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May 2021

## The Role of Domestic Animals in the Teaching and Management of Nature

Center for Urban Resilience

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# The Role of Domestic Animals in the Teaching and Management of Nature







Popular feral cat feeding station on the Ballona Creek Bike Path inside the chain link along Area C of the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve





# Popular Feeding Station for Feral Cats



figure 1-1

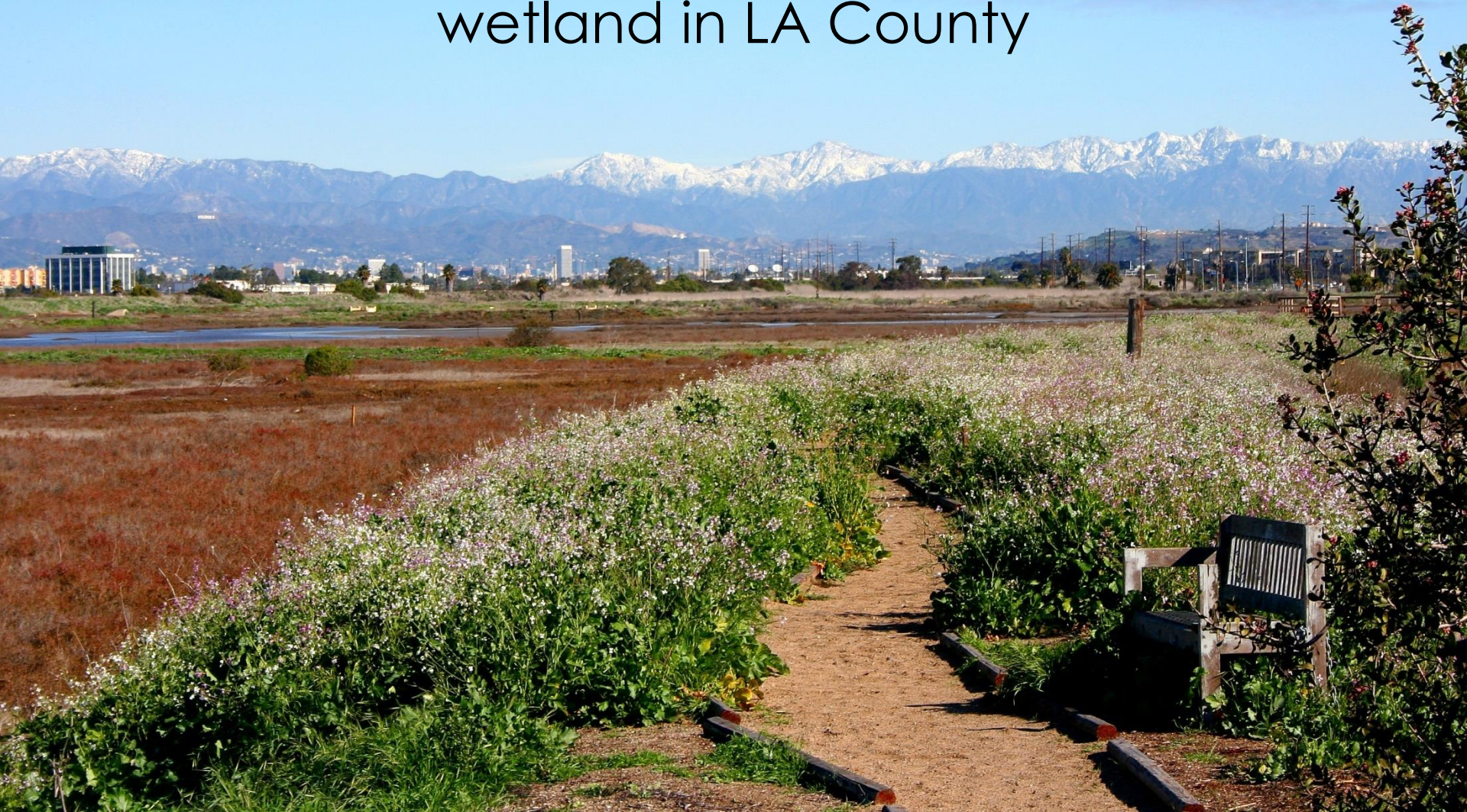
Ballona Wetlands Restoration  
Project Area

