

DONATE

NEWSLETTER

OCH News

3rd Quarter 2023 (July - September)

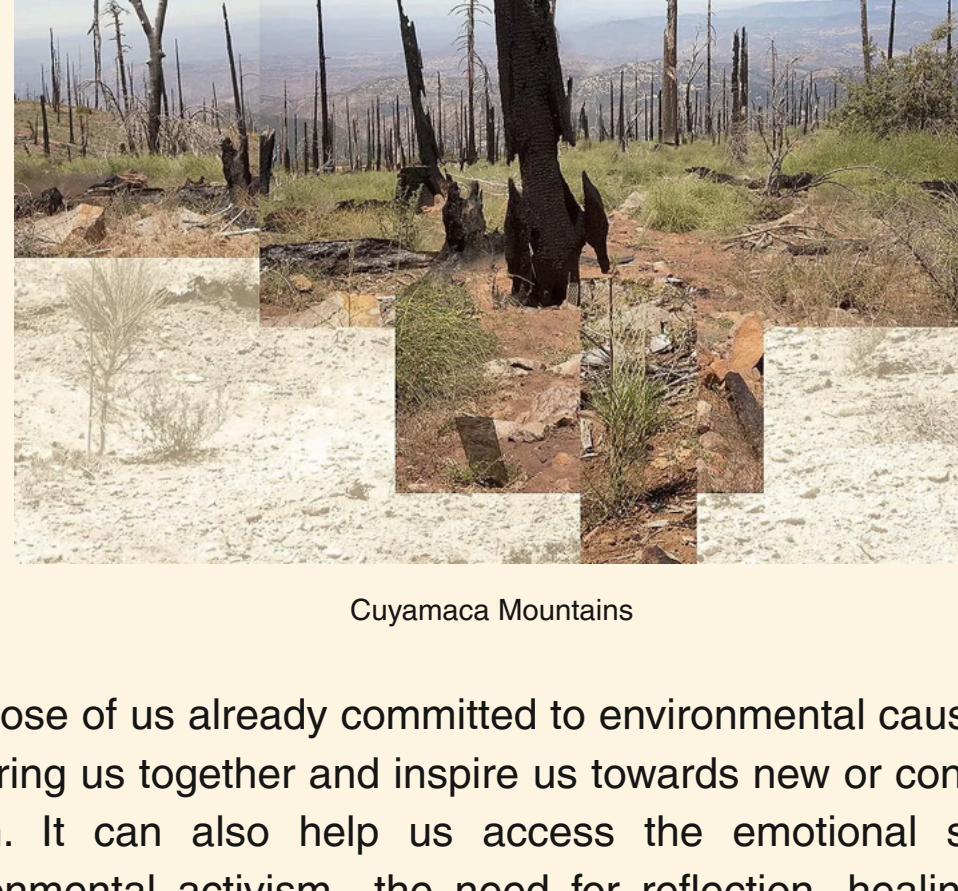
Quarterly News

Ecological Art: Valuable as well as Beautiful

By Gina Thompson

Science, studies, data, and facts are highly prized in the environmental movement. They provide us with the most up to date information in order to take action and often show others just how urgent our cause is. However, there is also much value to be found in fields other than science.

While striving for environmental awareness, it is important not to underestimate the potential of art to educate and motivate. Its visual, interactive, and emotional qualities create a unique opportunity for people to take in information. Looking at a piece of art, we can feel the message rather than hearing it. This can help an idea click in or foster a more personal connection to an issue in a way that news articles, education systems, or scientific facts sometimes can't.



Coyama Mountains

For those of us already committed to environmental causes, art can bring us together and inspire us towards new or continuing action. It can also help us access the emotional side of environmental activism—the need for reflection, healing, and community in the face of eco-grief and anxiety.

Many have realized these benefits of art and its potential to be incorporated into environmentalism. A new type of art called ecological art, or ecoart for short, has been gaining traction. Rather than just depicting nature, as historic environmental art did, ecoart focuses on revealing the problems that plague our ecosystems and encouraging solutions to them. Artists often utilize natural materials or processes in their art pieces as well. Ecoart notably blurs the line between art and activism. Continue reading here.

