

The latest & the Greatest

EONS and HB Tern Preserve Monitoring!

OCH contributed to both the Bolsa Chica Conservancy's EONS (Eyes On Nest Sites) and California State Parks Tern Preserve monitoring programs this 2019 breeding season. We were able to field 3 shifts for Bolsa Chica and 2 for State Parks. This opportunity helped our monitors become more comfortable with identifying California Least Terns and Western Snowy Plovers as well as a variety of other species that frequented both sites. We are grateful for the opportunity to be part of each of these groups teams and thank Grace Adams, former Executive Director of BCC, Jeannette Bush, EONS coordinator, Lana Nguyen, CA Park Ranger, Chelsea Crager, CA State Parks Volunteer Coordinator, and Ross Griswold for introducing us to these groups and their work. #CAStateParks #SnowyPlover #CALeastTerns #EONS #OCHPlovers&Terns.

training, a Q&A lunch, and some restoration at



Upper Newport Bay with our friend and partner, Project Grow. We were impressed with the LUSH management team and their true passion for the environment as well as their knowledge of so many critical



Grant Success! Thank you LUSH

In the spring of 2019 we applied for a grant from LUSH skincare company. We were hoping to get some financial support for our Coastal Dune Monitoring Program and with some effort, we were successful! We now have some much needed equipment for our monitors to help them with their monthly task of monitoring this sensitive habitat in Orange County. We were also lucky enough to host an event for a small group of LUSH managers on September 8th, 2019. We were able to have the better part of a day doing a monitor

environmental issues in our country and world today. We hope to continue relations with LUSH and were so thankful to have them with us in Orange County. #LUSH

#LUSHGlobal
#OCHCoastalDunes.

#ProjectGrow

- Tide pools
- Coastal Sage Scrub Communities
- Chaparral Communities
- Oak Woodland Communities
- Riparian Communities

Habitat Education Video Project!

If you are interested in sharing your photos, please send them in jpeg or png format to info@ochabitats.org



OCH Interns are working on a Habitat Education Video series which will consist of up to nine or more videos covering the main habitat types in Orange County. We hope to launch our first and introductory video by the end of 2019 and then build on each subsequent video throughout 2020. We are excited to add this program to our list of educational offerings and hope that the general public and students find it informative and useful. We are in search of photos for our video project of the habitats and species in the area. We would love to the public to share their best photos and give permission for us to use them in our video series (giving credit to photographer). We are looking for photos of the following:

- Coastal Dunes
- Wetlands & Estuaries

OCH Offering Nature Classes to Homeschool Groups!



In Fall 2019, we were approved by a local Charter School Group, Inspire, and will be offering Nature Classes to both English and Spanish speaking groups. We focus on the habitats within Orange County. Our lessons may be general, doing an overview of the entire habitat, or specific, giving focus to specific species or processes within a particular ecosystem. You can find out more about our programs by going to our [OCH Nature Class Page](#).

Volunteer of the Year -2019- Crystal Ryan & Trevor Stocking



Crystal joined OCH in 2017 and got settled into our monitoring program well enough to start training others, including her long-term partner, Trevor. Trevor arrived in Orange County and right into OC Habitats in 2018. Since then, these two have worked as a pair for our crew and what a pair they are! Crystal is currently studying Environmental Science and Policy at UCI and Trevor has his BS degree in Biology from Hawaii Pacific University. Once Trevor was fully trained the two of them took on our south county habitat

segments and have proven themselves quick learners. They were quickly asked to help with training of new volunteer monitors, which they excelled at. In addition to monitoring, they have worked in almost every other aspect of OCH including restoration work, education planning, and grant writing. They worked hard on our grants in 2018-2019 and helped in securing our LUSH grant (see LUSH article to the left). They have both worked their way into higher roles with OCH since they began due to their intelligence, hard work, passion for our mission and goals, and their desire to grow their knowledge and experience in the environmental field. In addition to providing so much to OCH, they are both in the midst of pursuing their careers in the environmental field. Trevor has worked with Bolsa Chica Conservancy, Department of Agriculture, and is currently with California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Crystal has been working her way through school working as a chef in a variety of hip restaurants in South County. With all of this and their own commitment to each other and their families, these two are hard-working and driven young professionals. OCH appreciates these two to the utmost and feels they have been force on our team that is hard to match.

