



The newsletter of IRWD

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Twenty Years of Summer Camp at the San Joaquin Marsh

Sea and Sage Audubon and Discovery Science Center Make Learning Fun

Youngsters of all ages from Anaheim to Irvine have discovered that the Irvine Ranch Water District San Joaquin Marsh is the place to be during the summer. Sea and Sage Audubon is observing 20 years of presenting summer nature camps, while the Discovery Science Center is enjoying its fourth year.

"We have many of the same campers coming back year after year," said Trude Hurd, Project Director of Education for Sea and Sage Audubon.

The summer camps are held in the IRWD Learning Center at the San Joaquin Marsh Campus and combine hands-on activities with science education. Veterans of the Sea and Sage Advanced Camp may go on to become members of the Junior Naturalist Program.

Various Summer Camp Curriculum Levels Offered

The Sea and Sage Fledgling Camp for seven and eight-year-olds introduces young campers to the world of birds and journaling. Marsh Bird Camp is for nine to 12-year-olds. Campers 11 years and older may participate in Advanced Bird Camp or Birds, Bugs and Blossoms Camp.

Discovery Science Center has two offerings: Summer Smiles for five and six-year-olds and Project Discovery for ages seven to 10.

On a recent day of camp in the Discovery Room, Discovery Science Center instructor Karyn Nagel and her staff worked with Summer Smiles campers to construct bird feeders from bread and birdseed. Egg was spread on the bread, and then pressed into the bird seed. Cookie cutters allowed the youngsters to create fun and interesting shapes in their bird feeders before they were allowed to dry. The finishing touch was placing a ribbon on the bread and birdseed so it could be tied on a tree to attract



A walk through the Marsh while birdwatching is the highlight of Audubon's summer camps.

birds. This was a jam-packed day. The youngsters heard a story, made leaf prints, took nature walks and capped their day making edible aquifers from vanilla ice cream, lemon-lime soda and chocolate chips.

Volunteers Are the Heart of the Birds of Prey Visit

In the Adventure Room, the Sea and Sage Marsh Bird Camp was enjoying Raptor Day. Volunteers from the Orange County Bird of Prey Center brought several visitors with them – Aries the American kestrel, Gus the screech owl, Spartacus the burrowing owl, JR the harris hawk, Wrong Way the great horned owl, and Hank the red-tailed hawk.

These birds have all been injured in some way and many are unable to be released into the wild. Volunteer Michelle Andre, wearing a long leather glove for protection from the birds' sharp talons, deftly handled her specimens.

"We are all volunteers, we don't get paid," she explained. "We do this because we love the birds."

In the afternoon, the campers continued their education about birds of prey by dissecting owl pellets. Because owls don't chew their food, the soft portion of their prey is digested and the harder materials such as bone, fur and hair congeal into a mass and are regurgitated.

Please visit www.irwd.com and seaandsageaudubon.org for more information on Marsh summer camps and community education programs.



The red-tailed hawk visit is a huge summer camp hit.

Take Control of Your Controller ~ Step 5

Now that you've gone through steps 1 through 4 and have a basic schedule in place, take advantage of the seasonal adjustment feature (also called the % Adjust or Watering Index feature) on your controller.

The watering index value is a percentage that will change throughout the year and is normally 100% for the summer when plant water demands are the highest. The idea is to schedule your controller for the summer schedule and then use the Watering Index adjustment feature to have your controller automatically decrease run times. For example, if a zone runs for 6 minutes in summer, the controller would automatically reduce the runtime to 3 minutes if in March you adjusted the controller to 50% using the Watering Index adjustment feature.



To find out more about the Watering Index, how to use it, and receive automatic reminders, sign up for IRWD's Control Your Controller newsletter by emailing aws@irwd.com.

Did you Know?

Q: What water-related school-age education programs does IRWD offer?

A: Through partnership with Discovery Science Center, IRWD offers grade-specific elementary school programs, using individual student response keypad technology for interactive learning. IRWD's middle school water quality instruction, also in partnership with Discovery Science Center, culminates with a field trip to the IRWD San Joaquin Marsh.

Additional IRWD-sponsored educational programs include: the Science Career Options Conference for middle school students held at UCI; Ask-a-Scientist Night at the Irvine Unified School District; the judging of water-related projects in Irvine Unified School District's annual science fair; the annual Water Awareness Poster Contest for students in grades 1 to 5; participation in the annual Children's Water Festival; and annual sponsorship of a team in the Solar Cup boat contest held at Lake Skinner in Riverside County.

Save these Dates

September 15: IRWD will host an Inner-Coastal Watershed Clean Up site along the San Diego Creek near the IRWD San Joaquin Marsh and the IRWD Michelson Water Recycling Plant. Meet on Riparian View just off Michelson. 8 a.m. to noon.

September 29: Join IRWD and UC Extension at the 4th Annual Residential Demonstration Landscape Open House and Vendor Fair. 7601 Irvine Blvd, Irvine, CA 92618. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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The mission of Irvine Ranch Water District, a public agency, is to provide reliable, high quality water and sewer service in an efficient, cost effective manner and environmentally sensitive way that provides a high level of customer satisfaction.

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