



Happy World Water Day

**This March, Celebrate Women and Water**

The Nature Conservancy is celebrating women and water this month as a confluence of both International Women's Day on the 8th and World Water Day on the 22nd. Through the Nature Conservancy work, scientists have learned that water isn't just a world crisis, it's a women's crisis. In response to these personal observations, The Nature Conservancy has created a Women and Water Fund. Every day, all around the world, women are connecting with water. Indeed, water is at the core of women's responsibilities in many societies, and millions of women and girls spend their days collecting and preparing water for cooking, cleaning, drinking and maintaining sanitation.



In the United States, most of us simply lift a handle or turn a knob and out it pours. The search for clean water doesn't stop us from working or attending school. It doesn't take us to dangerous parts of town. But regardless of where we live, women are dependent on clean water for our health and our happiness, to nourish ourselves and our families.

From the tiniest blue threads to mile-wide ribbons, rivers stitch together our lands. The natural cycling of water — falling from sky to ground, seeping into wetlands and aquifers, flowing through forests and cities and out to the ocean — connects us all. But we have pulled at these threads for centuries, extracting water for everything from growing crops to producing energy, and these demands on our waters are weakening the fabric.

For more information on the Women and Water Fund, visit: <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/habitats/riverslakes/explore/Women-and-Water.xml>

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**A Look At Chernobyl's Environment 25 Years Later**

As the world watches tragedy unfold in Japan, memories of the Chernobyl disaster ring loud. Chernobyl was a nuclear disaster that occurred on April 26, 1986 at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine when a sudden power output surged and the emergency shutdown failed, causing a reactor vessel rupture with a series of explosions. The resulting fire sent a plume of radioactive fallout into the atmosphere and over an extensive geographic area, reaching as far as North America.

**ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** According to GreenFacts.org, the radioactive materials released by the accident had many immediate detrimental effects on plants and animals living within 12 to 18 miles of the Chernobyl power plant. Each plant and animal responded differently to the accident depending on the dose of radiation received and level of sensitivity to the radiation. Overall, when high doses were sustained at relatively close distances from the reactor, both plants and animals experienced an increase in mortality and a decrease in reproduction. During the first few years after the accident, plants and animals of the Exclusion Zone (30+ mile evacuated region) showed many genetic effects of radiation. Today there are still reports of anomalies in plants and animals both in the Exclusion Zone and beyond.

**PARADOX:** Over the years, as the radioactivity levels decrease, the biological populations have been recovering. Some of the populations have recovered and grown because individuals reproduced or because plants and animals migrated from less affected areas. Human activities such as agriculture or industry have stopped in the area which has helped recovery. Paradoxically, the Exclusion Zone without any human activity has become a unique sanctuary for biodiversity and a lab to study both affects of radiation as well as recovery.



A white-tailed eagle chick observed recently in the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone. Before 1986, these rare predatory birds were hardly found in this area (Sergey Gaschak, 2004).

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**Desalination Demonstration Plan Unaffected By King**

Spring 2011

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

- Scientists are finding where ozone layers are thinner, whales actually suffer sunburns.
- 187,000 square miles of Alaskan Ice was recently set aside for Polar Bear Critical Habitat as the Bear populations have decreased significantly each year since 2001.
- Endangered Mountain Gorillas in central Africa have made a dramatic recovery increasing 26 percent since 2003 through international protection programs.
- World Carbon Emissions for 2010 are expected to be the highest in history.
- Only about 60 Javan Rhinos remain worldwide due to poaching for their horns considered an aphrodisiac.
- Genetically modified crops designed to tolerate Roundup have now created a super weed in the mid west also tolerant of Roundup.
- NOAA declared last year that swordfish and three other species have been fully rebuilt and no longer being overfished due to international cooperation.
- Bee kills are now being attributed to a combination of a fungus and virus which creates a lethal does of toxicity.
- Solar Panels will go back up on the White House for the first time since they were taken down in 1980.

## Harbor Sardine Deaths

Aside from the smell of dead fish, West Basin's demonstration plant was unaffected by the massive sardine kill in Redondo Beach during the second week of March. Some of the same factors that led to the fish seeking refuge in the Harbor, however, have had an effect on the desal plant. West Basin's intake and discharge system draw water from, and discharge to, an area outside of the marina through existing power plant intake lines that have been modified to accommodate the required hydraulic conditions for West Basin's demonstration project. Storms and strong winds increased turbidity in the source water, resulting in an increase in fine sand in the pre-filters (Arkal System), impacting the pre-straining process.



West Basin's operations team is evaluating changes to its response to such occurrences. One option includes the possibility of opening up more capacity in the pre-straining system when such conditions are present. In addition to the winds and increased turbidity, a significant 'red tide' or algal bloom was also present. Samples of the fish have been studied and found to have high levels of toxins. Scientists are considering that the fish may have traveled through the algal bloom - a 'perfect storm' if you will, caused by recent rains, increased nutrients in the runoff, and an upwelling of colder water mixing of warmer surface water.

