

NEWSLETTER

OCH News

2nd Quarter 2023 (April - June)

Quarterly News

Common Invasive Plants in Orange County

By Linsey Schroll

Southern California is rich with diversity; one can see an assortment of plants throughout Orange County. Orange County features a variety of diverse biomes, such as grasslands, coastal scrub, and wetlands. Unfortunately, the biodiversity of these areas are decreasing due to invasive plant species taking over, meaning we are seeing less and less variety of native plant species due to replacement by non-native plants which out compete the local plant species.

Why do we care about invasive species?

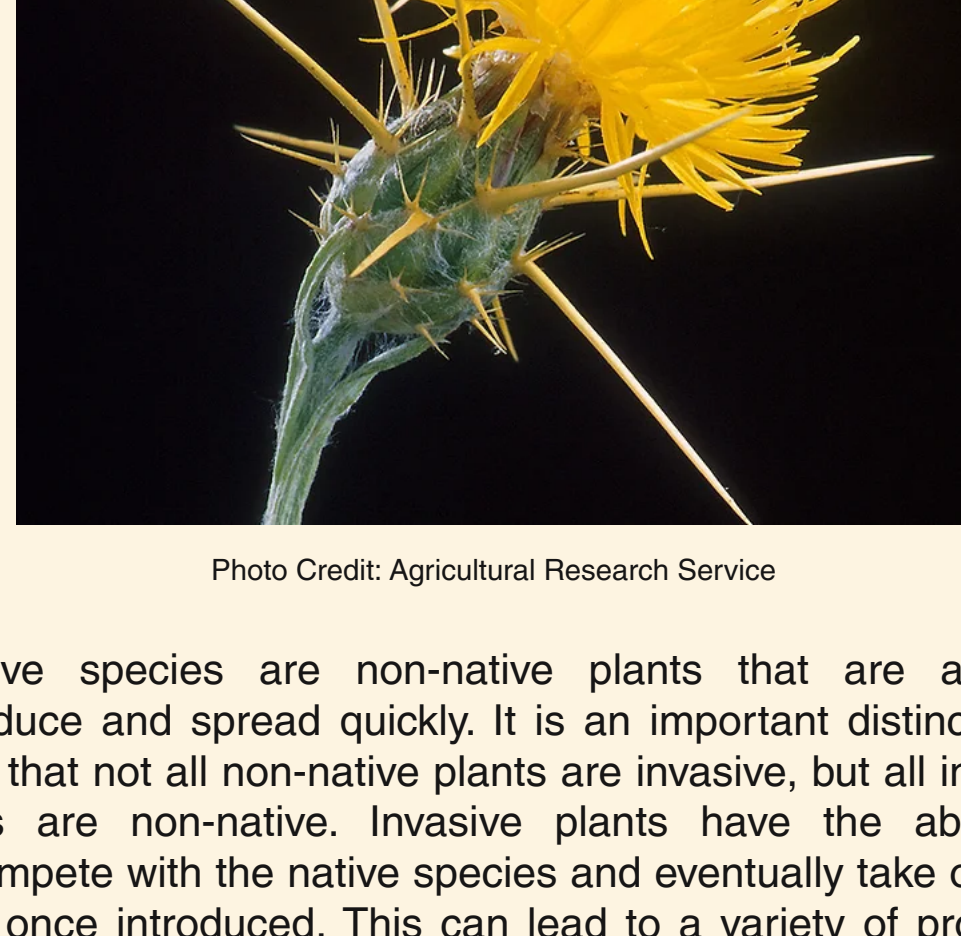


Photo Credit: Agricultural Research Service

Invasive species are non-native plants that are able to reproduce and spread quickly. It is an important distinction to make that not all non-native plants are invasive, but all invasive plants are non-native. Invasive plants have the ability to outcompete with the native species and eventually take over an area, once introduced. This can lead to a variety of problems including extinction of native species, significant decreases in biodiversity, altered natural fire frequencies / intensities, and changing vital nutrient and moisture availability, and this can cause permanent disruptions to the affected ecosystems. Disturbances to the natural environment like agriculture or herd grazing assist invasive plants' ability to establish themselves in a habitat and spread quickly. Invasive species become near impossible to eradicate after enough time without intervention. California in particular is at a higher risk for invasive species because it has a unique climate that allows for great growing conditions since it is warm for most of the year. This allows many plants to be able to thrive when introduced to California habitats. Continue reading [here](#)...

