



Creepy Crawlies

Crucial Critters That Get a Bum Rap

Essay by Stephanie Monzon

When my brother was very young, my grandfather would take him for walks in the stroller every morning, rain or shine. Inevitably, with great alarm, my brother would ask that Papa stop the stroller periodically, insisting on picking up the poor pink worms out of the gutter and tossing them onto the lawns along the route so they'd be safe. The slimy, squirmy worm that wriggles around in the puddles of the rainy season is a lowly critter that doesn't always get the respect it deserves, except by perhaps the curious little child who wants to pick it up to "save" it from drowning.

The worm and other creepy crawlly organisms common to us all but sometimes condemned as insignificant, or even criticized as menacing, are in fact critical to the health of the ecosystem on which we all depend. Beneath our feet, they are actually doing all kinds of wonders to balance the natural world around us.

Able to extend, contract, and twist in any direction, the common earthworm, *Lumbricus terrestris*,

spends most of its time underground, tunneling through the soil, eating it, dead leaves, and organic matter as it goes. The soil passes through the worm, and the waste accumulates in piles of round balls. These balls, or "castings," contain nutrients to help new plants grow. The holes and tunnels the worms

create in the soil provide effective, natural aeration. Thus the roots of plants spread out and grow, and water seeps through keeping the soil moist. Worms also bring dead leaves and plants back into their tunnels, making soil better as the material rots, and some even

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Climbing a Mountain during a Landslide

Or, New Challenges Ahead for the EYNC

by Marilee Flannery, EYNC Director

Looking back through past copies of ARNHA's *Acorn* newsletters, I can find many references to threats to Effie Yeaw Nature Center funding beginning in the 1990s. Each of those issues explained that unless funding was found many of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center's most popular programs would be lost.

Fortunately, in each case last minute funding was found to save the Nature Center's programs.

This year a last-minute rescue has not and is not expected to materialize. The recession has hurt the County's sales tax and property tax revenue as well as eliminated any special funds from development fees.

We began working on the budget for

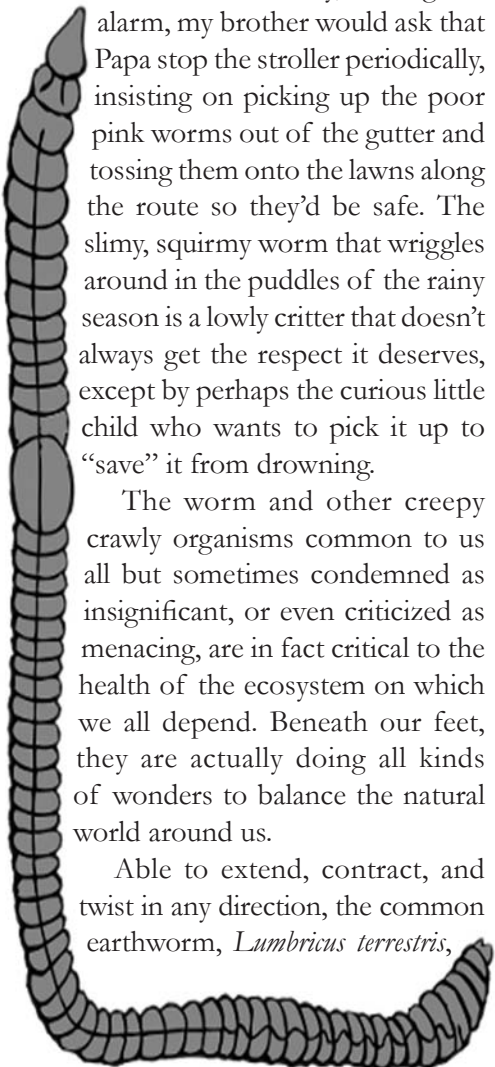
the 2009-10 fiscal year in April of 2009. From that date forward, the budget constantly changed; and every time we found a plan to deal with a cut to the budget, we got news that another cut was on the way. It's like trying to climb a mountain during a landslide.

The Effie Yeaw Nature Center will not receive any funds from the County of Sacramento's General Fund. This is the fund that pays for the Sheriff, Child Protective Services, Human Assistance, etc. The entire Parks Department's share of county funding dropped so low that only Park maintenance and operations are funded.

Since there is no funding for the

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See Kid's Page Inside



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Letter from the President

"When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world." – John Muir

The holiday season brings us closer together with friends and family. And although it is colder outside we can also make a closer connection with nature. Teaching our children to live in harmony with nature and how we must be sensitive to its needs; that all things are attached and that there is a cause and effect with what we do and how we live our lives. We all live down stream and must be sensitive to what we use and what we throw away and where it ends up. Quoting from our Vision Statement, "*ARNHA believes the future of the world lies in our children's ability to observe and analyze their surroundings, gaining thereby the wisdom to predict the outcome of their actions upon the environment.*"

As an ARNHA member you can help facilitate our goal to "Bring people to nature and nature to people" by giving gifts from the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Book Store or giving ARNHA memberships or a County Park Pass. **The book store is having its annual sale on December 5 from 9:30am to 2:00pm** and it is wise to get there early because things do sell out. This year we have added to our great collection of books with a new publication!

