OC Habitats 2019 *Annual Report*

OC HABITATS

Message from the President

2019 was quite a year for OC Habitats! A little like running a 5K that turns into a marathon! All of our programs ramped up in 2019. In Education and Outreach, we served over 700 students through our Habitat Education Programs both on campus and in the field. Our educational programming expanded when we were approved to become Inspire Charter School vendors and began our Nature Programming for a larger population of home school groups in Orange County. Our monitoring program also expanded as we were able to cover all the segments of the Coastal Dune Habitats in Orange County by mid-2019. Our associations with agencies are getting stronger and our work is being used for the good of the species that rely on these habitats. Our Restoration Program really began in 2019 with some of our first ever projects that were solely orchestrated by OCH and its volunteers. We did at least one project per month starting in March, all the way through December. We found greater support this year demonstrated by an increase in both long-term and short-term volunteers as well as more financial support from several foundations and corporations.

At the end of the 2019 "marathon" I feel proud of our accomplishments in all areas of our organization and in the people who serve including our interns, long-term, short-term, and NextGen (ages 12-17) volunteers. The passion and enthusiasm that these people bring to OCH is what fuels our drive to get to the "finish line." 2020, looks to be another challenge, maybe a triathlon! Read on to find out more about 2019 and what our goals are for 2020! We hope after you have reviewed 2019's successes, you will be inspired to join our team and find your new philanthropic home with OC Habitats!

~ Stacey Chartier-Grable

Monitoring

Habitat Monitoring

Coastal Dune Habitats

We continued our monitoring efforts along the coast in Orange County. We added several new monitors and were able to finish the year by covering all the segments that US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)has on their list (23). We continue to refine our data compilation and get these numbers out to the agencies that need them to help support their work to conserve and protect these habitats and the species, especially the listed species, that live therein. Our data is found to be helpful to these agencies by giving them a better view of what areas of the coast are most vital to species and should be given more protections from the beach-going crowds that Southern California attracts.

In addition to our monitoring efforts on the coast, we also worked with California State Parks and Bolsa Chica Conservancy to monitor their Tern Preserves where California Least Terns and Western Snowy Plovers breed from March-September. Most monitoring began in March or April and ended in early August. We provided 3 shifts to Bolsa Chica Conservancy and 2 shifts to California State Parks each week with approximately 15 monitors total. This is our 2nd year doing both programs. We found that scheduling these two monitoring programs in addition to our own monitoring program may have stretched our crew a little thin and we will be cutting back the amount of programs we commit to in 2020.

We had the pleasure of providing habitat tours to our Grant Donor, LUSH International, and to various Title 1 schools through the Discovery Cube Ocean Quest Citizen Science programming. We were lucky to be able to see many species but also our listed species, the Western Snowy Plover. We discussed the importance of the coastal dune habitats to this species and the many other species as well as how visitors can help by being mindful of their actions on the beach.

Education & Outreach

Habitat Education Programs

We provided our Habitat Education Program to over 750 students in 2019. Of these 750 students, 550 were from Title 1 programs.

Title 1 Designation (Definition):Title I, Part A (Title I) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. Federal funds are currently allocated through four statutory formulas that are based primarily on census poverty estimates and the cost of education in each state. ~ U.S. Department of Education

Schools Served

Peter's Elementary (kinder and 1st) - Jan, Feb, March 2019 (300 Students)
College Park Elementary (kinder and 1st) - Mar, Apr, May 2019 (200 Students)
Vista Middle School (8th) - June 2019 (40 Students)
Ocean Quest Citizen Science (6th grade) - Sept and Nov 2019 (110 and 100)
Home School Group (bilingual): Amigos Exploradores (Feb - June, 15 x 5 events)

Outreach and Speaking Engagements

Career Fair - Beckman High School - April 2019
Career Night - Irvine High School - March 2019
Ocean Quest - May 2019
Pacific Marine Mammal Center (Ocean Heroes and Camp Program) - May, June, July 2019
Coastal Cleanup Day - Sept 2019
Habitat Tours - LUSH - Sept 2019
Booth Outreach - LUSH Charity Pot - December 2019

Habitat Restoration

As one of our main goals, habitat restoration, was a BIG focus for our group in 2019. We were able to work with a variety of groups like OC Parks, Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy, Huntington Beach Central Park, and Project Grow in Newport Back Bay to help to restore many habitats back to their native state. It was exciting to see the environmental change and also to engage as many volunteers as we did during the process.