The History of the Acjachemen People

By Evie Andrade

Overview

Orange County, California is the ancestral territory and land of the Acjachemen Nation, or the Juaneño Band of Mission Indians. Prior to Spanish colonization in 1775, the Acjachemens occupied areas ranging from Aliso Creek to Northwestern San Diego for 10,000+ years. However, they were also present in Lake Elsinore, Catalina, and the San Clemente Islands.



Photo Credit: Allison Jernell

Due to California's diversity of ecosystems, plants, and animals, the Acjachemens had access to a variety of natural resources, which were integrated into their lifestyle and culture. Though there were different types of plants and animals based on the habitat present, the Acjachemens found ways to utilize each species for a specific purpose in their lifestyle. Additionally, they believed that all the habitats and land were sacred; they needed to be protected and used carefully to ensure their livelihood ([bjmian.com](#)). Continue reading [here](#).

Species Spotlight

Lizards of Orange County

By Erika Moe

Have you ever wondered what types of lizards live near your home in Orange County, California? When you see lizards here in Southern California, a few images come to mind: small brown or gray lizards with blue bellies, large alligator lizards with vibrant orange, red, and brown colors, or maybe you have seen a horned lizard in our local SoCal deserts. There are plenty of lizards in California – we will touch on a few of the more common ones here!

Most lizards have similar diets - they are an insectivore, they eat insects (of different varieties), fruits, plants, and sometimes other lizards or other small animals. Lizards are reptiles, and are cold-blooded (meaning they need the warmth of the sun to heat up their bodies and allow them to move around and function). They are the most abundant reptile, with thousands of species around the world and up to 60 species in California alone!



Photo Credit: Travis W. Reader

Unfortunately, lizards are sometimes considered pests when they are in our backyards or homes. In reality, lizards (since they are insectivores) are actually quite helpful to have near your home! They are relatively harmless to you and to your garden plants, so leaving them alone and allowing them to flourish in your yard is your best option! Continue reading [here!](#)

Education & Outreach

COFFEE & CONSERVATION (C&C)



OCH Habitats hosted one in-person and public C&C talk this quarter. OCH Interns talked about the history and impacts of Earth Day and pollinators of Orange County. Our guest speakers John Foley and Gabriela Worrel from Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. talked about the Irvine-Laguna wildlife corridor. Missed these talks? Head on to our [Learn](#) page or [OCH YouTube channel](#) to learn more about our native habitats and species!

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!](#) Note: OCH does not provide guided hikes in the summer months due to the hot weather. Our hikes will be back in October, so stay tuned!

Our Volunteers of the Year!



Marjorie & Jo King
Blog Editing Team



Eric Peña
Restoration Team



Tiffany Chao
Monitoring Team



Evie Andrade
Blog Writing Team

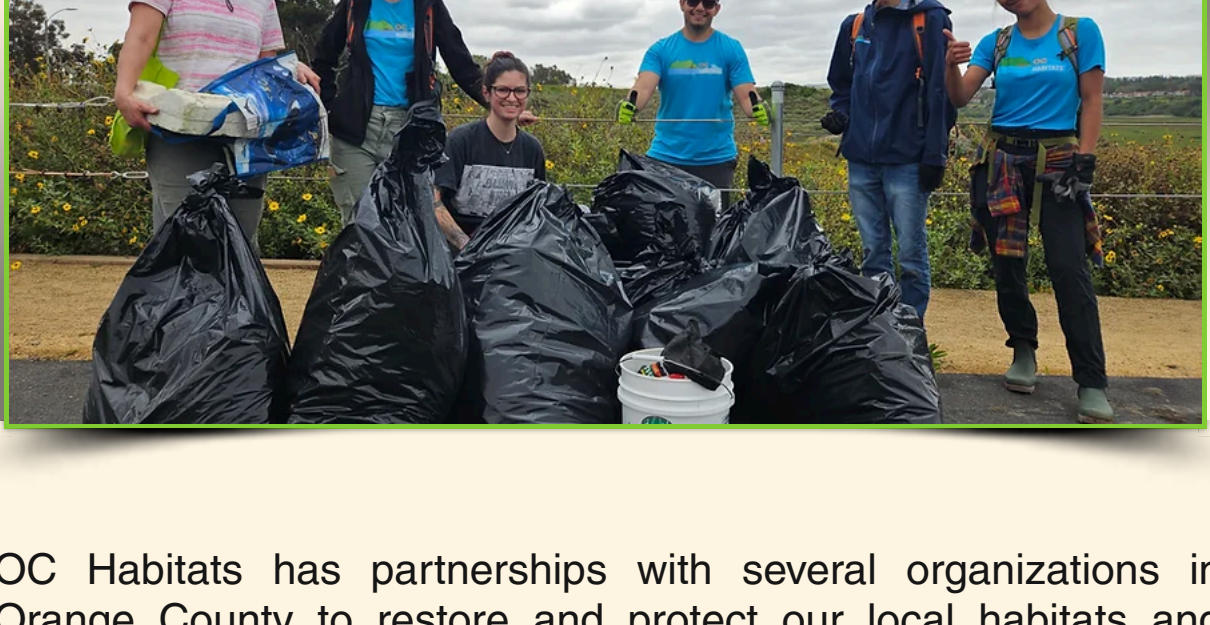
Staff of the Year!