AN AMERICAN RIVER JOURNAL

Illustrations by Jo Smith

Essays by Pete Hayes

I want to thank the talented Board of Directors and Associate Board members that contribute to ARNHA and who put out these great publications and this newsletter. We have talented graphic designers and artists like Molly Keller, and wonderful writers like Peter Hayes, Peggy Kennedy, Stephanie Monzon, Bill Dillinger, Ed Littrell, and Greg Voelm, and dedicated accountants like Roberta Wilner. We have dedicated stewards of the Nature Center like Noah Baygell, Lee Wilner, Linda Thomas, Bruce Kennedy, Cindy Dunning, Mojgan Fischer, and Claudia Hulbe. We also have the talented director of the Nature Center Marilee Flannery and staff member Jamie Washington as official Board members. Betty Cooper, Lia Robertson, Katie Baygell, Carol Doersch, Besty Weiland, and Beth Etgen bring ideas, leadership, and energy to ARNHA as Associate Board members. Georgia Jones keeps our web site up to date.

I would like to offer an invitation to you to join us at any of our Board Meetings which are on the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00 at the Nature Center. Any ARNHA member who might be interested in contributing some of their time and talent in the coming year is welcome to join us at any of our Board meetings.



Happy Holidays,
Larry Washington

Creepy, from page 1

sprouts into new plants. Worms eat fungi, mold, and bacteria. They are key decomposers, composting and enriching the soil, but also play a key role in the food web, providing food for birds, moles, etc. So next time you see the cool, long, pink, ribbed, wiggly worm, don't underestimate its role in keeping food on the table and the birds singing in the trees.

Another crawly critter that often gives us a chill is the millipede (class Diplopoda). Unlike the worm, the millipede is a kind of arthropod (having an exoskeleton, segmented body, and jointed legs). The millipede isn't nearly as scary as it seems at first glance, with

little intimidating if you think about it too hard! Beetles, (class Insecta, order Coleoptera), make up about 50 percent of all known insect species (and insects themselves make up 75 percent of all known animal species on the planet). The appearance of some, often with black, armor-like hardened bodies and leathery wings, may resemble the formidable flying monkeys of the Wicked Witch of the West in the movie *The Wizard of Oz*.

While some beetles can cause harm to crops, trees, etc., others are very useful. For instance, ladybird beetles ("lady bugs", of which there are 125 species in California alone, according to ARNHA's *The Outdoor World*), are a

the jitters, if only due to the sheer numbers that seem to materialize at once, is the amazing ant. The two most common ants in our area are the harvester ant and the carpenter ant. A member of the order Hymenoptera, along with bees and wasps, the ant is one of the most advanced and specialized of all the insects. As part of hierarchical colonies, they diligently recycle as many soil nutrients in dry earth as earthworms do in moist dirt, says *The Outdoor World*, aerating and fertilizing via their maze of tunnels nearly everywhere underground—in yards, in urban areas, in our houses, and in wild places.

Most of these burrowing insects are



its black, long, undulating body and plethora of writhing, feathery legs. In actuality, these creatures are slow, shy friends—not as swift as the somewhat venomous centipede, despite having two pairs of legs per segment versus one pair like the centipede. While the millipede falls short of having the 1,000 legs that its name implies (usually there are up to 180 pairs, according to Penelope York in her book *Bugs*), it performs very adeptly at filling an important environmental niche. Its numerous legs help force its body through the soil, and it is a wonderful scavenger and decomposer of leaves, wood, and dead bugs, cleaning up nature's waste. It also serves as a tasty treat for birds and frogs of all kinds that can easily catch these pokey fellows as they creep and crawl along in the damp when they aren't in hiding in the dark under rocks and logs.

The sheer numbers of another creepy crawly is astounding—and a

natural pest remover in the garden, in agricultural fields, and anywhere that damaging aphids attack. The ladybird lays its eggs—up to about 200—on the undersides of leaves where aphids abound. They eat only aphids and other plant-eating insects, the larvae eating about ten plus aphids per day, and the grown beetles each eat about 100 per day (according to Althea's book, *Insects*).

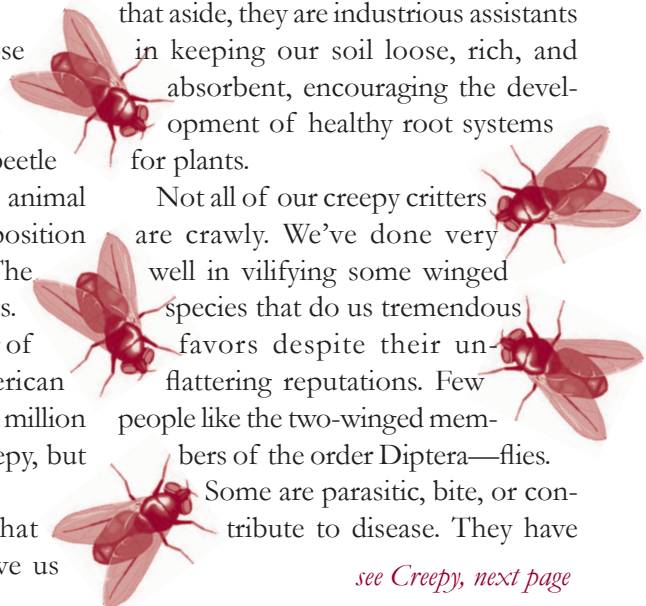
Let some of these critters loose on your roses and they'll have the aphids cleaned up in no time, pesticide-free. Another helpful beetle is the dung beetle that recycles animal waste, speeding up its decomposition and returning it to the earth. The educational website Handipoints.com estimates that by disposing of waste, these insects save American cattle farmers an estimated \$380 million every year. They may seem creepy, but they are nature's little janitors.

