OJAI
thank you for every precious moment.

Valley View Preserve Photographed by Chad Ress

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Spreading a Little Sunshine in the Ojai Valley

Noted author and president of the North American Butterfly Association, Jeffrey Glassberg once said, “Beautiful and graceful, varied and enchanting, small but approachable, butterflies lead you to the sunny side of life. And everyone deserves a little sunshine.”

Here at the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, we aim to spread a little happiness around our preserves by planting and caring for our native narrow-leaf milkweed. You can help by planting at your house as well.

Monarch butterflies have been variously described as angelic, mysterious, and magnificent, and are often associated with happiness and good luck. They are indeed a fascinating creature with a life history that challenges the imagination. One of the most amazing characteristics of monarchs is that their annual migration takes them from down in Mexico and up into North America where they split up, send some into Colorado and the others up the West Coast. The time it takes for the monarchs to make the migration is actually longer than the life span of any individual butterfly, so no one butterfly makes the whole trip. How they know where they are going is just one of the mysteries that make them special.

Ojai is along the migration route of the monarchs, and there are steps we can take to help them along their way. The easiest way to participate is to plant narrow-leaf milkweed (Asclepias fascicularis, pictured right). This plant is what experts call an “obligate” plant species, which means it is necessary for the monarch life cycle. Milkweed is where adult monarchs lay eggs and where the caterpillars feed before they undergo metamorphosis. The OVLC has planted milkweed as part of our restoration efforts at the Ojai Meadows Preserve, and it is also spreading naturally as a result of our weed management activities.

To prepare even more habitat, we will be increasing the planting of milkweed and other nectar plants. Monarch butterflies lay their eggs only on milkweed, so planting milkweed alone is not enough. We need to provide food and shelter for monarchs on their journey. Monarch butterflies need nectar sources to fuel them along their way.

You can help by planting milkweed in your yard. Many native flowering plants are drought tolerant and while blooming they are attractive. We recommend planting several small plants together in a group about one to two feet from each other. This creates a larger “inside area” of the group where caterpillars are more protected from predators. Make sure to plant some good nectar plants as well since these help attract the butterflies to your yard. Many native flowering plants are included at: bit.ly/CApollinators. Soon, you too can be spreading sunshine around our Ojai Valley. Get more tips on butterfly gardening at bit.ly/butterflygrdn

The caterpillar does all the work but the butterfly gets all the publicity.
- Attributed to George Carlin

"Monarch In May" by Kenneth Dwain Harrelson

You can become a Certified California Naturalist!

The Ojai Valley Land Conservancy is thrilled to announce that we will be offering the California Naturalist certification training in Spring 2016, as part of our annual education and outreach programming. We are currently in the planning phase and updates with specific class dates and more details will be available on our website (ovlc.org) in the next few weeks.

The California Naturalist Program promotes environmental literacy and stewardship through discovery and action. Many other states have similar naturalist programs, but this is the first statewide program in California. To become a certified California Naturalist, participants enroll in a 40+ hour course.

Each 40 hour course combines classroom and field experience in science, problem-solving, communication training and community service. Students are taught by an instructor and team of experts. Upon completing certification requirements, participants are eligible for four academic credits through UC Davis Extension for an additional nominal fee.

Subjects covered include ecology, geology, plant communities, interpretation, wildlife, and more.

The program provides hands on instruction and exposure to real world environmental projects designed to inspire adults to become active citizen-scientists and enhance their personal connection with the natural world. In addition to the course, California Naturalists will be encouraged to complete 40 hours of volunteer service in one of four areas: program support, interpretation/education, restoration/conservation and/or citizen science. For more information, please visit http://calnat.ucanr.edu/
In late October the OVLC began a restoration project to remove the old orange orchard at the Ventura River Preserve. The orange orchard was planted in the 1920s, but not managed for fruit production since 2004, when the OVLC acquired the property. Since then, removal of the orange orchard has been a high priority project for the OVLC. Removal of several thousand orange trees will address community threats caused by the mix of live and dead orange trees in the orchard. Restoration of 10 of the 41 acres will begin immediately. The effort will focus on the re-establishment of native coast live oak savanna and woodland habitats.

Removing the old orchard has multiple benefits, one being the reduction of threats from the spread of a lethal citrus disease carried by the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP). Derelict orchards around the Ojai Valley are potential host sites for the psyllids, which have already been found in the valley. The ACP is a flying insect that can carry a lethal citrus disease known as Huanglongbing (HLB). There are no cures for HLB; once a citrus tree is infected, the tree will die. The orange grove at the Ventura River Preserve could serve as a host for this insect, becoming a threat to commercial growers in the valley. Removing derelict orchards throughout the valley is one way to help protect local commercial citrus groves of the Ojai Valley.