Kim Yumul
Program & Project Lead

Habitat Restoration

ONGOING RESTORATION PROJECTS



OCH 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@ochhabitats.org! We love collaborating with other organizations to recruit volunteers.

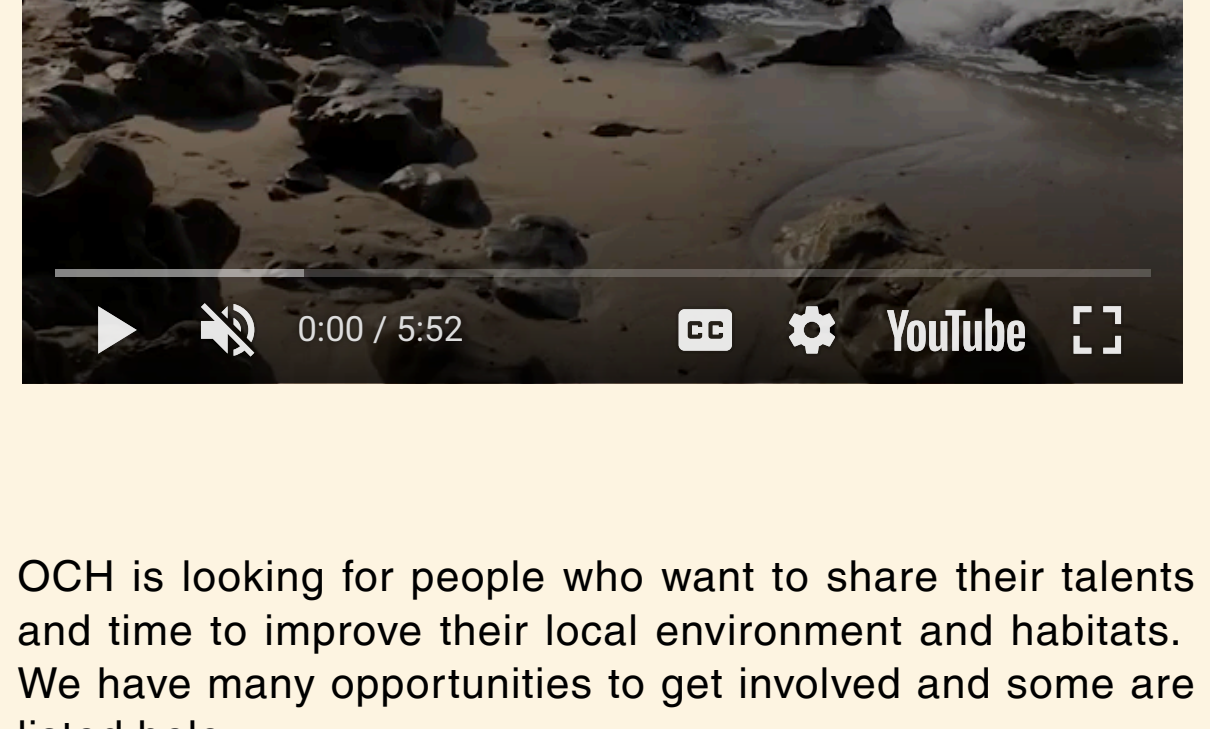
Marshland Conservation with Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy. Help with habitat restoration of the Magnolia, Brookhurst, Talbert, and Newland Marshes along PCH in Huntington Beach. Work in these marshes include non-native plants and debris removal, creating channels to allow water flow, installing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

Wetland Conservation with Project Grow in Newport Back Bay. Help to restore habitat within the Upper Newport Back Bay by removing plants and invasive species and replacing them with native and desired species that will build a greater diversity for native species in this system.

