

# OVERVIEW

SPRING/SUMMER 2023 -ISSUE 65

The Wilderness Issue:  
Flora and Fauna of Franklin Hills



FRANKLIN HILLS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



*"Grow where you're planted."* This advice was given to me by my favorite boss years ago after listening to me highlight some imperfection in my perfectly great job. She encouraged me to make the most of the opportunities in front of me and wisely guided me toward some much-needed perspective.

In January, our longstanding *Overview* editor, Elizabeth Richardson, announced her forced retirement due to diminished eyesight. Elizabeth served our neighborhood for decades, even after moving to northern California.

We desperately needed a new editor, but volunteers were in short supply. So, with a glass of wine in hand, I convinced board members Karen Altus and Jessica Luebke to co-edit this issue with me. I am grateful for their willingness to approach this new job with such zest, grace and humor. P-22 serves as the inspiration for this wilderness-themed "flora and fauna" issue. Reading its articles, I am reminded of how much of nature's beauty surrounds us.

Within sprawling Los Angeles, we are so fortunate to live in this oasis. We look at gorgeous foliage blooming while walking our adorable, well-loved pets through the neighborhood. From balconies we see flocks of birds soaring, hear owls

hooting, smell skunks skunking and watch squirrels consume the contents of our vegetable gardens. Despite having a "black thumb," I somehow now own a house where we regularly harvest a surprising variety of citrus and herbs.

In the past months I have felt growth of both my roots and branches here in Franklin Hills. The loss of both Elizabeth's eyesight and P-22 unexpectedly brought me new perspective and appreciation for the people, plants and creatures that surround me. I hope you find the same when reading this issue.

– AW



P-22 was the inspiration for this wildlife-themed issue of the *Overview*. (See full story, "The End of an Era" on page 16). As it turns out, a Franklin Hills resident has a friend who knows Steve Winter, the photographer who famously photographed P-22. Steve graciously granted us permission to share three of his majestic photos in this issue. We are grateful to Steve for allowing us to share these images with our community.

Steve Winter has been a photographer for *National Geographic* for over two decades. He specializes in wildlife,

## About the Cover The Wilderness Issue

**Karen Altus**

and particularly, big cats. He is a Nat Geo Explorer and has been named *BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year* and *BBC Wildlife Photojournalist of the Year*.

He was a two-time winner of Picture of the Year International's Global Vision Award and won 1st prize in the nature story category from *World Press Photo* in 2008 and 2014, and won 2nd prize in *World Press Photo 2020* in the Contemporary Issues category.

Steve has appeared on *60 Minutes*, *CBS Nightly News*, *NPR*, *BBC*, *CNN*, *NG WILD* and other media outlets. He speaks globally on big cats and conservation for *Nat Geo LIVE*.



📷: STEVE WINTER



STEVE WINTER'S PHOTO OF P-22 FEATURED ON THE COVER OF THE DECEMBER 2013 ISSUE OF NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

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## About The Overview

The Overview is a semi-annual publication created and distributed by volunteer residents, neighbors, friends, and supporters of the Franklin Hills Residents Association, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

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# A Decorated Tradition Continues!

Pat Hadnagy

It is so fitting that the bridge we love to decorate, the iconic symbol of Los Feliz and our beloved Franklin Hills, is now permanently adorned with a plaque commemorating the man who started the wonderful tradition. Of course, it is no coincidence that the placement of this homage to Christopher Boutelle sits against the face of a turret where he carefully placed his ladder to hang a wreath, year in, year out--without fail, and always with a smile.

In a previous article, I shared how Chris got me involved decorating the bridge with neighbors and FHRA Board Members. My daughters loved to join, as much for the donut holes we always brought as enjoying the company and the effort with everyone who braved the early Sunday mornings to decorate.

Now, what Chris started so many years ago for the December holidays, has blossomed into a year-round celebration of many other holidays and important dates to remember. For Summer, we started decorating for the Fourth of July. While planning for the Fourth of July, we realized that it took nearly a hundred years after our Declaration of Independence was signed for the enslaved people of Galveston, Texas, to be freed. As such, we hang flags to recognize and celebrate Juneteenth. To continue the celebration of freedom for all, we also decorate the Shakespeare Bridge for Pride Month.