Beach Clean-Ups

We started the year off with a beach clean-up in Newport Beach, California. We have focused on the Balboa Peninsula and even more specifically from the Balboa Pier to the Wedge as this habitat is considered critical habitat and ESHA for the listed Western Snowy Plover, which resides in this area year round. We hosted 2 more events in this same area in April for Earth Day and in November to wrap up the year. We used the Clean Swell App to record types and amounts of debris collected. Our volunteer, Sydney Rilum, led these events.

Restoration

We began a partnership with OC Parks in 2019 and organized a restoration of a burned area at the entrance driveway of Santiago Oaks Regional Park in March 2019. We spent a morning planting native plants along the perimeter of the driveway and in the median. In October, these plants were thriving and showing great progress.

From this project we moved to Irvine Regional Park and helped to maintain Ranger Kelly Moriarty's Coastal Sage Garden from May through August. This area had also been burned in the 2017 fires and was replanted by another group but needed to be maintained (water, weeding, and mulching) until the plants had secured their foothold and were able to survive on their own. Once these plants had gotten a good start we moved to another project.

Our third big project, the Harding Nature Trail Restoration Project, started in October. We first worked to clear the existing pathways and started to clear a section of non-natives for planting. We were able to get about 30 plants in the ground at the beginning of our wet season and will continue to plant through April 2020. This project is an ongoing project that will span well into, and possibly past, 2020. Our goal is to see this restoration from beginning to end, if possible.

We also worked with Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy, HB Central Park (Amigos Exploradores), ICRE at Fairveiw Park and Project Grow in Newport Beach working to remove invasives, plant natives, clean out debris, and repot growing seedlings.

Special Projects

OCH has a variety of special projects that we engage in every year. This year, we started our Habitat Video Project and continued with our work with the Wetlands & Wildlife Care Center in Huntington Beach. Other projects were often-times folded into another part of our mission like restoration or monitoring, such as our HB Central Park Restoration where we assisted a bilingual home school group with the removal of invasive species in their butterfly garden or our LUSH Habitat Tour and Restoration.

Wildlife Pouch & Hammock Project

OCH was provided with 15 yards of fabric from the Wetlands & Wildlife Care Center to sew pouches and hammocks for native species that are injured and/or orphaned. We were able to make 29 hammocks and 69 pouches. The event was well attended with over 20 volunteers from all over Orange County.

Habitat Video Project

Interns at OCH have been working on a video project since June of 2019. This video project will be a series of videos geared towards school-aged and college students who want to get an introduction to the various wild habitats within Orange County. The first video, to be launched in March 2020, will be an overview of all the habitats and some history about how the County has changed and how that has affected the habitats therein. Subsequent videos will follow discussing the specific habitats within the county in more detail. Contributions from almost every OCH intern has been included in this ongoing project. We are excited about these videos and their potential educational impact it provides the public once published.

The Numbers

Volunteer Team
Total OCH Crew for 2019: 41 Total Long-term Volunteers (2019) and 107 One-time Volunteers
OCH had a lot of help last year with 41 regular volunteers helping with monitoring, education and outreach, and restoration. In addition, we had even more volunteers that came for one-time events which added 107 volunteers to our overall team!

Volunteer Hours:
Total: 5015
Monitoring: 40%
Outreach & Education: 40%
Restoration: 17%
Administration: 3%

Financials
All funds received through donations or grants were used to benefit and support OCH's monitoring, outreach and education, and restoration programs.

