



# Volunteer Spotlight



Docent **Joan Brooks** is a dedicated volunteer at the Tijuana Estuary. Over the past two years, she has contributed an impressive 264 hours of service to the Tijuana Estuary. If you know Joan, then you know that she adores plants. She brings her passion, experience, and expertise to the nature walks that she offers on the 2nd Saturday of every month at 11 a.m. Joan has the remarkable ability to see the beauty and complexity of nature even the smallest and most subtle plants of the Tijuana Estuary. Often, she'll share one of her favorite William Blake quotes with those on her nature walks: "To see a world in a grain of sand, And a heaven in a wildflower, Hold infinity in the palm of your hand, And eternity in an hour."



*If you are interested in learning more about the Volunteer Program or would like to sign up as a volunteer please contact Sarah Emerson, Community Outreach Coordinator, at 619.575.3613 x330 or [semerson@parks.ca.gov](mailto:semerson@parks.ca.gov).*



#### WEBSITES:

[www.tijuanaestuary.org](http://www.tijuanaestuary.org)

#### NOAA

<http://ners.noaa.gov/TijuanaRiver/welcome.html>  
(education)  
[www.estuaries.gov](http://www.estuaries.gov)

#### CA State Parks

<http://www.parks.ca.gov>

#### USFWS

<http://www.fws.gov/sandiegorefuges/Tijuana.htm>

#### Supported by:



# Go with the Flow

A quarterly publication of the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve

## Spring 2009

### Eight Great Reasons Why You Should Compost

1. Yard and food waste make up 30% of the waste stream.
2. Healthy plants from healthy soil look better, produce better, and have a much greater ability to fight off pests and diseases which will reduce pest problems-and your use of pesticides.
3. Adding organic materials to the soil improves moisture retention.
4. Adding decomposed organic material to the soil feeds beneficial organisms.
5. Composting saves money-you avoid the cost of buying soil conditioners, bagged manure etc.
6. Home composting is a valuable tool in educating children about nature and the cycle of life.
7. Feeding your plants well will improve your own diet. Plants grown in depleted soils have a reduced nutrient content.
8. Compost provides a balanced, slow-release source of nutrients that helps the soil hold nutrients long enough for plants to use them.

[www.recycleworks.org](http://www.recycleworks.org)

*Designated by NOAA as the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (TRNERR) is one of 27 estuarine reserves in the country devoted to education and research. The Reserve is managed cooperatively by CA State Parks & the USFWS.*



Photo Courtesy of WILD Coast

## It Is What It Is

- Clay Phillips, Reserve Manager

"It is what it is." That's a common phrase spoken by our wise old sage Research Coordinator, Dr. Jeff Crooks. I like it. Spoken by Jeff and others around the Reserve, it's verbal short-hand for: "Well, that's not how I was hoping it would turn out or expected it would turn out, but it's what we have to deal with now, so let's have at it and somehow make the best of it." The ability to adapt to changing conditions is something I greatly admire about the people I get to work with here at the Research Reserve, the Refuge, SWIA, and our many other partners.

And, we've had many opportunities to adapt over the past few years: failed grants, the fence, changes in school priorities, Mexico politics, California's fiscal crisis, and many, many others.

Of course, we could go the other way on any of these disappointments. Like Winnie-the-Pooh's Eeyore, we could say "It is what it is...just like it always has and will be...sigh...no hope." I think the people around here don't succumb to pessimism because they have their head on straight, so they remain clear about what's most important. In spite of disappointments, we still have a really cool, important place to study, protect, restore, and teach people about. We still get to be ambassadors on behalf of remnant coastal wetlands throughout southern California and northern Baja. We're still on mission.

I love that part in the first Lord of the Rings movie when Frodo is whining about how he wished none of this would have happened. (I've never cared much for him.) Wise old Gandalf responds "So do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us." Our staff and volunteers are doing great with the time they've been given and are making the most of "...what it is"!