Invasive Tumbleweeds in Orange County

By Eric Peña

Salsola tragus, commonly known as Russian thistle, is an invasive tumbleweed that can be found in a variety of habitats in Orange County. What makes this tumbleweed particularly problematic is its exceptional ability to disperse seeds with the help of the wind, water, and human beings after the plant itself has already died. Russian thistle is so good at spreading its seeds throughout disturbed habitats that it invades and outcompetes native vegetation. Not only that, when the plant has died and is ready to disperse its seeds, its sharp thorns are powerful enough to total a car if it ends up blowing onto the road. Russian thistle is also excellent at harboring pests like the beet leaf-hopper, or Circulifer tenellus, which negatively impacts agriculture.



Photo Credit: Shana Welles

Salsola tragus is particularly known for its tumbling behavior when dispersing its seeds. When it's young, the leaves are dark green, and the bush itself can grow up to 4 feet long in diameter. It grows spines along its stems to prevent being eaten before it is able to reach maturity. After it dies, the stem breaks off and is able to tumble away, which helps the seeds fall off and disperse to various locations. This variety typically spreads its seeds between late fall and early winter. Continue reading here.

Species Spotlight

Birds, Bats, and Moths: A Spotlight on Orange County's Pollinating Species

By Cameron White

Step outside and enjoy the fresh air... or don't if you suffer from seasonal allergies. While pollen is one of the most common allergens, it is a significant means of reproduction for many flowering plants. Pollination is the spread of pollen from the male anther of one plant to the female stigma of another plant to allow for fertilization. This process is done by a wide variety of organisms, with honey bees being the most well-known. We will be exploring three pollinating organisms that reside here in Orange County: the Mexican Free-Tailed Bat, Anna's Hummingbird, and the White-lined Sphinx moth.