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.

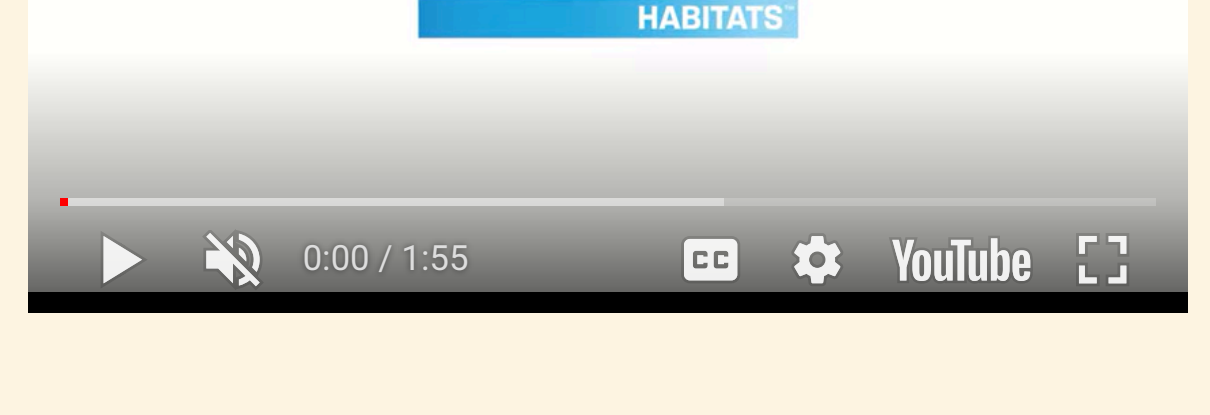
Santiago Park Cleanup with the City of Santa Ana. Help with the beautification of Santiago Park in Santa Ana to encourage people to spend more time outdoors and make a difference in the community!

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.

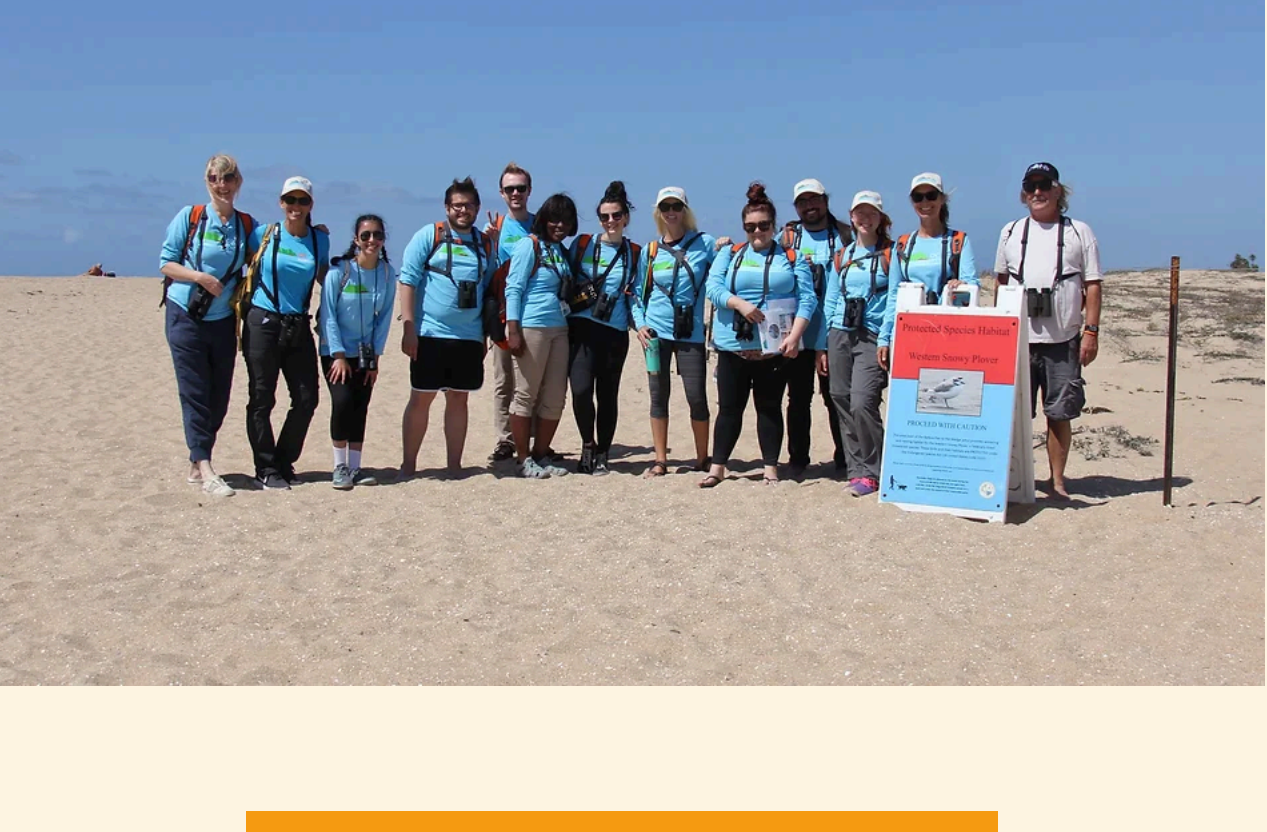
- Volunteer**
- Become a Habitat Monitor
 - Join our Habitat Education Team
 - Help with Administrative Tasks
 - Help with Outreach and Marketing
 - Become a Nature Hike Guide
 - Work on OCH's Social Media Outreach
 - Help with ongoing Restoration Projects
 - Work with our Grant Writing Team to secure 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@ochhabitats.org