TIJUANA ESTUARY VISITOR CENTER  
301 CASPIAN WAY  
IMPERIAL BEACH, CA 91932



# Spring 2009

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|-------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| March |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 1     | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 8     | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15    | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22    | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29    | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |    |

|       |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| April |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|       |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 5     | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12    | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19    | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26    | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |

|     |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| May |    |    |    |    |    |    |
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| 3   | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10  | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17  | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24  | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31  |    |    |    |    |    |    |

## The Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center is open: Wednesday - Sunday, 10:00 am - 5:00pm For more information please call 619-575-3613



### Nature Walk

Visitor Center • 11 - noon  
The Tijuana Estuary protects a variety of plant communities and wildlife. Come and discover the richness that unfolds around the Visitor Center, be it upland plant adaptations or the significance of our estuarine habitat. All ages. FREE!



### Bird Walk

Visitor Center • 3 - 4pm  
Take a leisurely stroll down the McCoy Trail and view and learn about some of the 370 species of birds that live or stop by this Reserve on their yearly migration. All ages. FREE!



### Saturday Speaker Series

Visitor Center • 11 - noon  
Invited speakers will report on various topics related to the Tijuana Estuary and its watershed. Join us for an informal way to get to know the estuary experts. FREE! For more info call 619.575.3613 x305



### Junior Rangers

Visitor Center • 3:30 - 4:30pm  
Children ages 7 to 12 are invited to take part in this exciting program, designed to help them discover the rich natural and cultural heritage preserved in parks. FREE! For more info call 619.575.3613 x305/306



### Volunteer Meeting

Visitor Center • 10 - 11am  
Share your interest in the natural environment with your fellow volunteers at the Tijuana Estuary. Collaborate with volunteers and staff on upcoming projects. Discuss news and happenings with your fellow nature lovers. New and potential volunteers welcome! FREE! For more info call 619.575.3613 x330



### Docent Training

Visitor Center • 9 - noon  
Share your love of nature with others by becoming a Tijuana Estuary Docent! Docents are highly trained volunteers who promote a greater understanding of the Tijuana Estuary through working with school groups, leading nature walks, and helping out at special events. Sign up for our 10 week docent training course by calling 619.575.3613 x330 or emailing semerson@parks.ca.gov.



### Volunteer Stewardship Event

Tijuana Slough NWR  
9 - noon



### Volunteer Stewardship Event

Border Field State Park  
9 - noon

Get outside, give back, and have fun! Spend the morning weeding, watering, and planting. Volunteers of all ages and abilities welcomed and appreciated. For more info call 619.575.3613 x330 or email semerson@parks.ca.gov.



### Stewardship Session

Visitor Center or Border Field SP  
9 - noon  
Here's a way to get your hands dirty and help the environment. Join our team of Friday stewardship volunteers. You must sign up ahead of time. Call 619.575.3613 x330



### Plover Patrol Training

Visitor Center • 9am - 1:00pm  
Volunteers are needed to help monitor beach activities that impact the survival of the threatened Western Snowy Plover and educate beach visitors about the various bird species that rely on increasingly rare beach and sand dune habitat. Sign up for the free 2-day training by calling 619.575.3613 x330 or emailing semerson@parks.ca.gov.



### Marsh Madness Open House

Visitor Center • 3:30 - 5:30pm  
Experience the world of an estuary - where the river meets the sea - the most productive natural habitat on the planet! You'll meet marsh species small and large, see science in action, and discover the many values of wetlands. Migrate on by for a few minutes or extend your stay. *Part of the San Diego Science Festival.* FREE! For more info call 619.575.3613 x305/306



### Int'l Migratory Bird Day

Visitor Center • 9:00am - 2:00pm  
This International Migratory Bird Day, Saturday May 9th at the Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center, we are Celebrating Birds in Culture. We'll feature the roles that birds play in the native cultures along the Pacific Flyway. Kumeyaay wildcat singer Stan Rodriguez will regale us with his native songs and stories and there will be other fun activities for the whole family. FREE! For more info call 619.575.3613



### Tijuana Estuary Explorers Teacher Training

Visitor Center • 9 - noon  
Teachers, step into the world of a field biologist in this hands-on training. Experience the estuary - pinch plants that adapt to salt, catch plankton, observe birds, and travel through a watershed. After you're done, you can bring your students on the exploration too! FREE! For more info call 619.575.3613 x305/306