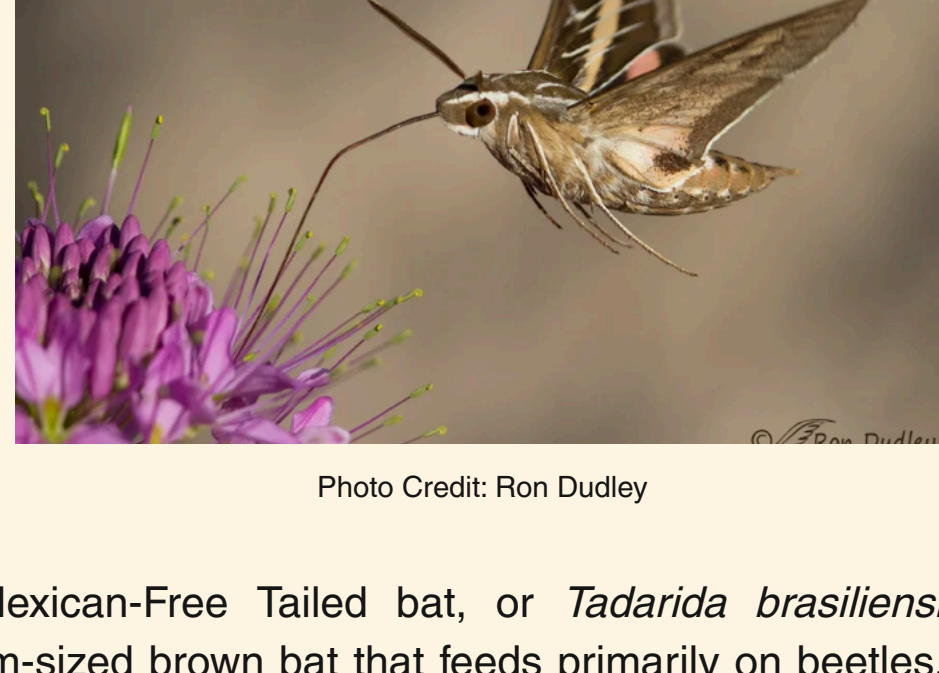


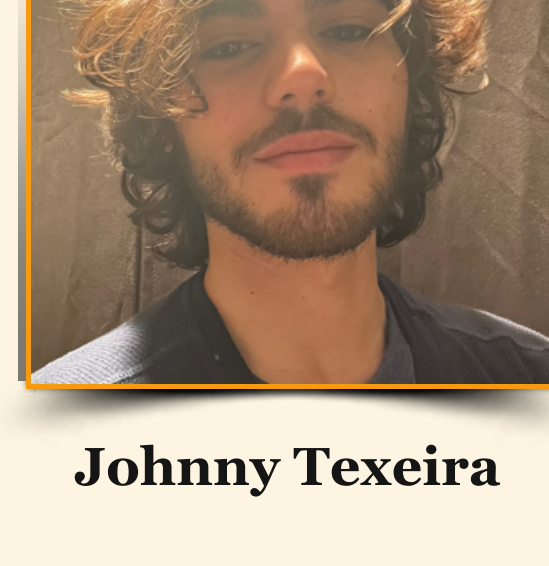
Photo Credit: Ron Dudley

The Mexican-Free Tailed bat, or Tadarida brasiliensis, is a medium-sized brown bat that feeds primarily on beetles, moths, June bugs, and just about any other flying insect it can catch. It can eat up to two-thirds of its entire weight in insects in one night! This makes it an important keystone species, meaning its presence in the ecosystem is crucial for keeping other populations of organisms in check. These hungry predators are also one of the fastest mammals on Earth, reaching speeds of up to 99 miles per hour in flight! These quick animals are also one of the most important pollinators for crops like agave and saguaro cactus. Bats are mostly drawn to large, pale-colored flowers with a musty smell. They pollinate flowers that other daytime pollinators might miss, like those that open at night. Pollination that is facilitated by bats is even given a special name called chiropterophily. Continue reading here!

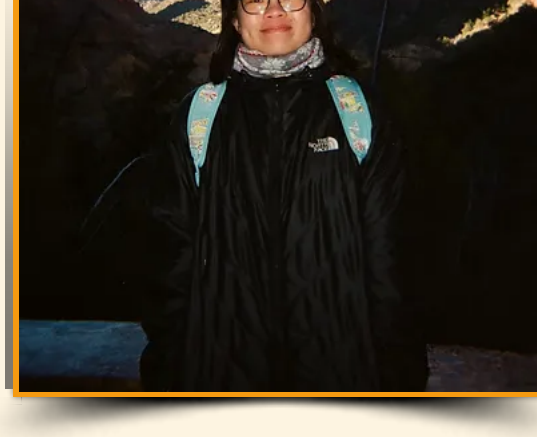
Our Volunteers of the Quarter!



Amanda Park



Johnny Teixeira



Faith Lim

Habitat Restoration

ONGOING RESTORATION PROJECTS



OC Habitats has partnerships with several organizations in Orange County to restore and protect our local habitats and species. We continue to look for volunteers who are committed to restoring and maintaining our native habitats and species here in Orange County. If you are interested in collaborating with us, please contact volunteer@ochabitats.org! We love collaborating with other organizations to recruit volunteers.

Marshland Conservation with Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy. Help with habitat restoration of the Magnolia, Brookhurst, Talbert, and Newland Marshes along PCH in Huntington Beach. Work in these marshes include non-native plants and debris removal, creating channels to allow water flow, installing native plants, and more! Occurs every 3rd Saturday of the month.

Coastal Sage Scrub Restoration with Turtle Rock Nature Center. Help to restore habitat at Turtle Rock Nature Center in Irvine by removing plants and invasive species.

Santiago Park Cleanup with the City of Santa Ana. Help with the beautification of Santiago Park in Santa Ana to encourage people to spend more time outdoors and make a difference in the community!