Another crawling critter that is most diminutive but can give us

scavengers, and in many ecosystems, ants are important dispersers of the seeds that they harvest. The Center for Insect Science says that worldwide, ants are one of the most important predators on small invertebrates, including other insects. Unfortunately, they protect aphids so they can harvest the aphids' honeydew secretions—and they are often our uninvited guests at picnics—but that aside, they are industrious assistants in keeping our soil loose, rich, and absorbent, encouraging the development of healthy root systems for plants.

Not all of our creepy critters are crawly. We've done very well in vilifying some winged species that do us tremendous favors despite their unflattering reputations. Few people like the two-winged members of the order Diptera—flies.

Some are parasitic, bite, or contribute to disease. They have



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huge compound eyes that look alien. Their young are white and slimy and squirmy and give us the heebie jeebies. However, they are important as prey, invaluable pollinators, and effective scavengers and nutrient recyclers. For instance, the drone fly (or hover fly, in the family Syrphidae) is a predator of harmful aphids and leafhoppers as well as a good pollinator. Some fly larvae eat decaying vegetable or animal matter, including feces, thereby cleaning it up and returning it to the soil, so we don't have to. Elizabeth Shepard in her book, *No Bones*, lets us know that some flies, such as robber flies, even catch wasps, beetles, and moths—insects we usually categorize as irritants. The fly is yet another insect that serves as great fodder for other animals such as birds, bats, and spiders.

One of the creatures we are most terrified of, despite its relative harmlessness and its large role in feeding and oxygenating our planet, is the bee. Also a member of the Hymenoptera order along with ants, bees are feared for their sting, which they only employ when threatened.

The wax and honey we harvest from bees is only a bonus to what these flying insects do for mankind. They are major pollinators of the flowering plants that feed us and help us breathe. Well over 100 agricultural crops are pollinated mostly or solely by bees, according to Rick Imes in his book *The Practical Entomologist*. Their bodies are highly specialized for gathering nectar and pollen with their long mouth parts (proboscis) and hairy bodies. The forelegs push the pollen that has collected on the bee's body back to the hind legs where it is then transferred to "baskets" located on special appendages called tibiae.

According to *The Outdoor World*, we have more than 1,000 species of native bees in California, such as the social bumble bee and honey bee, as well as

solitary bee species such as the burrowing bee, mason bee, carpenter bee, etc. Nearly one third of every human's food supply depends on these insects doing their job, according to Handipoints.com.

Spiders—although they don't slime, carry unsavory germs, or boast a stinger—are perhaps considered the ultimate in creepy crawlies. We even feature them in Halloween decorating, the day of celebrating all that is scary and spooky. There are about 30,000 different kinds of spiders, and while all are technically venomous, a vast majority of them don't hurt people. One of the only ones in our area that has a nasty bite is the black widow, but it only strikes when the web is disturbed or it feels it is in danger, and rarely does it kill anyone (though it isn't recommended to experiment!).

We should actually welcome some spiders into our homes—or at least our gardens—because they feed on insects that can be harmful to us and our crops, keeping numbers under control. In fact, according to *The Outdoor World*, one of the most common spiders in our region is a great exterminator of perhaps the most pesky and dangerous insect that plagues. We see the long-bodied pholcid spider (family Pholcidae) hanging upside down with its long, delicate legs on loosely woven webs, and it catches not only gnats but also the much-hated and potentially dangerous mosquito.

In addition to being stealthy predators, spiders also serve a great role in the food web as prey to many other

organisms such as wasps, toads, frogs, and birds. Maybe knowing their virtues will help us temper our tendencies toward arachnophobia next time we see an eight-legged critter on the wall.

Most of us find birds and mammals and other warm, fuzzy animals appealing because they seem to embody traits to which we relate, versus insects and other creepy critters that can look like something out of a science fiction film, as Imes points out. Even if we can't appreciate them, we at least have to learn to accept them as they are the dominant life form on this planet—there are a greater number of them than all other species combined, and they are so evolutionarily successful that they inhabit nearly every kind of habitat. But, "Whether you like them or not, bugs are an essential part of our lives. We spend a lot of time trying to get rid of them, but we could not live without them," says York.

When we use pesticides in our gardens we kill not just the "bad" insects, but also the good organisms that benefit us and our environment. While they can be a nuisance or simply gross us out, creepy crawlies play instrumental ecosystem roles as key components of the food web—both prey and predator; as nutrient recyclers; and as pollinators. So, next time you reach for that fly swatter or lift your shoe to smash something skittering below your feet, think twice before the "eek!" instinct takes over. Try shooing away instead of squashing our unduly underestimated creepy crawly companions.

