

An Environmental Affair

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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.

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Vegetable Garden Tips

Growing your own produce is a leisure activity second to none. A great deal of satisfaction comes from enjoying the taste of fresh vegetables straight from the garden.

Good Soil, Good Growth

Successful vegetable gardening requires fertile, well-prepared soil. The proper soil mix is a must to assure healthy, productive plants and mouth-watering garden vegetables.



One look at the color of your soil can tell you a lot about the soil's organic content and its drainage conditions. Surface soils vary from almost white to dark brown, black or gray. The darker the soil, the higher the organic content. Shades of yellow or red on the surface indicate the topsoil has been removed or that subsoil has been brought to the top mechanically. Yellow colored subsoils usually indicate slow drainage. Gray subsoils are a sign of too much water and too little air. Red to brown subsoils indicate iron and well-aerated conditions. Coarse soil is a sign of high sand content.

All gardeners can improve the quality of their soil by adding organic matter annually. Organic matter helps clay soil to drain and sandy soil to hold more moisture. A good source of organic material is a compost pile. Adding compost to the soil will help improve soil texture, increase water infiltration and provide needed nutrients. Minerals are also important for healthy plant growth. The right mix of nitrogen, phosphorous and potash is vital to hearty vegetable growth.

What Vegetables to Plant?

"Don't bite off more than you can chew," is the best advice to beginning gardeners. Select four or five of your family's favorite vegetables to start with. Some of the most popular and productive vegetables per square foot are tomatoes, peas, green beans, carrots and lettuce. For advice on particular varieties that thrive best in your locality, consult a neighborhood gardener, your local garden center or the cooperative extension service. The right mixture of sun, soil and moisture will determine how successful your gardening venture will be. Most crops require at least six to eight hours of full sun a day to thrive. A garden plot shaded by a tree will not flourish due to lack of full sun and because tree roots compete with garden plants for necessary nutrients.



Where to Plant?

There are no set rules, but a good size garden for a beginner would be 100 square feet. If the garden plot has never been tilled and is close to a house, the soil may require extensive preparation before it can be used. A raised bed is an excellent choice for a small area. Proper soil mixtures can be added to raised beds for good control of contents. A raised bed makes the most of a small amount of space and keeps plants up away from animals. Cultivation and weeding is simplified.

The most important thing about gardening is to have fun and involve the family. For more gardening advice please check the following web sites: www.ames.com, www.gardenweb.com or visit your local book store or library.

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) 580-1052. TDD (213) 977-7062. You can also reach us by fax: (213) 580-1084, e-mail: info@ead.ci.la.ca.us, or visit our Web site at www.lacity.org/ead. 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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PLEASE POST

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Editor

Household Product Alternatives



Many toxic household products have alternatives that are less toxic and often less expensive. Experiment with these suggested alternatives and see what you think. Remember we got along previously without these new chemical formulas for decades, if not hundreds of years. Do not pour hazardous products down the drain, toilet, or storm drains because they will end up in Santa

Monica or San Pedro Bays.

Substance.....Alternative

Household Products

- Drain cleaners.....Pour boiling water down the drain a couple of times a week as a preventative. Plunger followed by 1/2 cup baking soda and 1/2 cup vinegar and 4 cups boiling water.
- Oven cleaners.....diluted ammonia or baking soda
- Toilet bowl cleaners.....baking soda, mild detergent or small amount of bleach
- Spot removers.....club soda, immediate cold water, lemon juice, soak in corn meal and water.
- Furniture polish.....mineral oil with lemon juice
- Window cleaners.....vinegar & water, dry with newspapers

Garden Products

- Garden & houseplant insecticide.....one capfull dish soap per 1 gal. water and spray on plants
- Snail and slug killer.....hair clippings or stale beer in a dish. throw snails away
- Ant control.....red chili powder, paprika, or dried peppermint at point of entry

Sources: Heal the Bay, Los Angeles City Public Works

Environmental Contaminant Encyclopedia On-Line



The National Park Service's "Environmental Contaminants Encyclopedia" summarizes environmental fate and effects information on 118 toxic elements, compounds, and products. Entries include 30 oil and petroleum products most commonly spilled into fresh and marine waters of the U.S., 63 other petroleum-related compounds, metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and chlorinated organic solvents.