Upcoming Events & Opportunities

October 2023

- Saturday, October 28th, 8:30-11AM: Guided Hike at Hagador Canyon

November 2023

- Wednesday, November 8th, 2:45 - 4:30 PM: Santa Ana Park Clean-up
- Saturday, November 11th, 8:30 - 11 AM: Guided Hike at Newport Coast
- Saturday, November 18th, 9 - 12 PM: Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy (HBWC) Restoration

December 2023

- Our offices close from Dec 16-Jan 1st. See you in January!

Please visit Eventbrite to sign up for our events. Contact staff@ochabitats.org for inquiries.

Join Our Crew!



OCH is looking for people who want to share their talents and time to improve their local environment and habitats. We have many opportunities to get involved and some are listed below.

Volunteer

- Become a Habitat Monitor
- Join our Habitat Education Team
- Help with Administrative Tasks
- Help with Outreach and Marketing
- Become a Nature Hike Guide
- Work on OCH's Social Media Outreach
- Help with ongoing Restoration Projects
- Work with our Grant Writing Team to secure funding for our organization, programs, and projects.



Internships

- College students earn credit through CSUF, CSULB, Saddleback, UCI, and more
- Gain experience in the conservation field, a grassroots nonprofit, business administration, public speaking, education, and more.
- Become a film or art intern for OCH.
- Click Internships above for application.

Join our Board

- We are always looking for people to help us reach our goals and mission. Submit your resume, references and cover letter to och@ochabitats.org

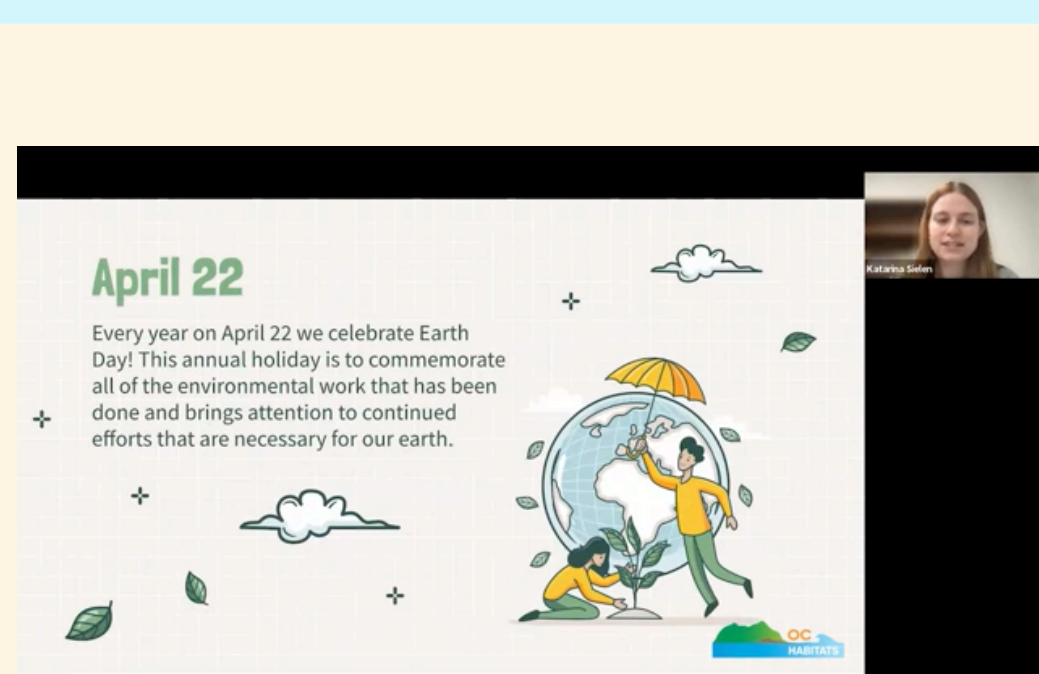
We look forward to hearing from you!



Join Our Crew

Education & Outreach

COFFEE & CONSERVATION (C&C)



OCH Habitats continues to host our Coffee & Conservation (C&C) events. These talks are typically hosted on Saturdays, where we discuss diverse environmental topics. Head on to our Learn page or OCH YouTube channel to watch!