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## The Urban-Wildlife Interface

Picture an urban coastal neighborhood: Butterflies, bees and lizards visit your backyard garden, an opossum foraged on the ripening tomatoes in the garden last night, and a red-tailed hawk hovers overhead looking for a squirrel meal in the park across the street. In a neighborhood further inland near the foothills, a bear soaks in a backyard spa, and coyotes prowl at night. Part of the urban wildlife picture is appealing; other parts exasperating, others unnerving. We appreciate and enjoy watching wildlife in our urban midst. Some wildlife - birds, insects, small reptiles and amphibians such as lizards and frogs, and small rodents, are beneficial to maintain native plant landscapes and balance the "food chain" in open area habitats that may include larger wild animals or those that are dangerous to us. On the flip side, large wild animals can lose their fear of humans and endanger people or pets as well as themselves.



Southern California's urban sprawl into the hills, mountains and deserts has left reduced and fragmented spaces for wildlife, especially for larger animals such as coyotes, black bears, deer, and other animals we consider a nuisance, detrimental, or dangerous. Displaced from their natural surroundings, they adapt to live near us, exploiting convenient water, shelter, and food sources from pet food, gardens, and poorly stored garbage. Encounters with these animals are now commonplace. Local government programs to relocate or euthanize trapped animals fail to reduce their numbers, because the void left in a relocated animal's "home range" is occupied by other animals that quickly reproduce and exploit easy living conditions close to humans.

We can co-exist with larger wild animals and minimize their impact to us in the "urban-wildlife interface" with some simple deterrents: Keep all pet food inside, fence yards, screen holes in house foundations, seal foundation/attic/crawlspace cracks to prevent small animals from entry, secure all trash and garbage containers and clean/disinfect them regularly to eliminate odors.

For more information on living side-by-side with our wild neighbors, try the following websites:

- **Humane Society:**  
[http://www.pasadenahumane.org/site/PageServer?pagename=programs\\_wildlife\\_fa](http://www.pasadenahumane.org/site/PageServer?pagename=programs_wildlife_fa)
- **South Bay Wildlife Rehab:**  
<http://www.sbwtr.org/>
- **Los Angeles Co. Dept. of Animal Control:**  
<http://www.animalcare.lacounty.gov>
- **Calif. Dept. of Fish and Game:**  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov>

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## Sustainable Landscape Practices

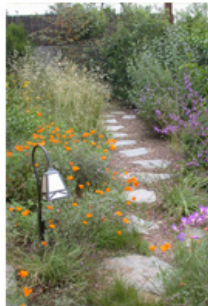
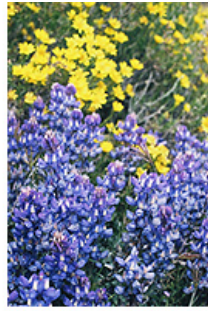
Sustainable landscaping practices allow us to work with nature and the natural conditions of the watershed where we live. Changing the way you garden with a few easy tips can make a huge difference on the environment. These practices

- A pair of once believed extinct Albatross has been nesting in the US Midway Atoll Territory
- The US Military has set a goal to use 50 percent renewable energy by 2020.
- A Washington woman was killed by a mountain goat while out on a hike yet a Montana woman chases off an aggressive bear by throwing zucchini at its head.

can save money by saving energy and water and allow you to spend less time in your landscape and free to do other things, while improving the quality of the environment.

The following are some best practices for sustainable landscaping, adopted from the River Friendly Landscapes Guidelines:

- **Landscape for the local climate:** choose plants local to your environment, thrive on local rainfall and in fire prone areas, plant appropriately plants
- **Landscape for less to the Landfill:** choose plants that match space available, reduce pruning, and compost your garden waste
- **Nurture the soil:** feed your soils naturally with mulch or composted material to protect the top soil, avoid compaction - don't overwater and avoid synthetic pesticides and herbicides which kill natural microorganisms in healthy soil
- **Conserve water:** don't overwater and use mulch to retain water, minimize the turf in your landscape and use low water using plants, and manage your irrigation system to avoid runoff such as drip irrigation
- **Conserve energy:** plant trees to shade paved areas and air conditioners, plant deciduous trees on the west and south for shade in the summer, sun in the winter and plan outdoor lighting carefully
- **Protect air and water quality:** exhaust natural methods of controlling weeds and pests before using synthetic chemicals, plant trees and minimize impervious surfaces
- **Create and protect wildlife habitat for birds, bees and butterflies:** create landscapes with diverse heights, plant California natives, and avoid the use of pesticides because these animals can be damaged by ingesting these chemicals
- **Grow your own food:** connect with how food is grown, create edible landscapes through planting fruit trees, herbs or vegetables and plant seeds in containers



Source: <http://cagardenweb.ucdavis.edu>

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## Earth Hour 2011: It's Time To Go Beyond The Hour

Earth Hour started in 2007 in Sydney, Australia when 2.2 million individuals and more than 2,000 businesses turned their lights off for one hour to take a stand against climate change. Only a year later and Earth Hour had become a global sustainability movement with more than 50 million people across 35 countries/territories participating.



