaurants and Clean Boater Programs while Rod Abbott, Field and Research Technician, discussed the Ballona Wetlands monitoring program.

A special thanks to interns Michelle Gomez and Vince Graves for coming out to help.

A very special thanks to Jeanne Kuntz and Melissa Stoller from the [Mar Vista Community Council](#).

(Photo: TBF)

What is the Ballona Wetlands Restoration Project?

Stretching from Playa del Rey to Venice, the Ballona Wetlands once occupied a 2000-acre expanse of critical coastal habitat. Currently covering an area of 600 acres, the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve is the largest and most promising opportunity for coastal wetland restoration in Los Angeles County.

(Photo: Ivan Medel, TBF)



The Ballona Wetlands Restoration Project is a long-term, science-based plan to return the Ballona Wetlands into a thriving ecological reserve. By healing this highly degraded site, the restoration project will create a diverse, resilient and dynamic ecosystem while providing a unique opportunity for the community to reconnect with southern California's natural heritage.



Coming in February!



February 27th, 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM at LMU

The Los Angeles Food Policy Council & Sustainable Seafood LA Present...

Sustainable Seafood Solutions: Is That Fish in Your Dish Sustainable?

We invite you to join us for an evening of engaging dialogue and sustainable seafood tasting, designed for consumers and business owners who want to learn more about the range of sustainable seafood options available, progress being made in fisheries and aquaculture, and the tools available for making informed seafood choices.

SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD TASTING

Whole Foods Market • Border Grill • Alaska Seafood • TwoXSea
Santa Monica Seafood • Community Seafood • Carlsbad Aquafarm
Sodexo • Marine Stewardship Council • Greenbar Craft Distillery

SPEAKERS

Ted Lieu - California State Senator (SD 28)
Mike Bonin - Los Angeles City Councilmember (CD 11)
David Rosenstein - Founder, EvoFarm

PANELISTS

Paula Daniels (moderator) - Founder, Los Angeles Food Policy Council
Mary Sue Milliken - "Top Chef Masters" & Co-Chef/Owner, Border Grill
Tim Aupperle - Regional Seafood Coordinator, Whole Foods Market
Sheila Bowman - Manager of Culinary and Strategic Initiatives, Seafood Watch
Mark Helvey - Program Lead, NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region

Thursday, February 27, 2014

6:00 p.m. - Sustainable Seafood Tasting
7:00 p.m. - Speakers, Presentation, & Panel

Loyola Marymount College • St. Robert's Auditorium
1 LMU Dr. • Los Angeles, CA 90045
Pay Station Parking - Lot H (Del Rey)
Map & Directions - www.lmu.edu/resources/campus_maps.htm

To Register: [HERE](#)

Next Governing Board Meeting

February 20

The SMBRC Governing Board meets on the 3rd Thursday of the even-numbered months from 9:30 to 11:30 am at the Del Rey Yacht Club.

If you would like information about the meetings, agendas, staff reports, or other related items, we encourage you to first visit our partner's organization's website: www.smbrc.ca.gov

Otherwise, please contact Scott Valor at svalor@santamonica.org for information.

Internships and Volunteer Opportunities

Assist with Scientific Monitoring and improve watershed health with the SMBRC.

The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission and its partners have many programs and projects happening at any one time so there is always something great to participate in!

Weekday and weekend opportunities available.

If you're interested in becoming an intern or volunteer, email Rod Abbott at rabbott@santamonicabay.org

(Photo:TBF)



Stay Connected!

Fanatical about Facebook? Tickled with Twitter? Join the Ballona Wetlands Restoration Project on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and Instagram to stay informed and up-to-date on the exciting phases of the Ballona Wetlands Restoration Project.



[Website](#)



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EXTRA! EXTRA! Starting this March, our newsletter goes monthly!

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