HIKING PROGRAM



OCH has been leading at least one guided hike per month, providing safe weather conditions. One of our hikes include a 2.5-mile Marine Protected Area (MPA) hike along the tide pools at Little Corona Beach to learn about the tide pools and the species living therein. We are always developing and expanding our hiking program to include new hikes at Laguna Canyon, Santiago Oaks Regional Park Trail, Dripping Cave Trail, San Joaquin Marsh Hike, and more, where the public can learn about the various species living in the area and how to leave no trace. If you're interested in joining us on our hikes, space is limited, so register through Eventbrite!

Quarterly News & Annual Reports

Current & Archived

- OCH NEWS 4TH QUARTER 2023
- OCH NEWS 3RD QUARTER 2023
- OCH NEWS 2ND QUARTER 2023
- OCH NEWS 1ST QUARTER 2023

- OCH NEWS 4TH QUARTER 2022
- OCH NEWS 3RD QUARTER 2022
- OCH NEWS 2ND QUARTER 2022
- OCH NEWS 1ST QUARTER 2022

- OCH NEWS 4TH QUARTER 2021
- OCH NEWS 3RD QUARTER 2021
- OCH NEWS 2ND QUARTER 2021
- OCH NEWS 1ST QUARTER 2021

- OCH NEWS 4TH QUARTER 2020
- OCH NEWS 3RD QUARTER 2020
- OCH NEWS 2ND QUARTER 2020
- OCH NEWS 1ST QUARTER 2020

- OCH NEWS 4TH QUARTER 2019

2022 Annual Report

- 2021 ANNUAL REPORT
- 2020 ANNUAL REPORT
- 2019 ANNUAL REPORT
- 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Volunteers of the Year