Proj. # 1793





The Ballona Wetlands are the  
last remaining open space  
wetland in LA County



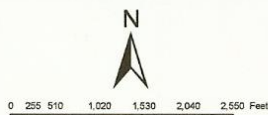


# Ballona – Death by Development





# Ballona – Death by Development



**Marina del Rey Harbor  
took up 900 acres**

*figure 1-1*

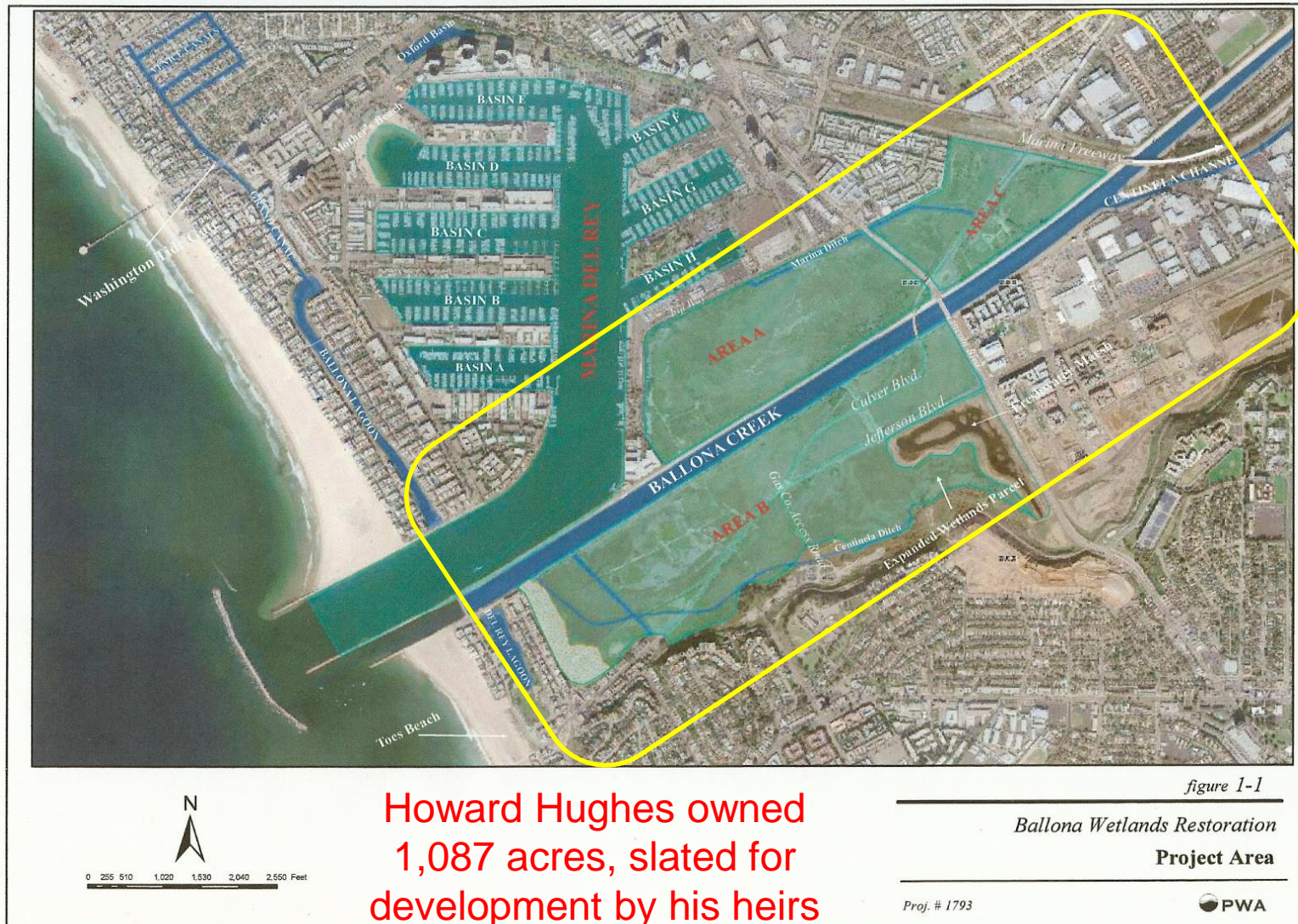
*Ballona Wetlands Restoration  
Project Area*