The document is useful to those who need to obtain information on environmental contaminants quickly and effectively. Contaminant specialists, environmental toxicologists, hazardous waste specialists, environmental risk assessors, contaminant researchers, water quality specialists and natural resource managers are among the intended users. Libraries, academia, state governments, local governments and concerned members of the public will also find this product useful.

Access the Encyclopedia on-line at www.nature.nps.gov/toxic



Orangutans: Get to Know Them



The word orangutan means "man of the forest." As the largest truly arboreal animals on earth, orangutans' superior brain power helps them survive. Saving wild endangered orangutans and their habitat is a challenge. As a result of logging, agriculture, fires, and poaching in their native Indonesia and Malaysia, as of 1997 there were only about 10,000 - 20,000 orangutans left in the wild.

In captivity, the orangutan does not need to compete with gibbons and siamangs for food. He does not need to check his fruit trees or scare off intruders. He adapts to life in a group. His mind is free to tackle other puzzles, so the prospect of providing

constant intellectual stimulation for these great apes is a daunting task. At the Los Angeles Zoo, this task will become a great deal easier with Red Ape Rain Forest, open July 13, 2000. The orangutans will be able to climb on high limbs and forage for fruit and other goodies throughout their exhibit.

Life with the orangutans is always surprising, a constant process of discovery and learning — by orangutans and people.

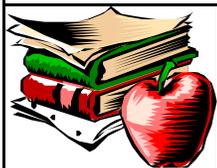


To learn more about these wonderful animals visit the new Red Ape Forest at the L.A. Zoo or visit www.lazoo.org/redape/orangutan.html.



He that plants trees loves others beside himself.
- Thomas Fuller

TEACHER'S CORNER



Welcome to our New Teacher's Corner!

This is a new feature of our newsletter that will showcase environmental education ideas and information for teachers, students, parents, and other interested readers. We welcome your suggestions regarding environmental curriculum development, study unit design, special projects, field trips, events, and any other creative, innovative resources you would like to share. For instance, if your school, library, or community center is hosting an environmentally-related event and participation is open to the public, please pass along the details for inclusion in the next Environmental Affair.

We look forward to hearing from you!

10 TIPS: ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

By Katie Lipkis, 1990

- 1. Recycle and reuse everything you can.**
Purchase recycled products.
- 2. Compost your food scraps and grass clippings.**
Try to cut your household trash in half. Visit TreePeople to take a composting workshop or to see the display available at the composting bins.
- 3. Be energy-efficient.**
Lower the thermostat on your water heater, hang your clothes out to dry, take shorter showers, and turn off lights when you leave the room.
- 4. Be car-conscious.**
- 5. Give your home a checkup.**
Weather-strip it for the winter, install a water-efficient shower head, put a timer on the garden hose.
- 6. Be an active and informed volunteer.**
- 7. Exercise your purchasing power.**
Avoid Styrofoam, disposable products, and toxic cleaners and pesticides.
- 8. Get involved.**
- 9. Educate yourself.**
- 10. Plant trees.**
The appropriate trees planted on the southern and western exposures of your home will cool your home and reduce your energy costs up to 40%.



For more information on TreePeople and the services they provide please call (818) 753-4600.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Neighborhood Matching Fund Grant- Supports grassroots community groups by financing capital improvement projects that benefit Los Angeles neighborhoods.

Deadline: August 8, 2000. (Depending on council district.)

Contact: Check the NMF Web site for updates at www.lacity.org/bpw/ocs/nmf or call Michael Espinosa at (213) 485-1034.



California ReLeaf 2001 – Tree planting grant program for community groups and volunteer city boards.