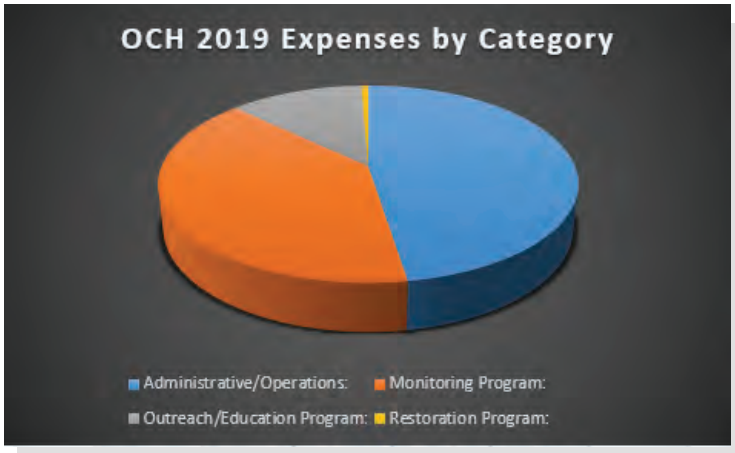
Grants, Fundraisers, and Donations
We were awarded several grants and donations in 2019 from the Griswold Family Foundation ($5,000), Deutsche Bank Matching Grant Program ($5,000), LUSH International Cosmetics ($9,346), and Walmart ($1,000). The LUSH and Walmart Grant was specific to our monitoring program and provided our team with backpacks, binoculars, fieldguides, jackets, and other essential items for our fieldwork. The other grants and donations were available to use across all areas of our organization including education and outreach, restoration, and overhead costs.

2019

Total Revenue:	$ 22,666.23
Total Expenses:	$ 9,939.28
2019 Total Net Assets:	**$ 12,726.95**

Project Expenses: (% of Revenue)

Administrative - Operational Costs:	15%
Monitoring Programs:	20%
Education and Outreach Programs:	9%
Restoration Programs:	Less than 1%



OCH Crew and Info

2019 Board of Directors

Stacey Chartier-Grable – President/Ex. Director
Alice Carter - Treasurer
La Kinya Allen Hall - Secretary
Ginny Gregurek – Member-at-Large
Adelle Bennett – Member-at-Large

2019 Volunteer and Intern Team

Volunteers
Diane Biggs
Bianca Borja - Student Liaison
Kristi Caldwell
Tracey Clark
Sarah Crestol
Pedro Dominquez
Tom Gee
Carol Gregurek
Ross Griswold
Bill Halladay
Mike Hawkins
Julius Leyh
Devon Ohlwiler
Nicole Madey
Sydney Rilum
Danny Rivas
Crystal Ryan - Trainer/Grant Writer
Erick Sarrion
Mashell Shetterly
Nick Shetterly
Kerrie Solas
Trevor Stocking - Trainer/Grant Writer
Lola Toyama
Phong Tran
Diana Vu
Kristin Walovich
Grace Yeh

NextGen (ages 12-17)
Arianna Carter
Declan Carter
Ellen Cassity
Mia Elliott
Sam Grable
Ryan Griego
Kristie Moore
Brianna Moore
Joshua Moore
Bradley Moore
Gracie Shetterly
Regina Thompson

Interns
Abby Foster
Matt Franklin
Alex Gunton
Ariel Kuo
Sheen Sidhu
Olivia Richardson

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Find us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube - OCHabitats

Looking to 2020

As we enter into the new year and the new decade, we are making plans for 2020 and the future, we always reflect on past successes and failures to make sure we are doing the most good with the resources we have.

Our 2020 Intentions include:

1. Continue to provide educaiton and outreach to people of all ages through outreach events, educational programming, and partnerships with similarly minded organizations.

2. Continue our restoration work at Harding Nature Trail, Huntington Beach Wetlands, Newport Back Bay, and Fairview Park and continue to foster our existing relationships with other nonprofits, agencies, and municipalities.

3. Work with agencies to refine our monitoring program so that our data and surveys provide both reliable and usable information to help support and protect the conservation of habitats and species.

4. Recruit and train passionate volunteers and staff to help with the overall mission and specific goals of OCH. Expand our reach to more communities within Orange County (north, south, and east).

5. Refine our educational programming, public, private and home school to reach attainable goals and educate as many students as possible. Expand our marketing of our educational programs through all groups via social media, email marketing, and direct contact with potential groups and schools.

6. Prepare a more formalized business and strategic plan that will help to guide OC Habitats into the future.

7. Partner with like-minded organizations like Project Grow, OC Coastkeepers, ICRE, OC Parks, and HBWC to encourage habitat protection through awareness and stewardship.

8. Find funding through grants and corporate sponsorships that allow OCH to hire part-time staff to ensure our work is both reliable and consistent.

9. Provide opportunities for learning and growth for our volunteers, interns, and friends as we expand our work. These opportunities could be as simple as Movie Night with an environmental slant or as in depth as a TedTalk which discusses the status and impacts to our current ecosystems within Orange County.