Upcoming Events

December 2019

- Harding Nature Trail Restoration - Sunday December 1st, 8am
- OCH Annual Year-End Fundraiser (December 3-31st)
- Wildlife Pouch Party - Saturday, December 7th 10am
- LUSH Charity Pot Event - Sunday, December 8th 12pm
- Happy Holidays! Welcome 2020!

January 2020

- Harding Nature Trail Restoration - Sunday January 5th, 8am

Volunteer of the Month December 2019



December's Volunteer of the Month is **Ross Griswold**. Ross has been such a vital part of our organization and has supported our work since the very beginning. Ross has become an expert in Western Snowy Plovers in the last decade and works with both government agencies like USFWS and CDFW as well as many nonprofits like Bolsa Chica Conservancy, San Diego Zoo, Sea and Sage Audubon, and, of course, OCH. He is well known among the birding communities through the coastal part of Orange County and his past and present work is valued by all. Ross is a graduate of USC and worked in business for the majority of his career and

found SNPL's in his retirement. Something about the Snowy Plovers touched him and he has been forging ahead in hopes that these little guys will thrive again here in Orange County. Ross has volunteered countless hours to the conservation of this species through weekly monitoring, quarterly surveys (more detailed) and serving on various conservation boards over the years. Ross is a proud dad of three boys who are now starting their own careers and philanthropic journeys, which he gets to help and guide them in with all his experience. Ross has offered to help train our monitors and when they get a chance to survey with him, there is a lot to learn as he covers a lot of ground during his survey days (Wednesdays). Not only is Ross quite the scientist, he is also a fabulous photographer. He has shared many of his photos with our organization for educational and outreach purposes and we are so thankful for his generosity. In addition to monitoring and photography, he has helped OCH with their training programs each year. In 2019, he helped to build our monitoring orientation program that we hosted in February 2019 and led our field trip. We hope that he will be willing to do it again in 2020! With all Ross has to offer our community, OCH feels incredibly lucky to have him on our team.

Volunteer of the Month November 2019

OCH News

4th Quarter 2019

Tom Gee has been with OCH since its inception and coming from his volunteering work with the City of Newport Beach's Natural Resource Department. He started off by volunteering with the City of Newport Beach and helping with the



Snowy Plovers and invasive plants on Balboa Peninsula. His background is in technology and he has worked many years in the field before retiring. He is great with numbers and all the current programs and apps that keep popping up. Tom is a busy grandparent, helping his children with the care and upkeep of his grandchildren that range from high school age to kindergarten. He doesn't miss a game, meet, or event when it comes to his grandkids. We should all be so lucky to have such a devoted grandpa! His commitment to his family is a testament to the man that he is and a person who has their priorities in the right place. Tom is a resident of Newport Beach, specifically in Balboa Peninsula area, and over the years has taught himself how to identify the native and non-native plant species that live on the Coastal Dunes there. He is mostly responsible for the close to

pristine state that some of the coastal dunes are in near the Balboa Pier. He has been especially helpful in our Coastal Dune Habitat programming in teaching our naturalists about these plants. Although his passion is more plant related, he monitors our Coastal Dune habitats weekly and has become a source of reliable and consistent data for our surveys. Since OCH began, Tom has taken more and more responsibilities in our organization by his continued monitoring, the Tern Monitoring Program with State Parks, attending almost all the OCH classes and events that have been offered, helping with our habitat tours and field trips, and helping to train new OCH monitors. He has even filled in for meetings where important and controversial information is being shared. The success of this organization is due to volunteers like Tom and we are so happy to have him on our team!