Global landmarks such as the Sydney Harbour Bridge, CN Tower in Toronto, Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, and Rome's Colosseum, all stood in darkness, as symbols of hope for a cause that grows more urgent by the hour.

On Saturday 27 March, Earth Hour 2010 became the biggest Earth Hour ever. A record 128 countries and territories joined the global display of climate action. Iconic buildings and landmarks from Asia Pacific to Europe and Africa to the Americas switched off. People across the world from all walks of life turned off their lights and came together in celebration and contemplation of the one thing we all have in common - our planet.

Earth Hour 2011 will take place on **Saturday 26 March at 8.30PM** (local time). This Earth Hour we want you to go beyond the hour, so after the lights go back on think about what else you can do to make a difference. Together our actions add up.

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## Earth Day Around The Corner In The District

**Carson**  
Carson's "Ecology Extravaganza"



Millender-McDonald Community Center  
801 E. Carson St.  
Saturday April 23 10 a.m.  
Admission is free  
Call 310-835-0212, Ext. 1465, for more information.



#### **Palos Verdes Peninsula**

Celebrate Earth Day's 40th Anniversary  
Paseo Lunado Green at Palos Verdes Drive West and Paseo Lunado in  
Lunada Bay  
Sunday April 24 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

#### **Rolling Hills Estates**

Rolling Hills Estates Earth Day Celebration  
Silver Spur Road between Hawthorne and Crenshaw boulevards in Rolling  
Hills Estates  
The event will feature fun and educational activities, green giveaways, and  
information about a variety of environmental programs. Waste Management will  
accept household batteries and inkjet cartridges for recycling without a fee. A  
sustainable craft project for children and an art exhibit made of recycled content  
also will be featured.  
Saturday April 23 - 4 p.m.

#### **Rancho Palos Verdes**

Rancho Palos Verdes Composting Workshop  
Fireside Room at Hesse Park, 29301 Hawthorne Blvd. Visit  
Saturday April 23 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
[www.smartgardening.com](http://www.smartgardening.com)

#### **The Cabrillo Marine Aquarium Earth Day Beach Cleanup and Fair**

3720 Stephen M. White Drive.  
Saturday April 23 8 to 10 a.m. Point Fermin State Marine Park and Cabrillo  
Beach  
Fair from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the aquarium,  
For more information, call 310-548-7562 or go to  
[www.cabrilloomarineaquarium.org](http://www.cabrilloomarineaquarium.org)

#### **San Pedro**

E-waste Recycling Hosted by San Pedro Girl Scouts - Troops 9535 and 11955  
Albertsons at 28090 S. Western Ave. in San Pedro.  
"Be Green" at their free e-waste and recycling event to raise money for their  
troop  
Acceptable items to drop off include computers, monitors, laptops, televisions,  
stereos, scanners, cameras, keyboards, DVD players and anything with a  
screen. No appliances or batteries will be accepted.  
10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday April 23

### **Other Events**

#### **AEG's Earth Day Festival**

LA Live Plaza  
800 W. Olympic Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90015  
*April 22, 12-6 p.m.*

#### **Aquarium of the Pacific Earth Day Celebration**

Aquarium of the Pacific  
100 Aquarium Way  
Long Beach, CA 90802  
*April 24, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and April 25, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.*

#### **Earth Day Celebration Pasadena**

Memorial Park & Armory Center for the Arts  
145 N. Raymond Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91103  
*April 24, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.*

#### **Earth Day Festival with Frog's Leap Winery**

Pourtal Wine Tasting Bar  
104 Santa Monica Blvd.  
Santa Monica, CA 90401  
310-393-7693  
*April 22, 7-9 p.m.*

#### **A Promise For the Planet**

Spaceland  
1717 Silver Lake Blvd.  
Silver Lake, CA 90026  
*April 22, 12-5 p.m.*

#### **Malibu Eco Expo and Home Tour**

Malibu Country Mart  
3835 Cross Creek Rd.  
Malibu, CA 90265  
310-456-9025  
*April 24, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (expo), 11 a.m.-2 p.m. (LEED home tour)*

#### **The Star Eco Station Children's Earth Day**

Rio Vista School  
10101 Jefferson Blvd.  
Culver City, 90232  
*April 25, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.*

Visit us at [www.westbasin.org](http://www.westbasin.org) © West Basin Municipal Water District

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