We look forward to hearing from you!



[Join Our Crew](#)

Quarterly News & Annual Reports

Current & Archived

- [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](#)

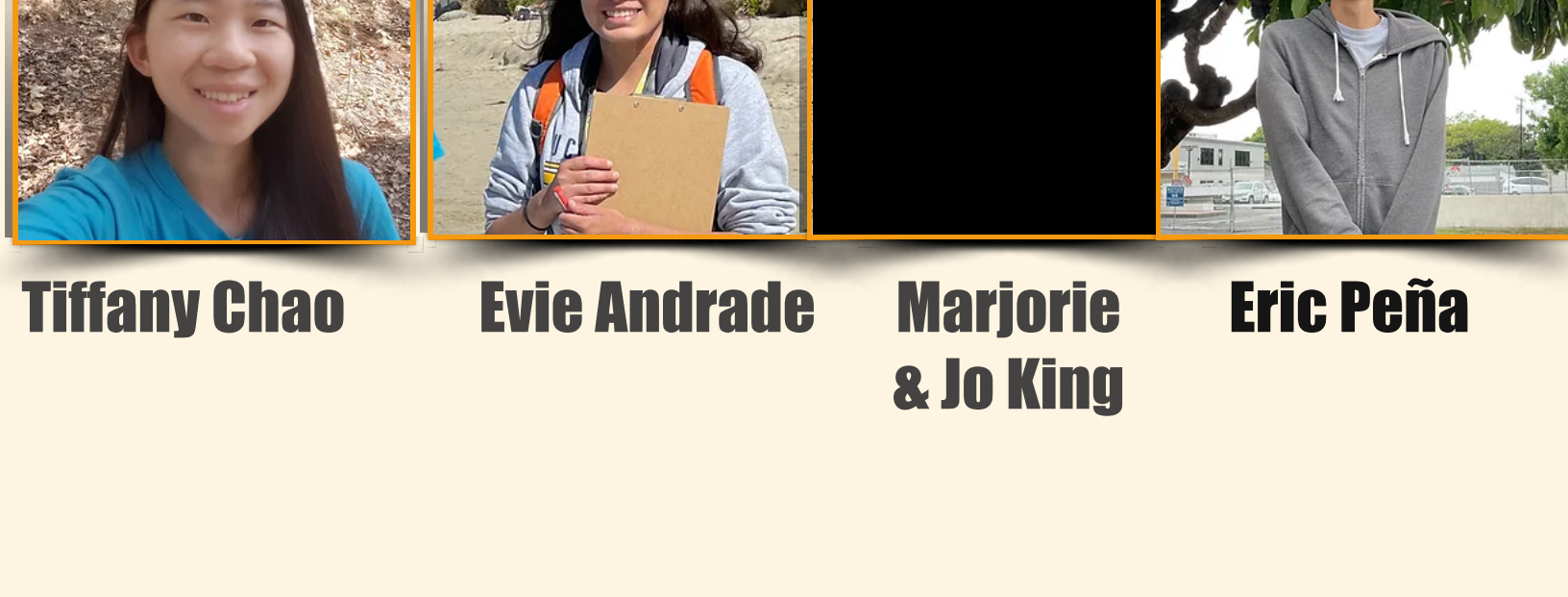
Volunteers of the Year

2022



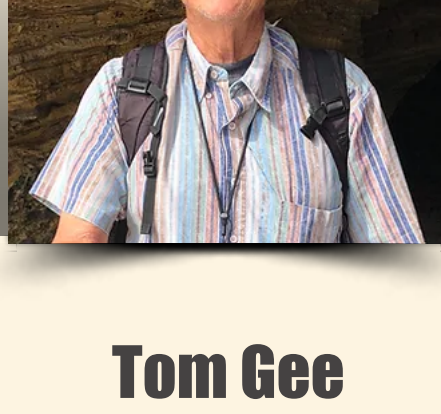
Ginny Gregurek Drew Kosicki

2023



Tiffany Chao Evie Andrade Marjorie & Jo King Eric Peña

2017



Tom Gee

2018