Volunteer of the Month October 2019



Drew Kosicki has been with OCH for over 2 years, following us from the City of Newport Beach. He is incredibly devoted to the environment and the conservation and preservation of species and habitats therein. Over the last two years, Drew has given us his time, energy, knowledge, and passion for local ecosystems and species. He is on our monitoring team taking several segments per month and has even filled in for others at a moment's notice. He has been an integral part of our education team where he has taught students about their local habitats, the food web, ocean systems, and more. Drew has shared various environmental job opportunities that OCH has been able to share with our young career-seeking volunteers in hopes of working in the environmental field. Drew doesn't often miss our field trips or workshops and his presence hasn't gone unnoticed. His tireless commitment to our organization and the environment overall is simply amazing and he sets quite an example as an exemplary volunteer. His commitment extends beyond OCH to other conservation organizations, most notably Newport Bay Conservancy, where he does habitat tours around the bay on kayaks, outriggers, and on foot. You may also find him in a tux serving cocktails at some of their larger fundraising events. Drew is a model volunteer and one to take notes on. Thank you Drew for all you do for OCH and the earth!

accessibility and presentation of this trail in just one visit! We look forward to continue working monthly on this quarter-mile trail and restoring the vegetation back to its native status. As we move into the cooler winter months, we will continue to clear out non-natives and begin planting native Coastal Sage Scrub plants and tending to them.



Opportunities are available for anyone to volunteer with this project, and we encourage groups such as sports teams, clubs, schools, and businesses/corporations to join us.

Harding Nature Trail Restoration by Abby Foster

In October, OCH started on our new project restoring the Harding Nature Trail at Irvine Regional Park. We have partnered with OC parks to restore this area which has been affected by invasive species and the wildfires in 2017. In our first month of restoration, twelve volunteers came together and cleared out non-native plant debris from the trail, with the help and supervision of our Park Ranger, Kelly Stump-Moriarty. We made notable progress and have greatly improved the

Volunteer of the Year -2018 - Bianca Borja

Bianca came to us in Spring of 2018 and has been so involved and made such a difference from the moment she joined us that she quickly became the obvious choice for our Volunteer of the Year in 2018, being our first to receive the honor in our OC Habitats history. She took on every available task including Coastal Dune Habitat monitoring, social media coordinator, student liaison for college students, and naturalist educator at both public and home school programs. She has a degree in Anthropology from California State University,



Long Beach (CSULB) and has just started her masters of science program for Educational Counseling at University of La Verne. Her drive to better the world and help others reigns supreme

among her strong character traits and our intent is to hold on to her forever! As she continues to contribute to our organization and mission, her role with us continues to grow and develop into higher position with more responsibility. We feel incredibly privileged to have her on our team.

Featured Partners: Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy



In 1985, Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy (HBWC) was founded with the intent of acquiring, restoring, and protecting coastal wetlands in Huntington Beach, CA. Wetland habitats are incredibly important habitats to many species of

plant and animal and serve an important role in ecosystem

health by providing a natural filter for toxins that flow down the watershed to the ocean. These

ecosystems were not always valued and have been depleted



severely since the 1800's for development, leaving only 180 acres of the original 300 original acres that were once in Huntington Beach. Since its inception, HBWC has acquired Talbert, Brookhurst, and Magnolia marshes along Coast Highway from the Santa Ana River to Beach Blvd. Currently, HBWC, along with CalTrans, is working toward acquiring Newland Marsh as well. At the HBWC headquarters, adjacent to Magnolia Marsh, HBWC has an interpretive center and nursery where they host tours for groups of all ages. In addition, the Wetlands & Wildlife Care Center is located on the HBWC property and serves injured, sick, and orphaned indigenous wildlife in Orange County. HBWC hosts many restoration events including weed pulling, trash clean-ups, native plantings, and more. They work with many other local groups and agencies to continue their good works with the hope that these marshes will be here for future generations. For more information about HBWC go to their [website](#) or visit the Interpretive Center at 21900 Pacific Coast Highway (corner of Newland and PCH), Huntington Beach, CA 92646.



OC Habitats Annual End-of-Year Fundraiser and Volunteer Drive begin on Tuesday, December 3rd, 2019 - #GivingTuesday! Join our team in working towards conservation, preservation, and restoration of our local native habitats in Orange County but donating funds to support our monitoring, educational, and restoration programs. Volunteer as a monitor, educator, docent, or intern to get involved in a different way...with your time and expertise and/or passion. Check out our drive on our website [donor page](#), [volunteer page](#), or [Facebook](#).