Stephanie Monzon is an ARNHA associate board member and EYNC volunteer ■



Moon Talk

The following is an excerpt from "An American River Journal," a new book published by ARNHA. It features illustrations by the late Jo Glasson Smith, ARNHA co-founder, and nature essays by Peter J. Hayes, retired newspaper editor and ARNHA associate board member. It is available for \$9.75 at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center's Discovery Shop, ARNHA.org, and selected stores.

It was a moon to remember. Several days of brisk winds had swept clear the atmosphere, exposing the full moon as a bright luminous globe with sharply-defined craters and dry plains. We wonder—does a moon like that have a name?

It's not a harvest moon, of course. That one is fiery orange and appears nearest to the autumnal equinox, as early as September 8 and as late as October 6. With fair skies it might last the better part of a week, and in the old days it gave farmers the equivalent of an extra day or so in which to cut their corn by hand by moonlight.

Nor does it seem to be a hunter's moon, the

full moon of October that brings the countryman and his dog out of his comfortable house to feel the wonders of the night. It's not necessary to hunt anything to appreciate a hunter's moon, only to feel the drying leaves crackle underfoot, see the lengthening shadows of the trees, and sense the night smells that are never present in daytime.

Well then, perhaps it was the beaver moon familiar to Indians and woodsmen. November is when beaver pelts are prime. The beaver moon name also recognizes the winter-wise habits of the beavers that by now have reinforced their dams, have full ponds and houses well-stocked with food. It was a reminder to the procrastinating countryman that if he hasn't already done so, he had better emulate the busy beaver.

But we have seldom heard these names given to a full moon in our valley. So we'll just settle for calling it a Thanksgiving Moon. ■



EYNC Assembly Building Available for Private Events

If you have an event that can benefit from proximity to a 77 acre Nature Preserve and a facsimile of a Maidu Indian Village, the Assembly Building at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center may be what you're looking for.

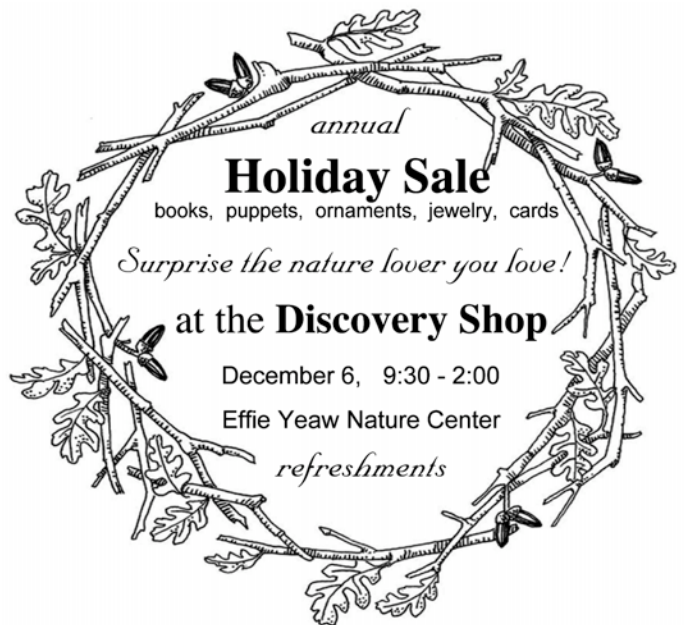
The Assembly Building is available for rent to a minimal number of organizations and agencies for meetings, workshops, and educational programs, and for a restricted number of special events that are aligned with the Department of Regional Parks, Recreation, and Open Space mission.

The entrance of the assembly building has a large covered porch which we use to gather students prior to the educational programs offered inside. The main room inside functions as an assembly space for large groups, or partitions can be pulled across turning the main room into three smaller classrooms. One end of the main room has a full kitchen.

This building primarily serves the needs of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, the American River Natural History Association, and Parks Department programs but has many open dates through this winter. All events must be compatible with the Preserve. No birthday parties or weddings.

Please call the Nature Center at (916) 489-4918 for more information. ■

Don't miss the annual Holiday Sale at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center's Discovery Shop! It's a great place to find presents for anyone on your list. And it helps support a vital part of our community!



Art Studio Workshop Set for December 9

- The American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) will offer a non-instructional art studio workshop using the facilities and the collections of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

- The Nature Center will supply taxidermied animals, furs, and skeletons of animals such as ducks, owls, hawks, snakes, bobcats, etc. from their collections offering artists (beginner and experienced) a chance to study and draw/paint them up close.

- Participants will supply their own tools and art materials (pencils, paper, watercolors, etc.) and expertise.

- Libby Harmor will be facilitating this program—laying out the artifacts, taxidermied animals, Maidu artifacts, etc. in ways that will lead to some beautiful drawings and paintings. Her many years of experience as a professional artist include design for theater, exhibits, and displays. She will not be offering art instruction.



- This program is the first in a series of studio workshops to be offered at the Nature Center.

- The first studio will be available from 12:30 to 3pm on Wednesday, December 9th. The cost will be \$7 per session. Pre-registration is required, with a minimum enrollment of 10 participants ages 16 and over.

- For information and registration, call the Nature Center at (916) 489-4918.