Finally, when the days shorten and start to cool, we decorate for Fall to celebrate harvest season, the start of a new school year, and our reasons to be thankful. After this, in just a few weeks, it's time to fill the shoes left behind by Chris, steady up the ladders and decorate the bridge once again for the December holidays.

If you ever want to participate, just let us know. Or, if you see us out there, feel free to stop, say hi, and if you can, join in! That's how I got involved and it's been a lot of fun ever since. Chris started putting together the original decorations and, since then, our decorations are a collection of donations from Franklin Hills residents and purchases by the FHRA. If you'd like to sponsor a particular holiday's bridge decor, please reach out to the FHRA via email at [FHRA@franklinhills.org](mailto:FHRA@franklinhills.org).

We hope you enjoy the decorations as much as we do!



THE DILIGENT CHRIS BOUTELLE TIGHTENING THE CHAIN SECURING A HOLIDAY WREATH TO THE SHAKESPEARE BRIDGE



CHRIS BOUTELLE GUIDING THE LIGHTS HUNG AROUND THE TOP OF A TURRET

📷: PAT HADNAGY



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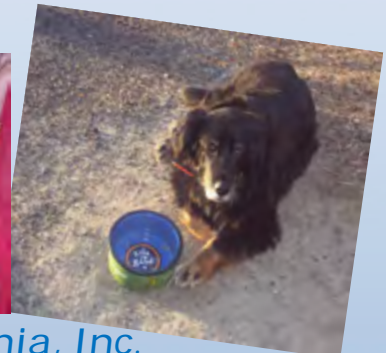
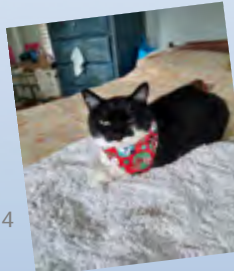
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**AcesAngels.org** Dogs for adoption/foster, donation & volunteer opportunities.

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# A Spooktacular Return to Community

**Joshua Melville**

I stepped onto my balcony this past October 29th in awe. Normally, if I looked down all I would see on the quiet artery known as Radio Street atop Franklin Hills would be the occasional jogger or dog walker. Today there was a Mardi Gras! A bouncy tent and rock band graced the asphalt along with hundreds of my neighbors attending the Franklin Hills Halloween Block Party. The event was organized by volunteers of the Residents Association.

When we moved to the Hill in 2009 at age 49, my wife Cindy and I were among its youngest residents and the only nightlife to be found were prowling coyotes. Feeling frisky, we tried our hand at being the Hill socialites with an annual mid-October salon called, "Falliday," a contraction of Fall and holiday coined by my wife. With catered food and an open bar, friends with busy lives attended with cocktails in hand and played catch-up. We looked forward to this event every year for the better part of a decade.

The pandemic squashed it. Many perennials had moved out of LA. Others would not attend unless masks were mandatory. Needless to say, it was not going to be the tradition we treasured.

But this past October the Halloween Festival brought its spirit back to life in ways we never could have: with raffles, live music, and a wine and cigar grotto. Once again, our yard was populated with families creating memories, performers sharing their talents and even the local Council Member attending. There was a real sense of community, signaling that our neighborhood had arrived as a place each year to make new traditions.

But to me, personally the festival was a bit more. It represented the idea that the world had finally begun returning to normal. And after almost three years of barren streets, I looked down on the children playing and adults dancing and could just not stop smiling. Our little-known hills had become a welcoming destination.



## About the FHRA

**Mission Statement:** *The FHRA promotes a sense of community by bringing neighbors together to help create a safe and vibrant neighborhood for all!*

**Purpose:** This Association is organized and operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This Association is a nonprofit public benefit corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person. It is organized under the Nonprofit Public Benefit Law for public purposes.

**Objective:** The specific purpose of this Association is to improve the community and the quality of life and promote the common good and general welfare of the people in the Franklin Hills neighborhood.

