



PAW PRINTS

Volume 40, Number 6

Newsletter of the Eaton Canyon Nature Center Associates

June 2022

PUBLIC CALENDAR

A Day in Nature: Wildlife in an Urban Interface

Saturday, June 25, 9 am - 3 pm
Eaton Canyon Nature Center

Nature Tails Story Hour

Every Saturday at 10:30 am on the Outdoor Patio. Stories and activities for children.

Saturday Nature Center Discovery

Saturday mornings on the Outdoor Patio.
Animal Ambassadors: 10 am and 12 pm. Nature Discovery Tables: 10:30 am to 12:30 pm

Docent-Led Family Nature Walk

Every Saturday at 9 am. Meet in front of the Nature Center. No dogs please.

Nature Knowledge Nights

Tuesday, Thursday, & Saturday Drop in
At Patio or Lobby 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Eaton Canyon Gardening Group

Every Wednesday at 9:30 am and second Sundays of the month at 10 am. **Current volunteers only.** Meet by Nature Center garage door.

The following events and meetings cannot take place at the nature center due to precautions in response to COVID-19.

Calif. Native Plant Society Plant Walk Plant walks are held on the second Sunday of each month except July and August at 9 am. Meet in the back patio.

Audubon Bird Walk

Third Sunday of the month, 8 am. Meet leader Hill Penfold in front of the Nature Center.

Meetings:

Pasadena Group Sierra Club

Monthly meetings via Zoom are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 7 pm. Check their website for information:
www.sierraclub.org/angeles/pasadena

Audubon Society

Monthly meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm. Check their website for more information: www.pasadenaaudubon.org

Calif. Native Plant Society

Meetings are held the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm via Zoom.
Check their website for more information:
<https://www.cnps-sgm.org/activities.php>

Docent Training is Back at Eaton!

By Diane Lang



Photos: Brenda Hurst

After more than two-years' hiatus, Docent Training is back! On May 4, 15 students (including six intrepid ones who have hung in there since 2020!) began our Spring 2022 training. This is a wonderful class of students, devoted to nature, and delightful to interact with. Some of them come with extensive nature knowledge, but all are eager learners. The first two meetings (we meet two mornings a week) were followed by a hike, as many classes will be, with information shared by both experienced Eaton Canyon docents, as well as new students. Mickey Long's introduction to Ecology was, as always, a great way to start; we look forward to Cliff and Gabi McLean teaching us about local plants, with other wonderful teachers to follow. Meeting in the auditorium gives room for current docents to sit in for review, and several are taking advantage of that.

When schools are able to come back—and outreaches are scheduled—we'll be ready!

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Paw Prints is a monthly publication of the ECNCA. Articles and photographs are welcome on topics related to natural history and Nature Center activities. If you see something interesting in the canyon, please share it with us! The deadline for submissions to the July 2022 issue is June 15, 2022. Send submissions to Brenda Hurst eatonmember@gmail.com.

Contributors: Brenda Hurst, Diane Lang, Helen Wong

Paw Prints Production

Content Editor: Brenda Hurst
Layout: Carole Scurlock
Copy Editor: Laura Joseph

DOCENT AND MEMBER CALENDAR

Bag Lunch and Mini-Inservice

Wednesday, June 1, 2022 at Noon in the Auditorium, **F.U.N. Boxes and Fun for Us**. Diane Lang will present: **Birds and Mammals With Classroom Learning Games to Reinforce These Topics**. Students enjoy them and so will the Docents/Volunteers who attend. Some new elements from the Birds/Mammals F.U.N. boxes will be introduced.

Notice: The following events and meetings temporarily cannot take place at the nature center due to precautions required in response to COVID-19.

Guided School Tours

School tours are conducted from October to the end of the school season. Call the office for reservations. 626-398-5420

ECNCA Board Meetings

The ECNCA board meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7 pm via Zoom. If you are interested in joining a meeting, please send an email to eatonmember@gmail.com, at least 2 days prior to the meeting.