“If ACP were to be found on the preserve, it would require extensive chemical treatments on the preserve, and possibly on neighboring properties. The OVLC will responsibly remove the threat in advance as a way of protecting commercial groves and reducing the need for any chemical treatment,” says Brian Stark, Executive Director.

“There are a lot of untended and/or inadequately cared for citrus trees in the Ojai Valley that serve as potential harbors for this pest and disease. If people have untended citrus trees they should seriously consider having them removed now before the bacterial disease arrives in our precious valley,” says Emily Ayala of Friend’s Ranch.

This Page: Before and after aerial images (courtesy of Rick Wilborn www.VirtualTerrainTours.com) of the project area. The green in the second image shows the amount of native vegetation already in the area. Next Page: The citrus mower in action.

As many of the trees are already dead, they also comprise a substantial fuel source for wildfires. Removing the dead trees will help reduce threats from fuel loading. Some selected dead trees will remain, however, to provide temporary bird habitats until new natives can be raised. Finally, the orange tree removal will make room for the planting of hundreds of new coast live oaks as part of the larger restoration efforts at the preserve.

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Thank you to the businesses supporting the protection and care of our open spaces in the Ojai Valley. Please show your appreciation by supporting these businesses today.
Welcome to the Newest OVLC Members!

(From 7/21/15 - 11/3/15)

Adam Morrison
Angela Booth
Ann Horton & Fred Line
Annie Reeves
Aronika C. Washburn
Anouk Steinken
Barbara Feld
Beth L. Wickstrum
Bonne Delpendar Brown
Brauna & Gordon Walsh
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Carla Edwards
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Cassandra Taylor &
Jolene Stanford
Christina Kennedy
Christopher (C.J.) Cintas
Courtney Katzenbach
Cynthia Schneider
Dan Walsh
Denise K. Neil
Diana Blanchard
Doug Reed & Kristine Humphries
Dr. David White
Drew & Kris Mashburn
Elizabeth Holder
Ellen Keith
Emily Teter
Ginnette & Marc Waterman
Glora Foote
Heather Shields
Jay Windsor
Jeff and Kate Sjoka
Jerry Hittleman
Joanne Palmer
Julia Summers
Kelly Deckleber
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Kim Vincent & Roger Ford
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Kitty Sklaver
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Lynn Braitman & Rob Moser
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Maren Vertoch
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Nancy Klassen
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Sooz Glazebrook
Sophie Loire
Steve Colome
Susan & Flemming Bertelsen
Susan Lynn
Tarek Al-Awar & Jenna O’Donnell
Tracy Bellomo
Tracy Hudak
Tricia Mills
Vickie Peters
Victoria Nechera
Ward Woods
Wendy Barker

November 18 – Fall Docent Training
With Stewardship Director Rick Bisaccia

November 21 – Guided Restoration Tour and Nature Hike
Led by John Pavelko and Art Vander. This hike will look at the Rice Creek Restoration Project and the orange grove removal project. Then we will head up Hills Canyon for a plant and bird identification walk.
8:00 – 11:00 AM at Oso Trailhead

December 12 – WAO: Winter Bird Migration
8:30 AM at the Ojai Meadow Preserve. Led by Jesse Granthem

January 29 – WAO: Mother Nature’s Child, Growing Outdoors in the Media Age
Film Presentation and Panel Discussion co-hosted with Ventura Wild. 6:00 PM at Matilija Auditorium.

To RSVP contact Marti at (805) 649-6852 x 2 or marti@ovlc.org.

All WAO (Wild About Ojai) events are free for members and $10 for non-members.

For a current list of events visit: ovlc.org/events
Ojai Meadows Preserve Winter Pathway Project
The walk from Highway 33 to the pond has often been a muddy trudge for Ojai Meadows Preserve users after a rain. In August, 1% for Ojai funds paid for Evans Excavating of Ojai to install a graded path surfaced with decomposed granite. (Pictured Above)

Trail Crew
It’s with volunteers that OVLC is able to get so much improved and completed on trails, restorations and in the office and we value them greatly. The OVLC volunteer trail crew goes out regularly to improve and build trails on several of the preserves.


Kennedy Ridge Trail
In 2008, the OVLC in partnership with the Ojai District, US Forest Service (USFS) undertook to open the Kennedy Ridge Trail which starts on the Ventura River Preserve, enters the Los Padres National Forest and would eventually link up with the historic Camino Cielo and Ocean View Trails.

After a hiatus of several years OVLC and supporting partners, legislators and interested members of the public, bolstered with a seed money grant from the Patagonia Corporation are gearing up to reapproach the USFS to put this vital and popular project back on the front burner.


Gridley Trailhead Project
The Gridley Trailhead got shined up this summer by OVLC staff and volunteers, in partnership with the Ojai District, US Forest Service (USFS), and the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC).