Deadline: Mid-September

Contact: For application and guidelines contact Grant Coordinator Elisabeth Hoskins at (949) 642-0127.

GRANTS WITHOUT A DEADLINE

California Community Foundation – Support for the rehabilitation, maintenance and beautification of parks and recreation areas. Contact Sr. Program Secretary at (213) 413-4130, or visit the Web site at www.calfund.org for more info.

California State Coastal Conservancy – Proposition 204 funding specifically allocated for LA River Projects that focus on habitat restoration, construction of public access facilities and others. Projects must show linkage to the coast. Call (510) 286-4169 for more info.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund – Loan program established by the Clean Water Act to local agencies for water quality improvement projects. Call the EPA Water Division at (415) 744-1948 for more info.

Economic Development Administration Grants – The US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration will give priority consideration to projects that help communities achieve and sustain economic growth. Visit the Web site at www.doc.gov/eda for more info.

Energy Research Grants – The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy is seeking applicants for up to \$6 million in grants to research renewable energy programs. Call the US Department of Energy at (800) 683-0751 for more info.

Jobs Through Recycling – Recycling business development program that seeks to foster recycling/reuse businesses that increase the use of recyclable or reusable materials and contribute to economic development and jobs creation. Call Julia Wolfe with the EPA Waste Management Division at (415) 744-2131 for more info.

Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund – Provides loans to ensure that drinking water remains safe and affordable. Call the EPA Drinking Water Office at (415) 744-1852 for more info.



AUGUST CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EACH MONTH:



24-hour Wildflower Hotline (818) 768-3533

Sponsored by The Theodore Payne Foundation, callers to the free Wildflower Hotline are directed to when and where to see the best blooms from over 30 locations throughout Southern California. New this year—all information will be posted to www.theodorepayne.org.

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 **4:30pm. on the third Sunday of each month** for an informal, leisurely, hour-long walk. Location varies each month and some walks feature brief talks highlighting natural, historical, artistic, or political aspects of the River. The walk is canceled if it's raining. For more information, visit the FoLAR Web site at www.folar.org, or contact Joe Linton at (213) 381-3570.



Habitat Restoration Days

Help restore wildflowers, trees and shrubs that were once here 200 years ago at the Madrona Marsh Preserve. Everyone is invited to help in planting, weeding and collecting and growing seeds in this rewarding work project. **Every second Saturday of the month.** Morning maintenance is done from 9am-noon **every Tuesday and Wednesday.** Call (310) 32-MARSH.



Hyperion Treatment Plant Tours

Free public tours are available each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 9 a.m. Contact Felice Kidd: (310) 648-5363 for information or to schedule a tour.

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 call (818) 756-8166.



Satwiwa Sundays

From 10am to 5pm at Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa. Meet guest hosts, watch demonstrations and share the experiences of the Native American LA Community. Call (805) 370-2301 for more information.

Smart Gardening Workshops

The Los Angeles Countywide Yard Waste Program will be holding its Smart Gardening workshops throughout the County during the Spring. Topics covered are backyard and worm composting, grass recycling, and water-wise gardening. For more information, call (888) CLEAN-LA or visit www.smartgardening.com.

Community Garden and Clean-Up/Northeast Los Angeles

2nd & 4th Saturday of every month. 9am-1pm. What do birds and people have in common? They both enjoy a day at the park! Beginning now until the end of summer, the City of Los Angeles is planning to restore some of the offramp areas along the Pasadena Freeway. Join others as they install park benches, plant shrubs, and plant trees. Contact: Luis Quirarte with L.A. Works, (323) 222-2620

The EAD Web site, 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 Web site 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.

Tyke Hike

This hike is scheduled every first Thursday of the month in the Madrona Marsh Preserve and involves looking for animal tracks, listening for singing birds, looking for ducks and their babies, observing habitat changes and wildflowers blooming. A \$5 donation per family is requested for the Natural History Center Education Programs; reservations are appreciated. For more info., call the Friends of Madrona Marsh: (310) 32MARSH.