ARNHA in the Community

This fall ARNHA participated in several community events to tell people about the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and ARNHA. These included Carmichael Founder’s Day Celebration on September 26, Sacramento Valley Conservancy Treasures of the Valley on October 1, and Friends of the River Bank Family Festival on October 4.

Urban Farming the Creative Way

Community gardens are well known for producing tasty, organic fruits and vegetables in a neighborhood setting. But Soil Born Farms www.soilborn.org on the American River Parkway in Rancho Cordova is that and more.

Executive Director Shawn Harrison described to an ARNHA public forum audience September 30 the creative, many-sided initiatives of this non-profit urban agriculture and education project. In a nutshell, the idea is to show and tell adults and children how to create a healthier, sustainable food system.

“We work with underserved schools to get youths involved with the farm,” Harrison said. “They go into the fields, learn about nutrition and how to cook food, and go to our farm produce stands. They learn to be a steward of the land.”

He recounted hearing a parent say, “My kid is in your program, and he’s telling ME what to buy at the store!”

Besides maintaining a farm stand on Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 2140 Chase Drive in Rancho Cordova, Soil Born offers fresh fruits and vegetables in stands in low-income neighborhoods.

Other programs include gardening classes in such subjects as Home Vermiculture (worms, for the uninitiated) and Raising Chickens in Your backyard; paid apprentice positions, and volunteer opportunities in planting and harvesting the produce. “It’s a good chance to give back,” said Harrison, 37, who has an M.A. in Agriculture.

Grocery Shopping? Support ARNHA at No Cost to You!

The American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) is participating in Raley’s Quality of Life program to raise much needed funds for the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Anyone can participate in the program, and there is no cost to the participant. Participants in the program submit their cards each time they shop at Raley’s, Bel Air, Nob Hill or Food Source stores and a portion of their purchase will be donated back to ARHNA. The Quality of Life Cards are available at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, or you can call 916-489-4918 or email Betty Cooper at bcooper@saccounty.net to request a card. Learn more at www.effieyeaw.org.

Madison Elementary Thanks EYNC

A recent set of thank you letters serves as a telling reminder of how vital the Effie Yeaw Nature Center is for so many children. Fourth grade students from Madison Elementary in North Highlands expressed their appreciation and made keen observations after their school tour.

Naturalist Traci Barsuglia and docent Walter Dong first showed the students our indoor animals and exhibits. A highlight was seeing both an owl and snake up close and personal. “Cool” seemed to be the adjective of choice for the day. Vidim said, “Thanks for showing the snake. It looked cool and scary,” and Destiny thought the “owls were so cool.”

The wild animals out on the trail proved awe-inspiring. Sebastian spoke for many when he wrote that the snakes were “cool...But the deer were just as amazing. And the turkeys were awesome.” Kaela exclaimed, “The wild turkeys, man, they were wild!” Janelle also thought it was “cool” to see the wild turkeys and said that when they gobbled “it sounded like they were laughing.”

Many of the children had never been exposed to the wonders of nature that EYNC offers. Mae-gan said, “I had an extremely good time at Effie Yeaw...I’ve never seen any of those kind animals in real life.” And Andre noted that he’d “never seen that many deer before.” Randall counted 98 deer, while Emily saw 100, Dominic 102, and Ronnie 103. But Austin topped them all with a final count of 129. (The nature center staff estimates that there are approximately 40 deer in the 77-acre preserve at any given time.)

The intrigue of live animals did not preclude some students’ interest in the quieter details of the diverse flora in the nature area. Anthony was glad to learn what poison oak looks like. Janelle learned to use all of her senses while exploring nature: “We got to smell plants like the Mexican Tea—it smelled like new paint. The milk weed plant smelled like lavender.”

The cultural history of Maidu Indian Village and grinding rock also did not go unnoticed. Said Julia, “I really liked the houses that we saw that were made from the American people. And the rock that was made for the kitchen.”

The students sincerely expressed appreciation for the remarkable people that make EYNC such a wonderful place. Philip said, “They are great people for teaching us. Thank you.” “I liked how you were respectful and kind to us,” wrote Randall. Tino went on to say, “When I grow up I want to be like you.”

Effie Yeaw herself served to inspire some. “What is cool is that EYNC got its name from a woman” noted Julia. Angello was likewise impressed: “The maker of that place is very interesting. I think millions of people would like to go there...I wish I was the maker of that place.”

All of the students thanked an anonymous donor for providing the money that made the field trip possible. “If it wasn’t for you guys some of my friends wouldn’t have been able to come,” said Kierra. Keison wrote, “I wish there was a way I can repay you. So that’s why I’m going to come again.” Ana couldn’t express her appreciation enough: “It was very nice of you. I think it was very necessary...I have to say this one more time, Thank You.” Though perhaps Ronnie expresses the highest praise one can receive from a ten-year-old: “You guys rock!”

“P.S. You guys have a wonderful nature center. –Ashley”

Bill Pond's Life Offered Lessons in Leadership

Innovaton, persuasion, goodwill. . . such were the ingredients of character that William B. Pond brought to his crucial role as a prime mover in creation of the American River Parkway. How else can one explain how the first director of the Sacramento County Parks and Recreation Department managed to rally a wide-ranging array of government agencies, property owners and recreationists together to form a 23-mile long greenbelt through a burgeoning metropolitan area?