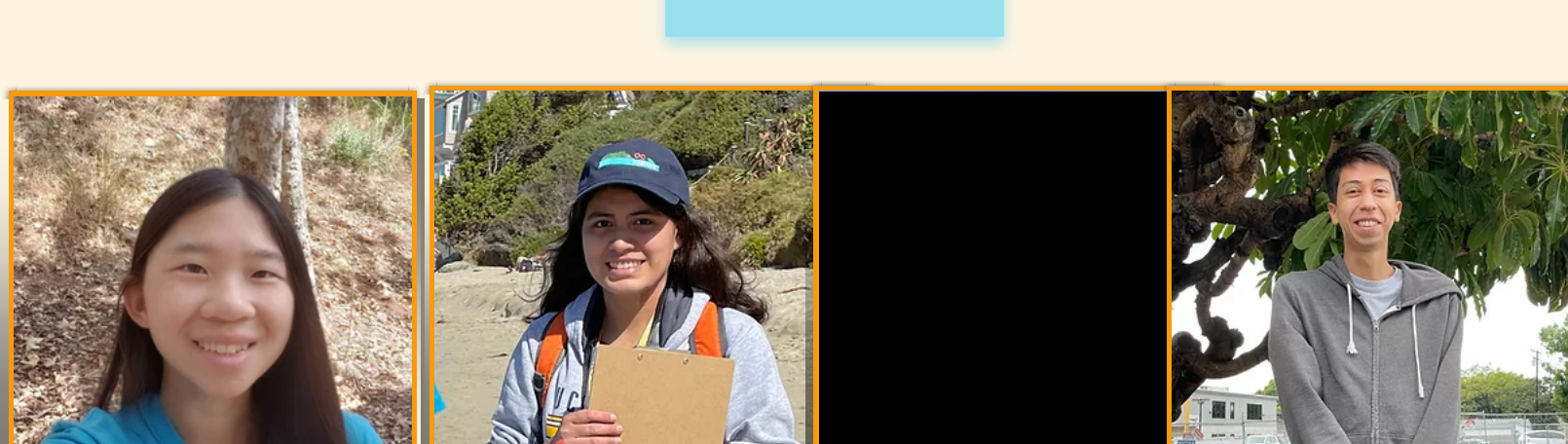
2022



Ginny Gregurek

Drew Kosicki

2023



Tiffany Chao

Evie Andrade

Marjorie & Jo King

Eric Peña

2017



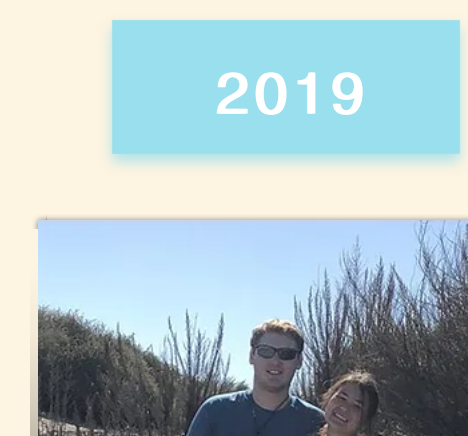
Tom Gee

2018



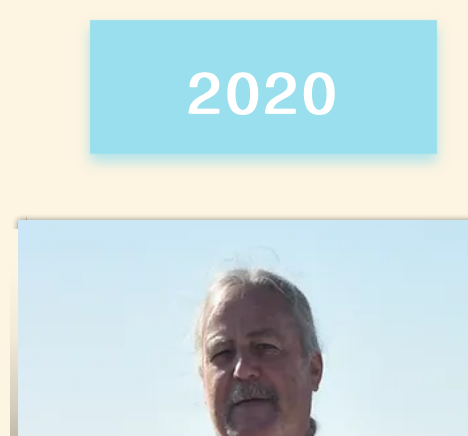
Bianca Borja

2019



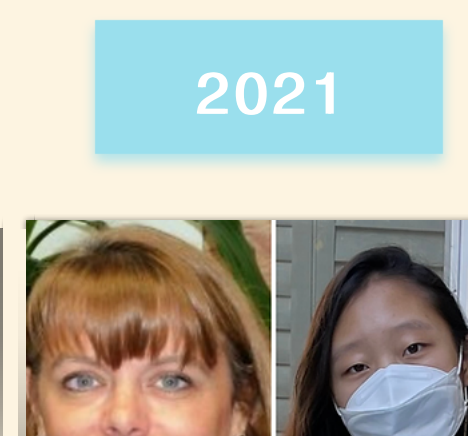
Crystal Ryan & Trevor Stocking

2020



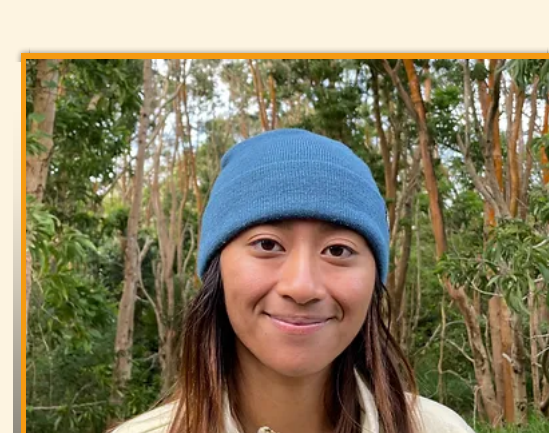
Ross Griswold

2021



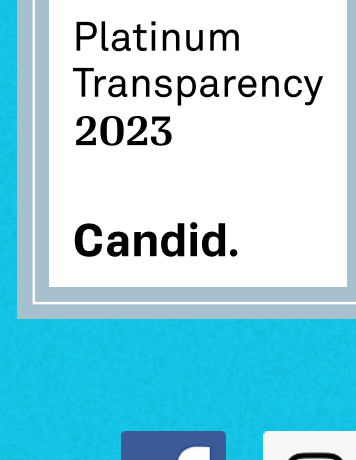
Cheryl Dyas & Michelle Lee

2023 Staff of Year



1505 17th Street, Suite 116 Santa Ana, CA 92705

Office Hours Tuesday - Friday: 8am-4pm Saturday: 8am-1pm Sunday - Monday: CLOSED



info@ochabitats.org 949.697.8651

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