



# NATURE NEWS

## Welcome to Nature News

Through this quarterly newsletter we hope to encourage you to **CONNECT** with us through our many programs, **EXPLORE** the wonders of nature, and help us **PRESERVE** Orange County wildlands. Enjoy!



## Earth Day Festival

Saturday, April 26  
2:00 pm - 6:00 pm

[VOLUNTEER AT THE FESTIVAL](#)

## Rambles About Nature

### Nature as your Neighbor

On a recent camping trip with my family, my kids and I were walking around the campground “taking in the neighborhood”. We checked out the different ways people

## Volunteer Corner

set up their campsites. Some in tents and some in campers. Some with big families, some just a couple, and occasionally a solo camper. These were our neighbors for the week; however, they weren't our only neighbors. Nature was now our closest neighbor. Trees, rocks, squirrels, deer, wild turkeys, and many other plants and animals surrounded us. As we walked around taking in the sites, we began to talk about what it means to be nature's neighbor and what it takes to be a good neighbor to nature.



We certainly do not need to be camping in the woods for nature to be our neighbor. Nature surrounds us in many places. We often think of places like national parks, preserves, and wilderness areas as where we can find nature, but nature can be in our neighborhood and at the park just up the street. Nature isn't always a place you need to go to; it is all around us and we are a part of nature. We share the community. We share the neighborhood and can be good neighbors in the same way we are good neighbors to our human neighbors.

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## Laura's Line



### Living with Wildlife

This newsletter is all about our Natural Neighbors, most of which we live quite happily next to in either our gardens or the Nature Reserve. However, some of our Natural Neighbors, make us a little nervous, coyotes for example.

Coyotes have their place in the ecosystem of the Nature Reserve where they perform vital ecosystem services such as rodent and insect control. Understanding the behavior of coyotes can help reduce conflicts with this species.

Most wild animals, including coyotes, naturally avoid or fear humans. However, coyotes are omnivores who will take advantage of easy neighborhood food such as rabbits on the lawn, pet food left outside and fruit or berries from planted ornamentals. Most of the time, coyotes go about their lives, avoiding or ignoring us. However, coyotes can become aggressive towards humans or our pets in three general circumstances:



## Building Community through Volunteerism

Volunteering has many individual benefits: making new friends, learning new skills, feeling a sense of purpose, and improving your mental and physical health; but it also helps create community. Volunteering strengthens neighborly bonds and embodies the "culture of care" for each other and for the land.

We asked Nature Reserve volunteers why they volunteer and how they feel connected to their community through volunteerism. Longtime volunteer Soussan Ahmadi said,

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## Staff Picks



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## Species Spotlight

### Cooper's Hawk

*(Astur cooperii)*

Cooper's hawks (*Astur cooperii*) are a medium-sized hawk and common year-round residents in southern California. This species has the classic accipiter shape with broad shoulders/wings and a very long, rounded tail. They are about the size of an American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) and smaller than the more common red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*). Adults are typically steel blue-gray above with reddish barring on the underparts and thick dark bands on the tail. Cooper's hawks occur in forests and woodlands but can also be regularly observed in recreational parks, neighborhoods, backyard bird feeders, and along streets with tall trees.



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## Community Connections



### Planting the Seeds of Stewardship

Starting in 2020, The Nature Reserve has held a program to help local high school juniors and seniors become more familiar with the careers in

environmental science and land management. Students are invited to apply and interview to be part of the program that runs through the fall, meeting twice a month on Saturday mornings. Each meeting introduces a different professional in the field of environmental science and the role they play with The Nature Reserve and other projects in Orange County.

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## Q&A: "How are you a good nature neighbor?"

Being a good neighbor means being considerate, kind, helpful and respectful to those who live around you. To us, that includes our natural neighbors, our native plants and animals. We asked our staff, "How are you a good nature neighbor?" Find out how we protect, support and care for our natural neighbors in our own homes and community.

STAFF ANSWERS

## Outdoor Explorers



### Caring for Our Natural Neighbors with Kids

As children deepen their connection to nature, they will naturally want to help and care for plants and animals they encounter. While most of the time the best way to care for nature is to leave it alone, there are also many effective ways to support and protect our natural friends living alongside us. Use these kid-friendly activities to help young explorers develop a sense of caring and compassion for our natural neighbors.

CARING FOR NATURE





# Summer Day Camp

**REGISTRATION  
OPEN NOW!**

Join us for a summer centered around nature!

Ages: 6-11

- June 9-12: Outdoor Explorers!
- June 16-19: Nature Artists!
- June 23-26: California Animal Adventures!



Support our programs!

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