Nature-Bird Walk (Regular Fourth Weekend monthly event)

Two walks will take place—one on Saturday, and one on Sunday—both at 10 am. The walks will meander through the Madrona Marsh Preserve, starting at the Natural History Center in Torrance. For more info., call the Friends of Madrona Marsh: (310) 32MARSH.



Fall Docents

Applications will be accepted through September 11 for Cabrillo Marine Aquarium's Adult Docent Training Class. Docents guide schoolchildren on tours through the exhibit hall or on the beach, providing information and conducting various activities relating to the marine life of southern California. A desire to learn about the ocean and an interest in children are the primary qualifications. Following three months of training (on Monday mornings) beginning September 18, docents are asked to serve one morning each week for two school years. A \$50 fee covers docent manual, text book and membership privileges.



THIS MONTH:

August 5-6

Sundown Safari- Have you ever wondered what it would be like to camp overnight in the L.A. Zoo? Find out during Sundown Safari, where you can fall asleep to the roaring of lions and wake up to the singing of siamangs. Enjoy dinner, breakfast, and a special after-hours tour. Bring your own tent or rent one from the Zoo. Sundown Safari begins at 5 p.m. as the Zoo closes, and ends at 9 a.m. the next day. For more info call (323) 644-4253 for registration materials.



August 5

THE PASADENA POPS ORCHESTRA- *When Irish Eyes Are Smiling* - At Descanso Gardens a delightful Celtic ensemble Cherish The Ladies will join the POPS for an enchanting evening of music from the Emerald Isle includ-

ing lilting Irish tunes like Danny Boy, gems from Finian's Rainbow, and Henry Mancini's exuberant Theme from the Molly Maguire. For info and tickets, call 626-792-7677.

August 10

GARDEN TALK & PLANT SALE: *Gardening in a Mediterranean Climate* - 2:30 p.m.



Southern California is one of only five regions in the world to enjoy the superb gardening climate that many of us take for granted. In this slide presentation, volunteer horticulturist Patrick Anderson will explore the gardens of the Mediterranean region, focusing on Italy and the south of France. Anderson will illustrate how the unique design components of these gardens have inspired landscaping styles here in California. Also discussed will be important plants from all five of the Mediterranean areas of the world that can easily be incorporated into our own gardens. A plant sale will follow. Free. For more info call: (626) 405-2141.

Friends' Hall, Huntington Library.

August 11

EVENING PICNIC CONCERT: *The Horse Soldiers* 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm, Main Lawn/Descanso Gardens.



This Americana band performs original and vintage country and western music grounded in the traditional roots of cowboy, Irish and folk. Bring a blanket or lawn chair, your favorite food and enjoy the music. Concert is free, and space is on a first come, first served basis. For more info call 626-792-7677.

August 12

Canyon Hike-9am - George F. Canyon is one of the prettiest canyons on the east side of the Peninsula through riparian and coastal sage scrub habitats. Park on Palos Verdes Drive East at the Palos Verdes Drive North intersection. Sponsored by Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy and the City of Rolling Hills Estates. For more info call (310) 541-7613.

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP:



Secrets of the Rain Forest - 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Children will explore the hidden secrets of the rain forests, home to some of the most amazing plants, animals, and insects in the world. After an exciting trek through The Huntington's own Jungle Garden, each participant will make a "living rain forest" to take home. Suitable for ages 6 and up. Registration of \$12 includes all materials and one free admission for an accompanying adult. Space is limited. To register, send a check payable to The Huntington to: Children's Programs, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA 91108. Confirmations will be sent by mail. For more info call: (626) 405-2128. Check-in at Entrance Pavilion

August 14

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT- *A College Credit Class with Mount San Antonio College*, 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Tim Wheeler, an instructor at Mt. San Antonio College, will teach about Integrated Pest Manage-

ment (IPM). IPM involves understanding safe and proper use of pesticides, proper cultural practices, and use of beneficial insects. Fee: \$71 (\$30 payable to Descanso Gardens; \$41 to be paid to Mt. San Antonio College on first day of class.) For more information, call Joan McGuire at (818) 949-7980.