New signage was purchased and installed, paid for by 1% for Ojai funding. The entry trail and water drainage was enhanced and repaired. Gridley Trailhead serves USFS and OVLC system trails, including access to the Fuelbreak Road Trail and the Valley View Preserve.

Pictured Above: Peter Wilder (YCC) and Rick Bisaccia (OVLC) with YCC members from Fillmore in front of the new sign. Right: Stewardship Director Rick Bisaccia painting new sign post.

Pratt Trailhead Project
Completed this spring, the Pratt Trailhead rehabilitation was an example of what OVLC and partners can do to help improve the local community’s access to local trails by coming together.

The Ojai District, US Forest Service (USFS) Trailhead is used to access several OVLC and USFS trails including the Valley View Preserve. Broken down fencing, decrepit, rotting signage, and damaged parking lot and road surface were all replaced, repainted or repaired by a coalition of volunteers and staff from the OVLC and US Forest Service paid for by 1% for Ojai.

Pictured Above: 1. New Pratt Trailhead signage. 2. Road grading and repair by Nathan Gruber of Evans Excavating of Ojai. 3. OVLC volunteers repaint the trailhead entry fencing.

Continued on next page…
Lower Will Canyon Reroute

Many trails have been re-routed in the last few years on the Ventura River Preserve in favor of lower gradients, enhanced safety and less erosion. OVLC staff and volunteers recently re-routed such a section in lower Wills Canyon at a seasonal creek crossing. Anti-erosion devices were installed, the old trail was cut and treaded. Pictured Below (Left to Right): 1. Volunteer Mike Gauley and other volunteers building the new trail. 2. OVLC volunteer trail crew members cutting new tread. 3. Trail volunteers who created the recent trail reroute.

Ventura County Watershed Protection District in partnership with the OVLC began an invasive plant species removal project at two of the OVLC’s preserves in late October. The primary species targeted is arundo (Arundo donax), a plant indigenous to the Indian sub-continent that looks similar to bamboo. Arundo has formed large infestations in watersheds throughout southern California, including the Ventura River. Removal of arundo at the OVLC preserves is part of a larger project to remove approximately 28 acres of the plant on 164 acres of land.

This project helps to protect the valley’s water supply. Research published by the California Invasive Plant Council states that on average, removal of one acre of arundo results in a net savings of 10 acre feet of water per year. To put that into perspective, one acre foot of water supplies two average four-person families with water for one year. This project will remove 28 acres of arundo. This equates to a total savings of 280 acre feet of water per year, or the amount of water supplies two average four-person families with water for 14 years.

Initial arundo removal efforts will take about three months. Other invasive plant species such as fennel (Foeniculum vulgare), Scotch broom (Cytisus scoparius), cape ivy (Delatorea odontia), tamarisk (Tamarix spp.) and castor bean (Ricinus communis) will be secondary targets. Maintenance of the project will occur periodically over the next three and a half years.

In addition to water savings, this project will also benefit wildlife. Since arundo is not native to our region, it has little to no value to native wildlife. Removal of arundo and restoration of native habitat will benefit threatened and endangered species that call the Ventura River home such as the southern California steelhead, California red-legged frog, least Bell’s vireo, and southwestern willow flycatcher.

Participation in the 1% program is a great way for us to connect to, and support what makes Ojai truly one-of-a-kind. "As residents and business owners of Ojai, we both enjoy and rely on the beauty of our natural surroundings. We are fortunate in this valley to have the outdoor resources that we do, and I wish to support them however I can. I grew up here, and have watched Ojai transform from a sleepy town to a destination for tourists. They are at home here, and preservation is key to keeping it the lovely and unique place it has always been." - Tara Jeffery, RN

1% FOR OJAI

small donations, big impact

"As a community-minded business owner, I believe that, like an extended family, we support each other and the "home" in which we live, regardless of whether that home is within a structure or part of a community like Ojai. I am grateful to live and work in this beautiful valley, and so proud to be a part of it and support the community as a whole." - Alex Mooney

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Any type of business can join this program! For more information to see how your business can participate, call or email our Director of Advancement - Tania Parker (805) 649-6852 x 6 or tania@ovlc.org - today!
Just by including the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy in your estate plans, you can help protect the beauty of Ojai for generations to come.

**A bequest is a simple way to support the OVLC in the future while retaining control of your assets during your lifetime. By making the OVLC a beneficiary of your will, trust, retirement plan, life insurance policy, or financial accounts, you ensure your values will be passed on after you.**

The real beneficiary, of course, is Ojai.

**You Can Use this Language for Your Gift:**

“I give, devise, and bequeath [percentage / amount / description] to the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, a nonprofit corporation, located at PO Box 1092, Ojai, CA, 93024, Tax Identification Number 77-0169682.”

For more information contact:

Tania Parker, Director of Advancement  
(805) 649-6852 x 6  
tania@ovlc.org  
Or visit www.ovlc.org