Bill Pond died September 20 in Sacramento at the age of 91, leaving a peerless legacy as not only "Father of the Parkway," but also as a staunch advocate of parks everywhere. Parks, he would say, "are how you measure the quality of life in a community."

Mr. Pond had been a parks and recreation manager in the Pacific Northwest when Sacramento County hired him in 1959 to direct the new parks and recreation department. One of the first jobs he assigned himself was to study existing park properties and areas worth considering for future parks development. He hiked and rode horseback up and down both sides of the Lower American River, exploring every inch of the 5,000 acres within the flood plain, "trespassing when I couldn't get permission."

"My main interest and focus remained on the potential for a unique environmental and recreational opportunity offered by the American River," he said.

A 1961 decision by the County Planning Commission to approve a subdivision within 125 feet of the river spurred public support for a campaign to open the river and its wooded banks to recreation.

Employing his diplomatic skills to the maximum, Bill Pond was the point man as the county acquired flood plain land at reasonable prices, through gifts, by easements for trails while pursuing federal and state funding, and benefiting from donations raised by the newly-formed Save the American River Association (SARA) and others.

Mr. Pond was well acquainted with Carmichael school teacher Effie Yeaw, who, with her volunteer associates, for years had led school children on nature walks on the 189-acre Deterding ranch. A SARA founder and its secretary, she urged him to make the beautiful wooded area a high priority objective for acquisition for the parkway.

However, funding was not available, but Mr. Pond, working with county counsel John Heinrich, devised a method whereby the county could purchase the property in stages over a seven-year period while seeking and obtaining federal and state grants. Today, of course, the property is Ancil Hoffman County Park, home of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

"He was a collaborator," Ron Suter, county's parks director from 1998 to 2006, told The Sacramento Bee upon Mr. Pond's death. "He collaborated with people before it was a term used by government."

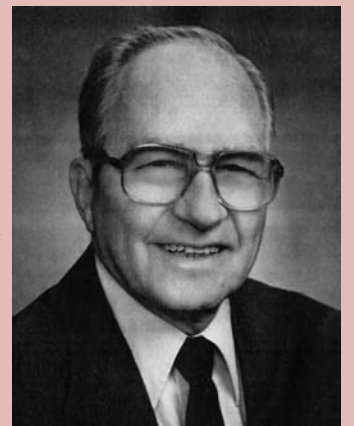
The late Jo Smith, ARNHA co-founder, said, "As the man at the top, he always treated those who worked under him -- professionals as well as volunteers -- with the greatest kindness and respect."

The county controlled 3,000 of the 5,000 acres of land included in the Parkway plan when Mr. Pond resigned in 1968 to become executive director of the National Recreation and Park Association in Washington, D.C. He returned to Sacramento in 1971 planning to start a consultant business but instead was recruited by the county to head the County Housing Authority, later the Community Development Environmental Protection Agency, with the parks department under his supervision.

He retired as head of General Services in 1983, but once again came back to community service as director of the Sacramento Science Center for four years.

In retirement, Bill Pond remained a strong supporter of parks. He often said the greatest challenge facing parks was the need for an assured funding base so that parks and recreation did not have to depend on the uncertainties of general fund budgeting. As a model he would cite the East Bay Regional Park District, which includes Alameda and Contra Costa counties and their urban and suburban entities which have pooled their resources to create and preserve an outstanding parks system for seventy years.

Donations in Mr. Pond's name may be sent to the American Heart Association, 2007 O St., Sacramento, CA 95811.



William B Pond photo courtesy Sacramento Bee

Bill Pond's Wife Dies

Eloise S. Pond, 91, died Oct. 21, just one month after the passing of her husband, former Sacramento County Parks and Recreation Director William B. Pond. Besides supporting her husband in his several career moves, she was a gifted teacher and violinist who played in the Sacramento Symphony and taught violin, piano, and English language skills in her home studio. She and her husband raised three children, Cheryl Azbill (deceased), Karen and Steven (Susan).

Thank You Donors!

Your support makes the difference!

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- Carol Doersch
- Jacqueline Duerr
- Joanne Hagopian
- Pete Hayes
- Bruce and Peggy Kennedy
- Sonya Lyons
- Richard and Beverly Mc Coy
- Harold Ohanesian
- Keri Spaulding

In Memory of George Gilmore:

- Bruce and Peggy Kennedy

In Memory of Bill Pond:

- Claudia Hulbe
- Linda Kimura

Other:

- Janet Baker
- Paula Baldi
- Thomas and Judy Chrisman
- Nathan Fairman
- Marion Falgren
- Lila Flannery
- Barbara Girard
- Claudia Hulbe
- Molly Keller

Stellar Volunteers Honored

ARNHA and the Effie Yeaw Nature Center chose six volunteers for Special Certificates of Recognition at this year's ARNHA Annual Meeting.

- Mojgan Fischer was chosen for visualizing, organizing, and overseeing the first ever Effie Yeaw Nature Center Rummage Sale.

- Dr. Gary Hanson was chosen for his dedication in leading numerous Nature Area Tours and leading special programs on rattlesnakes and other reptiles.