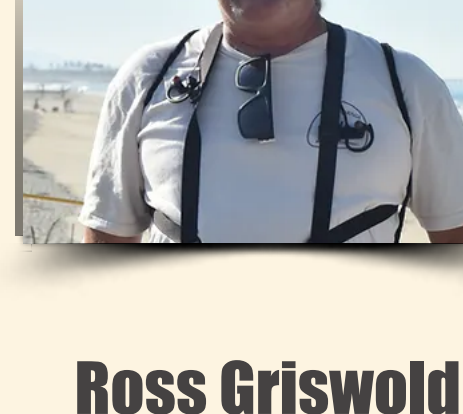
Bianca Borja

2019



Crystal Ryan & Trevor Stocking

2020



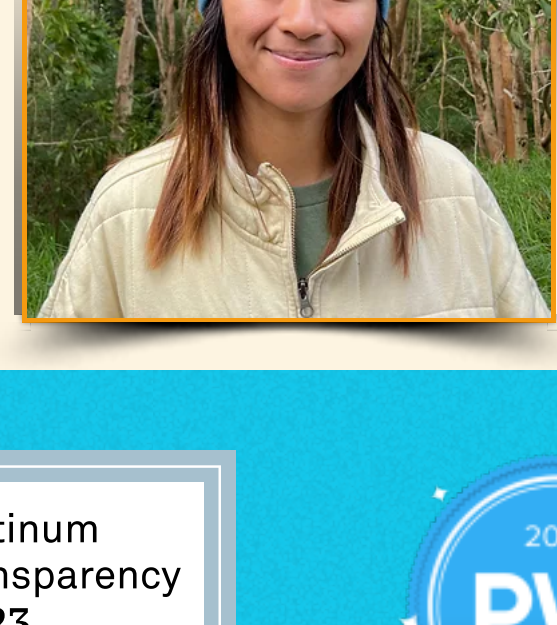
Ross Griswold

2021



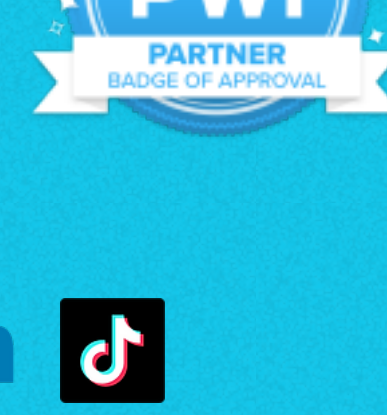
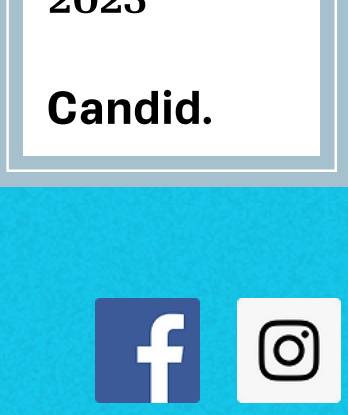
Cheryl Dyas & Michelle Lee

2023 Staff of Year



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



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