NEIGHBORS TAKE OVER RADIO STREET FOR THE ANNUAL HALLOWEEN BLOCK PARTY

PHOTO: RICK LAROCCA

# Memorializing Chris Boutelle

9/2/46 – 11/22/21

Michael Wilson

I had the pleasure of meeting Chris Boutelle at my first Franklin Hills Board meeting on November 17, 2021. Chris greeted me with a smile and could not have been nicer. We only had a chance to exchange a few words that night but I could tell he was a great guy and I was looking forward to getting to know him. Little did I know he would perish in a car crash only five days later. Of course, we were all stunned and saddened by this terrible news.

Chris lived in the Franklin Hills for 31 years and was an active member of the Franklin Hills Residents Association for 30 of those years. He spearheaded many beautification and improvement projects in the area including neighborhood clean-ups and street repairs. He was a key volunteer in the writing, distribution, and ad sales for the FHRA Overview newsletter. His work set an example and left a legacy of neighborhood involvement in our community of more than 1,900 residents.

At our Board meeting after his passing, I suggested we consider honoring Chris with a plaque on the Shakespeare Bridge as he was so instrumental in the effort to decorate the bridge on holidays. Everyone agreed it was a good idea so I volunteered to take it on as a project.

Since the city owns the bridge, I reached out to our City Council Member's (Nithya Raman) office for advice on how to go about getting city approval. They were helpful and directed me to the Planning Department. I had to apply for a permit and assumed it would be a simple process. I quickly learned otherwise! This was my first time dealing with L.A. city bureaucracy and I have come to understand why people become exasperated dealing with the red tape. In the end it took basically a full year to complete. I had to deal

with four different departments and must have written or received close to 50 emails. Once we gained the sign-off from all departments, I was informed we needed to show proof of one million dollars liability insurance – for an 8" x 10" brass plaque! At this point I was nearly ready to give up. I went back to our local City Council (CD4) office and said I felt this was an absurd demand and asked them to help. They kindly took it on and made the project theirs, hence freeing us from having to provide insurance. So, a full year later, we finally received our permit.

Chris Boutelle was memorialized with a plaque dedication ceremony on the Shakespeare Bridge on Saturday, March 11, 2023. We were joined by our local City Councilmember Nithya Raman, FHRA Board President Alison Wallace, and Chris's nephew, Nick Difruscia, in honoring Chris.



PICTURE OF CHRIS BOUTELLE PLAQUE

📷: MICHAEL WILSON



PHOTO OF ALISON WALLACE, NICK DIFRUSCIA, AND COUNCILMEMBER NITHYA RAMAN

📷: PAT HADNAGY



DECORATING VOLUNTEERS HONOR CHRIS BOUTELLE AFTER DECORATING THE BRIDGE FOR THE FIRST TIME WITHOUT HIM

📷: PAT HADNAGY

# Neighborhood Contacts

## City of LA Contacts

City Services	
	☎ 311 ✉ 311@lacity.org Hours M-F 7am-7pm Hours Sat - Sun 8:30 am-4:45 pm
Animal Services Dead Animal Pickup (Sanitation) Lost Animals Barking Dogs	☎ (888) 452-7381 extension 2 extension 2 extension 3
Building & Safety Violations	☎ (213) 473-3231
Parking Enforcement (DOT)	☎ (213) 485-4184
Council District 4	
Councilmember Nithya Raman (CD4)	☎ (213) 473-7004 ✉ contactCD4@lacity.org ☎ (213) 473-2311
Field Deputy Jennifer Hull	☎ (213) 645 7721 ✉ jennifer.hull@lacity.org
Graffiti Removal	☎ 311
Homeless Services	☎ 311
LA County Info Line	☎ 211
Mayor Karen Bass, City of Los Angeles	
Mayor Helpdesk	✉ mayor.helpdesk@lacity.org
Central Area Representative Serapia Kim	☎ 311 ✉ serapia.kim@lacity.org
Neighborhood Prosecutor Gabrielle Taylor	☎ (213) 978-2230 or (323) 561-3403 ✉ gabrielle.taylor@lacity.org