- Georgia Jones was chosen for her tireless and ongoing support as ARNHA's excellent webmaster.

- Gail Philippart was selected because she always volunteers for every event we offer in addition to leading Nature Area Tours.

- Erin Landry was also chosen for her work as an Animal Care Assistant.

- Kate Wigginton, our youngest volunteer to be honored, enthusiastically volunteered over 250 hours assisting with Vacation Fun Days in the last three years.

Over and over again, all of these volunteers give their time and their talents to help bring people to nature and nature to people!

ARNHA needs a volunteer CPA who is willing to audit our books for free or for a greatly reduced rate. Call Roberta Wilner at 481-5519.

Nature Center from the county's general fund, we looked for other funding. For this 2009-10 fiscal year, our biggest funders are from the Solid Waste Authority and the Oak Tree Preservation Fund. Together these sponsors will contribute \$387,000. For these funds, staff will be adding more oak tree education to the tours and vacation Fun Days classes. Students are also planting lots of valley oak acorns in the Preserve, and more oak tree saplings are to be caged to prevent them from being consumed by the deer.

That's the good news, but the unfortunate news is this funding is for one time only and will not be available next year.

Another important group of sponsors includes Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District, Fish & Game Propagation Fund, County of Sacramento Water Quality – Stormwater District, Environmental Management District, Bureau of Reclamation, and the Water Forum. Together they are sponsoring us for \$97,500. The funding from these sources is dependent upon the Effie Yeaw Nature Center teaching environmental education with an emphasis on pollution prevention, protecting the watershed, water conservation, and the water cycle. We do this in our many programs and Fun Days vacation camps.

The revenue we are to bring in from school and other programs this year is \$100,000. Now that we have fewer staff and have cut programs, raising this revenue will be difficult. Nevertheless, we will book as many programs as we can staff. We will depend greatly on volunteers.

Last but certainly not least is the \$70,000 to \$100,000 from the American River Natural History Association we

hope to receive this year. The higher amount is dependent on how many people contribute to ARNHA in support of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

With this revenue and the special grants the Nature Center receives, it will still be cutting hours of operation, staffing, free programs, and much more. The highest expenditure the Nature Center has is staffing; other costs are associated with operating two buildings, the 77-acre Preserve, and overhead (money back to the County). The EYNC's funding cuts have resulted in the reduction of the permanent staff by one position, our Education Director. It also cut the funding for the seasonal and intermittent staff by 50% which reduces the number of programs we can do.

Cutting the staff means fewer revenue earning programs which leads to more cuts in staffing unless this lost revenue can be replenished from another funding source.

What is the Effie Yeaw Nature Center losing with the 50% drop in funding

for staff naturalists? The following programs have been reduced or eliminated:

- Gibson Ranch Living History Program eliminated
- Free weekend programs reduced by 70%
- EYNC closed two afternoons a week in the fall and closed up to five days a week in the winter (except for tours and Maidu programs)
- Elimination of birthday parties (We don't have enough staff to present the party program)
- Elimination of winter Fun Days youth programs during holiday vacation
- Reduction in ability to provide environment-based educational games

that are taught in the big playing field across from the Nature Center. These games were provided to schools that had to bring several classes on a fieldtrip due to fewer and more costly busses for fieldtrips

- Reduction in school programs

We are looking into the possibility of closing to the public on weekdays (except holidays and school vacation days) beginning the first week of December through February (three months) to save staff costs. This will be publicized before being implemented.

One of the most troubling aspects of closing to the public is that we will not have a staff Naturalist available to monitor the 77-acre Nature Study Area, or deal immediately with reported problems. The 500-900+ people who use the Preserve on weekdays will not have access to the Nature Center restrooms, store or exhibits.

During the months we will not be open and not have a Naturalist on Duty, we foresee many problems such as those that occur in the five other Nature Study Areas within the American River Parkway (ARP). We have been fortunate that our Nature Study area has had volunteers and staff located on site daily to tend and protect it.

Our Nature Study Area is designated as a California State Watchable Wildlife site. See www.cawatchablewildlife.org

So what are we doing to try to rescue the Effie Yeaw Nature Center from eminent closure during weekdays for four months (and possibly more) and elimination of popular programs? We are trying many reductions in operating costs such as the following:

Using volunteers wherever possible. Volunteers must still be screened fingerprinted, given safety training, supervised and provided with the ongoing resources they need to do their jobs. Without our 200 active volunteers per year we couldn't operate the EYNC as well as

see Budget, next page

we have since 1976. Our volunteers will always and have always been needed.

Returning one of the vehicles leased from the County. We will be doing fewer programs in the classrooms and think we can get by with one vehicle.

Keeping the air conditioner off in the assembly building nearly all summer, saving a couple thousand dollars.

Moving our donation box close to the front door with a sign noting that we have free admission but need donations in order to stay open. Donations have doubled since this began.

Stepping up fundraising efforts and grant writing through ARNHA.

Re-examining the way we do programs to find ways to cut costs. We've raised the fees for our educational programs to help offset the costs. We're constantly searching for grants to support the Urban Nature Project—a scholarship program that pays for schools that can't afford our program fees.