August 18



NIGHT WALK - 7:30 pm (meet at 7:15 pm), Visitor Center. Jim Jackson, will show you the rewards of after-hour hiking.

Look for nighttime animals and enjoy the sights and smells of plants in twilight. Wear sensible shoes, warm clothes and bring your own flashlight. Walk concludes with coffee, cookies and conversation. Space limited so register early. Limited to ages 12 and up. Fee: \$10 members; \$15 general public. For more info call 626-792-7677. Reservation required.

August 19-20



Sundown Safari- Have you ever wondered what it would be like to camp overnight in the L.A. Zoo? Find out during Sundown Safari, where you can fall asleep to the roaring of lions and wake up to the singing of siamangs. Enjoy dinner, breakfast, and a special after-hours tour. Bring your own tent or rent one from the Zoo. Sundown Safari begins at 5 p.m. as the Zoo closes, and ends at 9 a.m. the next day. For more info call (323) 644-4253 for registration materials.



August 20

Down by the River Walk-4:30pm-Tour the Taylor Yard. Walk the riverfront along this soon-to-be abandoned rail yard.

Enter Taylor Yard at the main MTA road entrance and proceed to the River. Sponsored by FoLAR and Occidental College. For more info call (323)259-2566.

Shady Glade-Cold Creek Canyon Preserve. Even blistering hot days can be enjoyable in the dappled shade of this preserve. Learn bits of nature lore along this nature walk. 9:30 am. Sponsored by Cold Creek Docents. For more info call: (818) 346-9620.

Nature Walk & Cultural History-Peter Strauss Ranch, 4pm. Adults and children learn about the history of this ranch on a relaxed walk among oaks, ferns and mosses. Sponsored by Cold Creek Docents. For more info call: (818) 346-9620.

August 23

Campfire Program-Leo Carrillo State Park, 8pm. Come and meet park staff by the campfire for songs, park information and fun! Sponsored by California State Parks. For more info call: (818) 880-0350.

August 25 – 27

Mini-Trip: Santa Catalina Island-This L.A. Zoo outing is to the USC Philip K. Wrigley Marine Science Center on Santa Catalina Island. This weekend of marine science and waterfront activities is limited to 20 guests, and includes snorkeling in this marine refuge, where experienced guides will help you spot interesting creatures. For more contact Lisa Arnold at (323)

644-4708.

August 26

Dog Walk-A-Thon-Pt. Fermin Park at the end of Gaffey in San Pedro Second Annual event for Dogs and owners. Days activities For more info call: Roger Williams (310) 548-7705.

August 27

Beach and Wetlands



Birdwatching-Malibu Lagoon State Beach, 8:30am. Relaxed walk from lagoon to beach to see over 50 bird species and talk about natural history, bring binoculars. Sponsored by Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society. For more info call: (310) 457-2240.

Sacred Geometry, Fractals & Shared Forms in Nature-Sooky Goldman Nature Center, 10am. Explore the universal mathematics of nature and expand to a new dimension of awareness. Sponsored by William O. Douglas Outdoor Classroom. For more info call: (310) 858-3090.

August 30

Campfire Program-Leo Carrillo State Park, 8pm. Come and meet park staff by the campfire for songs, park information and fun! Sponsored by California State Parks. For more info call: (818) 880-0350.



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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) 580-1052**, or toll-free in Los Angeles only at **(800) 439-4666**. You can also visit our Web site at www.cityofla.org/ead and click on the Environmental Information Center Link.

AIR QUALITY

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

ASBESTOS – *Asbestos*
Environmental Hygiene
(213) 738-4078

BEE INFESTATIONS
Infestaciones de abejas
Vector Control
(800) 233-9279

BULKY ITEM PICK-UP
Recogida de artículos 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

ILLEGAL DUMPING INTO STORM DRAINS

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

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