Proj. # 1793



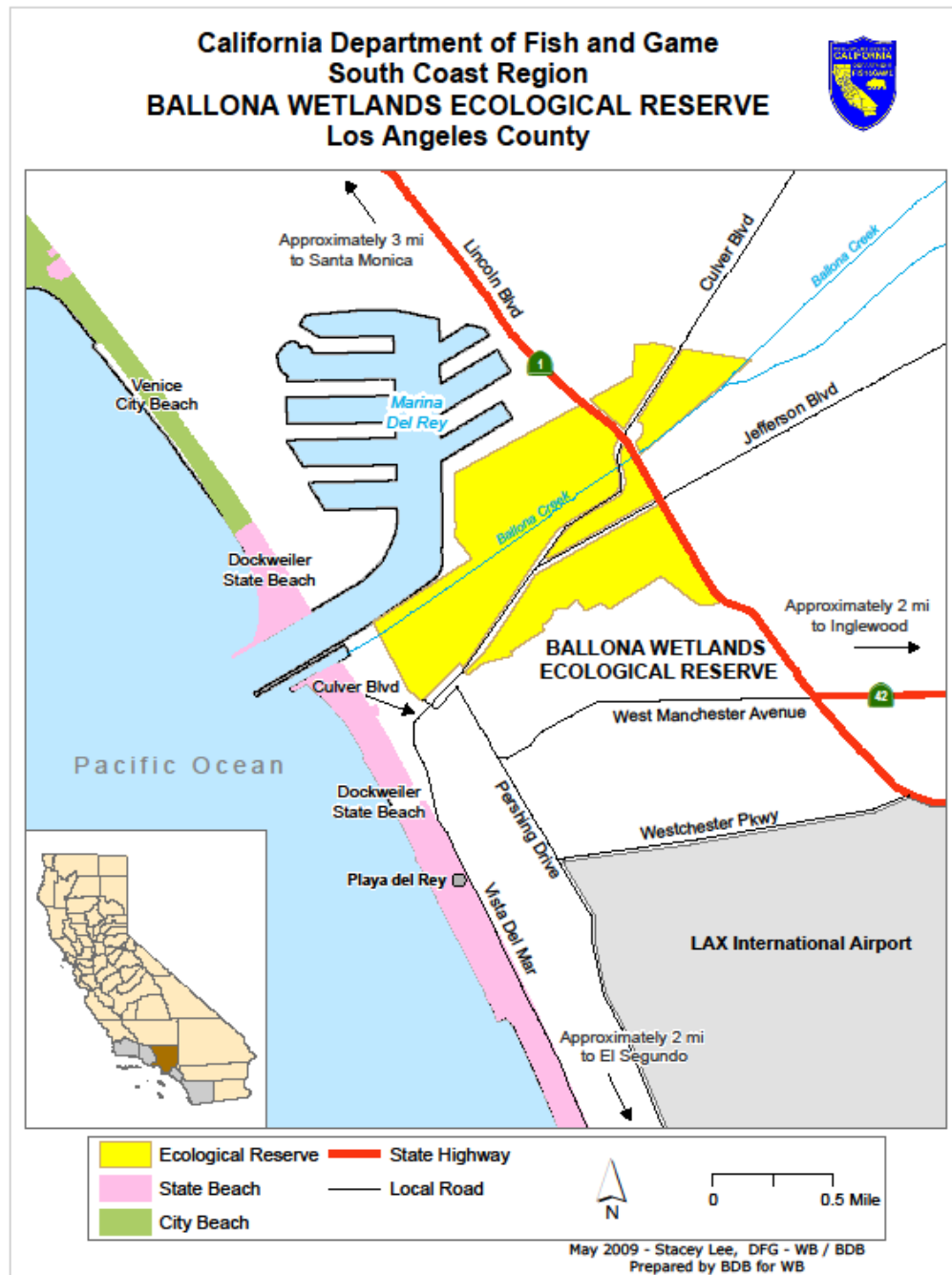


## Ballona – Death by Development





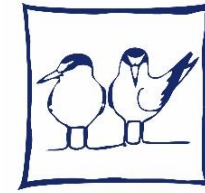
In 2005  
600 of the original  
2,000 acres of the  
historical  
Ballona Wetlands  
(in yellow)  
officially becomes  
an  
Ecological Reserve