Save the Date

Annual ECNCA Members Meeting & Elections

**Saturday, June 25, 2022
9 am - 10:30 am**

Eaton Canyon Nature Center

Insert Music Here Performs at Eaton Canyon!

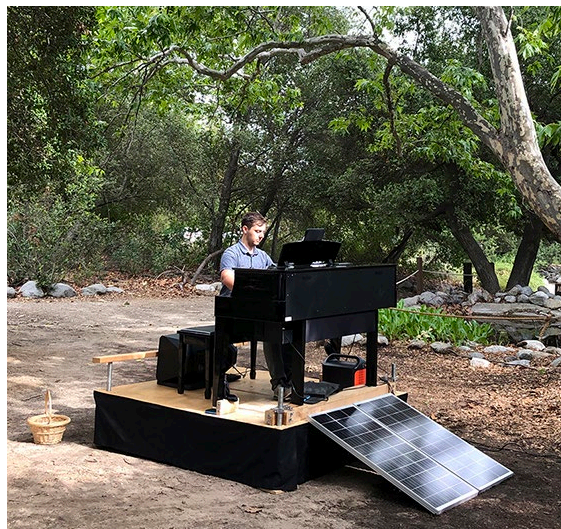


Photo: Brenda Hurst

Hopefully, many of you were lucky to have come by in April and listen to Insert Music Here perform at the Eaton Canyon Nature Center, by the pond. If so, you were able to hear performances by IMH Co-Founder and Artistic Director Katelyn Vahala on the piano, in a wide variety of music ranging from the foundational masterpieces of J.S. Bach to contemporary, meditative works of Minimalist composers like Philip Glass. Sam Kinsey, IMH Executive Director, also performed.

Insert Music Here (IMH) is a travelling concert series based on bringing piano music into nature. Sam Kinsey and Katelyn Vahala founded IMH in 2021 to bring together their passions for both music and nature—they are both pianists as well as avid hikers and backpackers! By performing in scenic natural settings, their goal is to help people reconnect with nature in new and meaningful ways while helping to raise awareness for their hosting conservation organizations and their work. This mission guided them in how they developed and hand-built a portable stage system to bring their beautiful hybrid grand piano out into rugged areas, fully supported by solar panels and battery system! They presented some of their first events at Eaton Canyon this past month through a collaboration with the Eaton Canyon Nature Center and LA County Parks and Recreation. They'll be back soon with another performance on June 25th!



Photo: Helen Wong

To learn more about their organization and upcoming events, or to get in touch with any questions or ideas for new musical collaborations, visit them at www.insertmusichere.com. They have some exciting projects coming up in Northern California State Parks and are planning a series of violin, cello, and piano programs throughout the Fall and Winter of this year that they hope to share around the local community!

Nature Center Discovery continues in our outdoor patio on Saturday mornings! Drop on by!

9 am: Docent-Led Family Nature Walk
10:30 am-12:30 pm: Nature Discovery Table & Gift Shop
10:30 am: Nature Tails Story Hour
10 am & 12 pm: Animal Ambassadors



ECNCA Volunteer Docents and Gift Shop Chairs: Pam Edwards (l), Karen Mateer (r) Photos: Brenda Hurst



ECNCA Volunteer Docent: Madeline Schleimer



Eaton Canyon Superintendent, Helen Wong, presenting one of our ambassador snakes.

Plant of the Month

Showy Penstemon

Botanical Name: *Penstemon spectabilis*

Family: Plantain (Plantaginaceae)

Blooms: April & May

Lifeform: Perennial herb

Habitat: Gentle rocky slopes and dry flats as part of chaparral or coastal sage scrub.

The Showy Penstemon is native to southern California and Baja California (growing primarily in the chaparral, scrub, and woodlands of the Peninsular and Transverse ranges) and to central California (growing in the northeastern part of the South Coast Range). This plant can reach a height of 6 feet and is especially spectacular when it blooms in the spring with beautiful purple-blue flowers.