## Utilities

Dig Alert (call before digging)	☎ 811
LADWP	☎ 1-800-DIAL-DWP (1-800-342-5397)
SoCalGas (inc. leak reporting)	☎ 1-800-427-2200
Sanitation	
Trash Bin Replacement	☎ (800) 773-2489x1
Bulky Item Removal	☎ (800) 773-2489x1

## Community Contacts

FHRA	✉ (323) 908-6078 ✉ FHRA@franklinhills.org
LAUSD	
LAUSD School Police	☎ (213) 625-6631
Marshall High School - Main#	☎ (323) 671-1400
King Middle School - Main#	☎ (323) 644-6700
Los Feliz Public Library	☎ (323) 913-4710
Lycée International de Los Angeles (LILA)	☎ (323) 665-4526 ✉ losfeliz@lilaschool.com
Prospect Studios	
Janet Campus, Production Services	☎ (323) 671-4022
Prospect Studio Security Shift Leader	☎ (323) 203-5201
David Ortiz	☎ (323) 671-5973
Security Operations Program Manager	

## Emergency Services

LAFD	
Fire Department: Emergency	☎ 911
Non-Emergency	☎ (213) 485-6185
Fire Station 35: 1601 Hillhurst	☎ (213) 485-6235
Fire Station 56: 2759 Rowena	☎ (213) 485-6256
Poison Control	☎ (800) 222-1222
LAPD	
Police Department, Emergency	☎ 911
Police Department, Northeast Division	☎ (323) 561-3211
Sr. Lead Officer Jose Ramirez	☎ (213) 793-0763 ✉ 39570@lapd.online
Sr. Lead Officer Antonio Hernandez	☎ (213) 793-0762 ✉ 39878@lapd.online
Non-Emergency	☎ (877) ASK-LAPD or (877) 275-5273
Gang Problems	☎ (323) 561-3335
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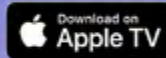


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# Make Preparedness a Priority

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*That's great, it starts with an earthquake,  
Birds and snakes, and aeroplanes,  
And Lenny Bruce is not afraid.*

Recognize the opening lyrics to R.E.M.'s "End of the World as We Know It"? It came out 36 years ago, a few years after I moved to the Franklin Hills. The catchy tune is still very relevant today, except for the refrain, "and I feel fine."

No one should feel fine until they've carved out some solid time to prepare themselves and their families for the inevitable – and possibly imminent – natural disasters in SoCal.

So we're doing a full-court press to encourage all Franklin Hills residents to Be Prepared. . . and then feel fine about it!

There's an alphabet soup of acronyms -- from local, state, federal and global organizations -- on how to prepare. Not to mention experts who live among us, including David Ahrendts (see "Neighbors Who Inspire Us" in Overview Vol. 59, the Spring/Summer 2020 edition on our website).

But sometimes information overload can be overwhelming.

With six months left before the end of this year, let's all commit to taking this very real threat very seriously. No excuses.

We made good progress on this previously, thanks to Shirley Mims, who launched the "Map Your Neighborhood" (MYN) plan more than five years ago. MYN's strategy was to prepare neighbors to help each other during the critical first hour after a disaster, when first responders may not be available.

But a lot has changed since then, so it's time to hit reset. We have new residents in the Franklin Hills, and MYN has evolved into "RYLAN," or *Ready Your Los Angeles Neighborhood* ([www.readyla.org](http://www.readyla.org)). This city-wide program provides tools and workshops to communicate with neighbors, help your family, and provide aid to others.

(Continued on page 13)

## BALLER ART WARE

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# A Little Night Music

**Elizabeth Richardson**

Stepping out of my Ronda Vista Drive home on a warm evening, there it was: the HOO hoo hoo HOO HOO soft on the night. "It's back", I thought, smiling at the memory. Calling quietly to a passing neighbor out walking her dog, I asked if she had heard it. "Oh yes, isn't it wonderful?" she whispered as if the sound of her voice might cause the Great Horned Owl to stop. "Do you see it? There, up in that tall pine right there." And there it was, tall against the sky, and the fading light of the setting sun.

I asked around. "Did you hear the owl?" "Oh yes, I did," responded neighbors from every corner of Franklin Hills. "But did you hear the answering call?" I hadn't. "Just wait." I did wait and was rewarded several weeks later. I learned that the first call is that of the female. The answering call was from a male, possibly her mate.