# Ballona Discovery Park

Located at: 13110 Bluff Creek Drive,  
(off Lincoln Boulevard) Playa Vista, CA 90094



FRIENDS OF  
**BALLONA**  
WETLANDS

## Center for Urban Resilience (CUREs)

<http://cures.lmu.edu/our-programs/education/ballona-discovery-park/>

## Friends of Ballona Wetlands

[http://www.ballonafriends.org/visit\\_discovery\\_park.html](http://www.ballonafriends.org/visit_discovery_park.html)



CUREs Contact:  
(310) 338-5104  
[CUREs@lmu.edu](mailto:CUREs@lmu.edu)  
<http://cures.lmu.edu/>

Friends Contact:  
(310) 306-5994  
[info@ballonafriends.org](mailto:info@ballonafriends.org)  
<http://www.ballonafriends.org/>





# Loyola Marymount University and Friends of Ballona Wetlands Education Partnerships

- Tours
- Research
- Restorations

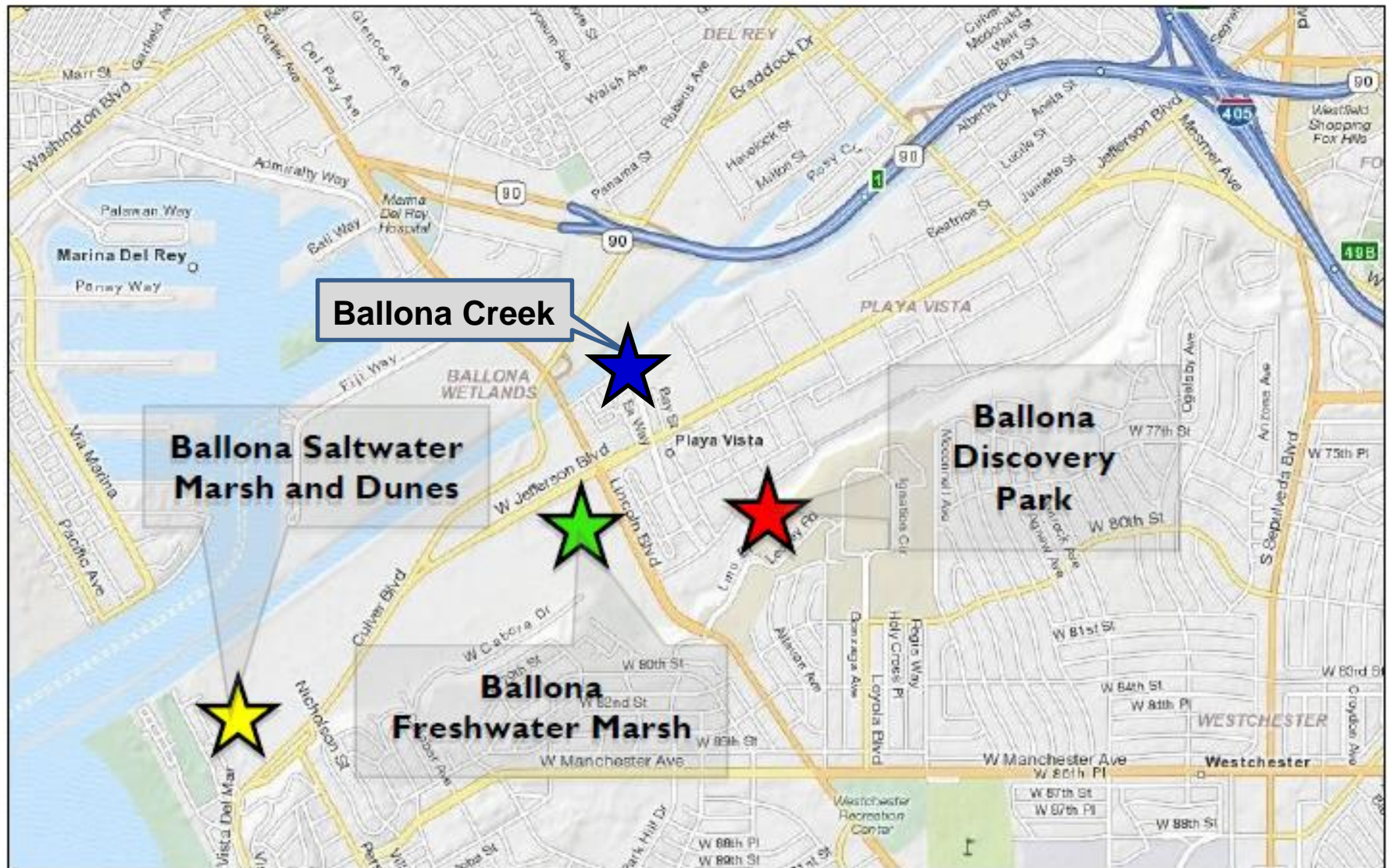


# Projects in the Ballona Wetlands and Service Areas

- Ballona Creek
- Ballona Discovery Park
- Ballona Freshwater Marsh
- Ballona Saltwater Marsh



# Where to go to “Explore and Experience Ballona!”







What the Friends are known for...



Successful Dunes Restoration



Over the past 25 years, over 95,000 volunteers have helped restore 8 acres of Dunes Habitat that once covered 30 miles of Southern California Coast Line







The Dunes in 1995





The Dunes in 2008