The show-stopping flowers, wide-mouthed and tubular in shape, are perfect for pollinators such as hummingbirds and wasps. The throat of the flower is lighter in color, lavender to almost white, and hairless inside. The narrow leaves are lance-shaped to oval, serrated on the edges, and up to about 2 1/2" in length. Paired leaves are oppositely arranged on the stem.

Showy Penstemons are fast growing and able to produce flowers their first year. They are deer resistant, easy to grow, and also great for bird, hummingbird, butterfly, and bee gardens. They support butterflies like the Common Buckeye, a variety of Checkerspots, and moths.

According to CalScape, this plant likes full sun if planted in rocky, loamy or clay soils, that hold moisture, and part shade if planted in drier, sandier soils. It's best to plant on a slight slope or on flats that drain at least moderately well. Usually, if planted in these areas, a Showy Penstemon will not need any supplementary summer water. They will flower more abundantly however with occasional summer water (1x per month) but may be shorter lived. Showy Penstemons are fairly short lived even under the best of conditions however, typically living 5-10 years. It's still a great plant to grow in southern California. They will often self-seed and come up in nearby spots in your garden, particularly in partly shaded areas.

As I'm writing this in May, Eaton Canyon's gorgeous Showy Penstemons are in full bloom. One place you can find them growing is near the nature center by the Fire Ecology Trail sign.

Brenda Hurst



Insert Music Here concert Photo: Helen Wong

ECNCA BOARD MEMBERS

President: Brenda Hurst

Vice-President: Mary Foltyn

Recording Secretary: Marge Mayotte-Hirn

Corresponding Secretary: Mary Veselich

Treasurer: Terry Ginsberg

Membership Chair: Brenda Hurst

School Trip Docent Chair: David Kristoff

Weekend Docent Chair: Ramie Case

Twilight Program Chair: Mike Regan

Bus Grants Committee Chair: Marge Mayotte-Hirn

Gardening Group Chair: Marilyn Hildebrandt

Conservation Group Chair:

Gift Shop Chairs: Pam Edwards, Karen Mateer

Bag Lunch Chair: Mary Foltyn

Moonlight Hike Co-chairs: Ramie Case, Teresa Kirkland

Members-at-Large: Judy Jenkins, Rose Haig, Susan Hopkins

Nature Center Director: Helen Wong

NCA President: Laura Nicholson

NCA Representatives: Diane Lang

Eaton Canyon Nature Center Associates (ECNCA) is a chapter of the Nature Center Associates (NCA), a non-profit support group of the natural area park system of Los Angeles County. Founded for educational and scientific purposes, its primary mission is to develop in children and adults an appreciation of the natural world and to preserve Eaton Canyon as a natural area for future generations.

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

Become A Member of the ECNCA (Eaton Canyon Nature Center Associates)

Membership benefits include the ECNCA newsletter, program announcements and a 10% discount at the gift shop. To join the Eaton Canyon Nature Center Associates, fill out the form below and mail with your check, payable to the ECNCA, 1750 North Altadena Drive, Pasadena, CA 91107.

Name: _____ Email _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Please check appropriate box and mark return envelope "Membership"

☐ Individual \$30 ☐ Family \$45 ☐ Senior \$15 ☐ Senior Family \$30 ☐ Student \$15

☐ Friend of the Canyon \$75 ☐ Sage Saver \$100 ☐ Chaparral Contributor \$250 ☐ Riparian Guardian \$500

☐ Oak Woodlands Protector \$750 ☐ Wildlands Angel \$1000 ☐ NEW ☐ RENEWAL

Enclosed is my MEMBERSHIP in the amount of \$_____

Enclosed is my additional DONATION in the amount of \$_____

Please make checks payable to the ECNCA. All contributions are tax deductible.