Since its opening in 1976, the Effie Yeaw Nature Center has grown from a small neighborhood nature center to a nature center of regional importance. We are in sight of the summit. With the current economic crisis causing this landslide, we must decide if, with ARNHA's help, we can wait out the adversity then continue to the summit.

We must also ask ourselves if experiencing wildness or nature is essential to the growth and development of our

youth. Is it essential to the well being of adults, mothers, fathers, and seniors? If the answer is “yes,” then we need to work together to keep the preserve protected, to help the EYNC to remain open offering educational programs to our community.

If you would like to support the Nature Center there are several possibilities:

- Donate—change, cash, checks, credit cards. You may donate to Effie Yeaw Nature Center through the American River Natural History Association or through the County of Sacramento. You *will* probably hear us asking for donations and see our donation boxes more prominently displayed.
- Renew your ARNHA membership level at a higher level.
- Buy a Parks Annual Pass for \$50 that will gain you entrance into any of the County Parks for 12 months.
- Participate in any of the fundraisers that we will be organizing, hosting, or publicizing to raise money for the Center. You, your friends, and family can host a fundraiser to benefit the Nature Center.
- Give gifts of ARNHA memberships, Park Passes, or buy environmental gifts from our Discovery Shop.
- Write or call the County of Sacramento Supervisors to encourage them to support the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. You can also share this with

friends, co-workers, and family to rally their support for the Nature Center.

Only with your help can we continue to offer meaningful and fun environmental and cultural history programs to the families of Sacramento. ■



Children explore their environment with Brian Gilmore, EYNC naturalists.

EYNC Wish List



ARNHA Volunteers

- Handyperson needed for various exhibit, maintenance and outdoor projects.
- Event Planner (with training/experience)
- Painter for the fence in the parking lot
- People to construct a walkway, install nature play area components such as logs

Vacation Fun Days supplies

- Water color sets
- Color pencils
- Clay (real clay, black, reddish brown, etc.)
- “Natural” colors of yarn
- Unopened glue sticks
- Acorn caps
- Rolls of plastic table covering (green or brown) to cover and protect tables during vacation camp programs (found at Wishing Well)

Supplies for Maidu Program

- Clean non-wormy black oak acorns needed for making acorn meal
- Valley Oak acorn caps (caps only) in good condition
- Plastilina (non hardening) black clay
- Artificial Sinew from Tandy Leather or Pacific Western Traders
- Cut firewood

Sponsors for programs

- Tours
- Weekend Programs
- School site programs

Supplies for landscape workers

- Two-gallon insulated water thermos for habitat restoration workers
- Gift Cards for Supplies (PetsMart, Petco, Raley's or BelAir for animal care supplies and food; Home Depot for building materials)
- Gift Card for Tap Plastics to purchase acrylic containers to protect the mounted animals (stuffed) that are taken to classrooms

American River Natural History Association
P.O. Box 241
Carmichael, CA 95609-0241
(916) 489-4918 • www.arnha.org
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ARNHA Calendar of Events

- **Discovery Shop Annual Holiday Sale**
Saturday, December 5, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at EYNC
- **American River Parkway Wildlife Count**
Saturday, December 5 at EYNC
- **Save the American River Ass'n Annual Meeting**
Saturday, December 5, 10 a.m. at EYNC
- **An American River Journal Book Signing**
Sunday, December 6, 3 p.m.
at Time Tested Books, 1114 21st St., in Midtown
- **Studio Art Workshop**
Wednesday, December 9, 12:30 to 3 p.m. at EYNC
- **Volunteer Holiday Party**
Friday, December 11, 12 noon to 1:30 pm at EYNC
- **An American River Journal Book Signing**
Saturday, December 12, 1 p.m.
at Trail Mix Store, 116D "I" St., Old Sacramento
- **Spring Fun Days**
Monday, March 29 – Friday, April 2

**Thanks to All Who Upgraded
Your Memberships!**
Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

- Sue Adams
- Susan M Atkinson
- John M Bernier
- Joan E Berry
- Bowington/Brown
- Joanne Costello
- Beth & Joel Dubois
- Grace C. Ertel
- Marilyn C. Evans
- Mojgan Fischer
- Carole Girard
- Mr. Louis Heinrich
- Georgia Jones
- Matt & Nanci Kuzins
- Jacqui & Les Lahr
- Carol Lerner
- Drs Jill Abramson & Colmar Moseley
- Lestelle M. Nichols
- Diana and Tom Parker
- Carol & Frank Poelman
- Lia Robertson
- Margaret Rogers
- Rene & Michael Ruiz
- Peter, Betty, & Michaela Schlocker
- George Smith
- Jan S Stevens
- Kristie Stevens
- Carol Stirnaman
- Sylvia F Suverkrop
- Ray & Carol Zelinski

**Welcome,
New Members!**

- Lisa and William Acevedo
- Gideon and Naseem Alston
- William Matthew Brittain
- Marion Falgren
- Richard Garrison
- Tina Lucas
- Jacqueline Matson
- Stella McMillin
- Kathleen B. Ossmann
- Rich and Marianne Rayburn
- Jennifer Riley
- Kamran and Nancy Sahrakar
- Paul and Sarah Steenhausen
- Susan Stern
- Nancy Westlund
- Patricia A. White
- Lisa Wuriu
- Trudy Ziebell