Thanks to the Friends restoration efforts over the past 25 years, the dunes are now once again home to many forms of life.



Anna's Hummingbird



Common Buckeye Butterfly



Mud Dauber Wasp



Pygmy Blue Butterfly



Acmon Blue Butterfly



Side blotch lizard



Cottontail Rabbit



California King snake



California Legless Lizard



Pacific Tree Frog



...and in July of 2011



... A population of the rare El Segundo Blue Butterfly was found in a restored area of the Ballona Wetlands!



# Tongva, People of the Earth



Ballona Wetlands  
is a sacred site





Prints of "Wiyot's Children" by Mary Leighton Thomson are available on the Friends Website: <http://www.ballonafriends.org/history.html>



The Tongva people  
domesticated wild  
dogs who then  
became part of their  
hunter-gatherer  
community





## THE CYCLE OF LIFE in the Ballona Wetlands

### EVERYTHING IN NATURE IS CONNECTED

All of the life forms that you see in the wetlands are deeply intertwined with each other and with the lives of humans.

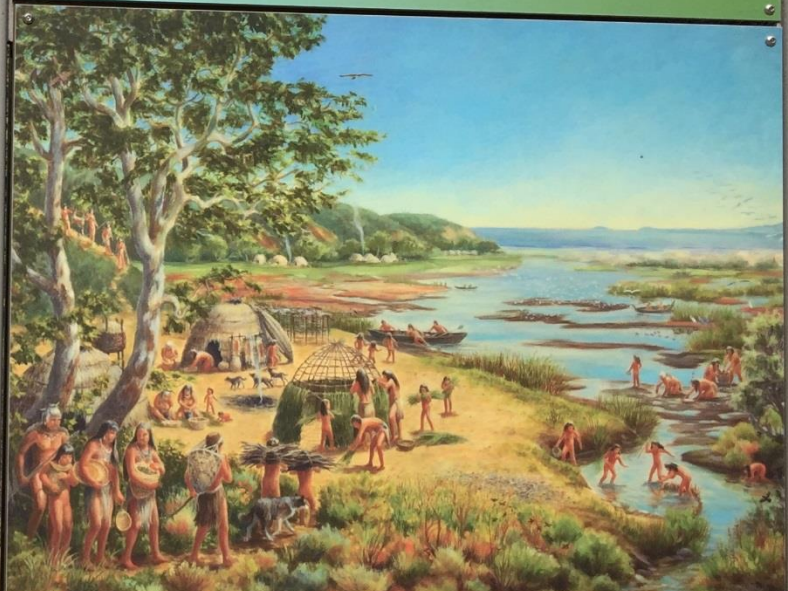


### WHAT IS A WETLAND?

The Ballona Wetlands are a combination of habitats. They include the Freshwater Marsh, Salt Marsh, Mud Flats, Lagoons, and Dunes. Learn more about them on the Watershed Walk here in the Park.



## THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE: Then and Now



"Wiyot's Children" is an oil painting created by Mary Leighton Thomson. The painting is a product of extensive research that Thomson conducted on the Gabriolino/Tongva people. It is one of only a few depictions showing the early lifestyle of the people native to the Ballona Wetlands.

Humans have depended upon the Ballona Wetlands for thousands of years. The earliest inhabitants of the area were Native Americans.



## Ballona Discovery Park – a model of wetlands habitat



With educational displays and interactive learning components



# Life in the Lagoons

## Biodiversity

From sea lettuce to cormorants, lagoons support plants and animals of all kinds. This diversity of life, or biodiversity, is an important part of any balanced ecosystem. The plants and animals of the lagoon contribute to a larger food web that extends through the entire wetlands. Restoration efforts are helping to maintain these complex interactions.





# kid's note



My Dog stays on a leash

# kid's note



I keep my cat inside





Hunting cat captured by motion sensor camera.



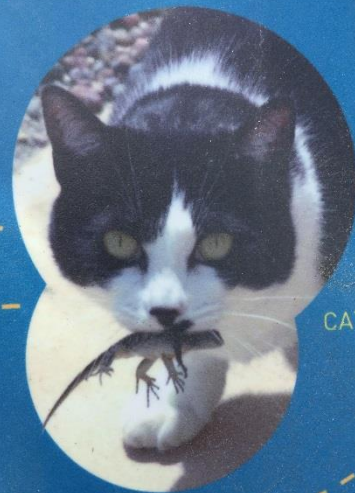
## The Challenge of Pets

Household pets can be a significant threat to the natural biodiversity of an area. Native species such as songbirds and rodents may not be prepared to protect themselves. Fragile plant life can be easily damaged by excited, romping animals. The final result is that only a few of the heartiest species will remain. Requiring dogs to be leashed as their owners enjoy the wetlands, and keeping cats at home, are just a couple of ways to support restoration efforts by protecting vulnerable species.

HUMAN



DOG



CAT

DAN



# Pet Animal Dumping in the Wetlands



Domestic Rabbits



# Pet Animal Dumping in the Wetlands



Red-eared Slider Turtle



# Pet Animal Dumping in the Wetlands



Boa Constrictor Snake





# Pet Animal Dumping in the Wetlands



Cat



# Pet Animal Dumping in the Wetlands



Dog



# WHAT CAN I DO?

**LOOK** OUT FOR  
COOL CRITTERS



**RIDE** MY BIKE



**LIMIT** USE OF  
PESTICIDES AND  
FERTILIZERS

**ENJOY**  
THE BEACH



USE A COMMERCIAL  
CAR **WASH**  
(they use less water)



**CARPPOOL**



**LEASH** MY DOG



**VOLUNTEER** TO KEEP  
NATURAL SPACES  
CLEAN AND HEALTHY  
go to: [www.ballonafriends.org](http://www.ballonafriends.org)





# A Delicate Balance





# The Delicate balance and diversity of wildlife in the Ballona Dunes can be negatively affected by Domestic Pets



Pygmy Blue Butterfly



Anna's Hummingbird



Common Buckeye Butterfly



Mud Dauber Wasp



Acmon Blue Butterfly



Side blotch lizard



Cottontail Rabbit



California King snake



California Legless Lizard



Pacific Tree Frog



LMU CUREs and its partners The Bay Foundation and Friends of Ballona Wetlands are trying to educate the public about this



Cats and Dogs not only kill other wild creatures when allowed to run free in sensitive habitat they also trample native plants and create biohazards with their feces and urine. Their mere presence is enough to deter wildlife from thriving