My first encounter with a Great Horned Owl was amazing. I was living in Denver. One morning, a neighbor hailed me. "You have got to see what's in the blue spruce down the street." Curious, I saw a few kids standing astride their bicycles, mouths open by what they were seeing and hearing. It sounded as if a hundred crows were at a convention, screaming at the podium. In truth, there were only nine or ten. Some were swooping in and out of the huge blue spruce. Others were sitting high up, warning any new arrivals of danger! All were clearly afraid and making a huge effort to dislodge the danger out of the tree.

The 'danger' was a female Great Horned Owl, and she was calmly taking a morning nap after a night on the prowl. When the darting crows came a little too close, she would open one eye, swivel her head just a fraction, and the crows on the wing would bank sharply to get out of range, only to return a few minutes later to continue their harassment of the owl.

The owl was beautiful and huge, probably close to her full height of 36 inches. Her feathered horns gave her a fearsome expression. Her huge yellow eyes dominated her features. If needed, her fourteen neck bones allowed her to turn her head 270°, so she could stare down any crow brave enough to come too close. Through all the noise and flapping, she rested unperturbed.

If she wasn't threatening the crows, why were they 'mobbing' her? The crows had a good reason. Great Horned Owls will dine on almost anything, including members of their own species. Their brown and white


'barred' feathers make them difficult to spot. Their hunting skills are legendary, enhanced by excellent vision and hearing that can detect a nearby mouse walking on leaf litter. Gliding on wings that span from 3'- 5', they can't be heard because of very tiny feathers that poke out from the wings, silencing the sound of their flight. Once struck, the victim usually dies immediately, as the claws close around the spine with a force of 300 to 500 pounds per square inch.

As a lover of all creatures great and small, I have always had a hard time loving predators. But I know nature has a plan, and each creature serves a purpose in that grand design.

So let us give praise to these magnificent birds for their night music. And be grateful for their voracious appetite that keeps down the population of small, troublesome creatures with whom we share this oasis.



OWLS AT NIGHT

 FLICKR



UNKNOWN

GREAT HORNED OWL

# Median Garden Spring Updates

## Karen Altus

With all the rain we've had this spring, the *Shakespeare Bridge Median Garden* is ready to bloom! As of late March, we are already enjoying the red sage (*Salvia greggii*), bird of paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*), and trailing lantana (*Lantana montevidensis*), among other beauties.

Franklin Hills' resident and landscape architect Melinda Taylor, who designed and managed the maintenance of the garden since 1995, retired last year. To replace her, she recommended one of her colleagues, Mauricio Ramos, who continues the weeding, pruning, fertilizing and cleaning that keeps our Franklin Hills western entrance looking its best.

As you enjoy this attraction each time you drive or walk by, please remember that the care and upkeep of the Median Garden is funded entirely by the FHRA and we appreciate your generous donations: <https://www.franklinhills.org/median>



BIRD OF PARADISE FLOWERS IN BLOOM



BEAUTIFUL BLOOMS OF THE MEDIAN GARDEN



TRAILING LANTANA

# Lizards in Franklin Hills

## Kay Camphuis

Each spring in Franklin Hills, I look forward to reacquainting myself with the lizard population in my back garden. Based on sightings of various sized lizards, there are dozens of them in my yard alone. Franklin Hills must be home to hundreds, perhaps thousands, of them.

My online research indicates that the species is *Sceloporus occidentalis*. (I am not a herpetologist, one who studies reptiles, so I cannot be absolutely certain that I have identified the lizard correctly.) There are five subspecies. The common name is Western Fence Lizard. The lizard resides in Arizona, New Mexico, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Northern Mexico and surrounding areas.

Lizards feed on insects, including flies, ants, beetles and spiders. An intriguing aspect of this lizard is its ability to blend in with their surrounding habitat, mostly especially a faded gray wooden fence. It is quite possible that their common name arose from this coloration.

I am very happy to share my garden with these little creatures. They always bring delight when I spot one here in Franklin Hills.



 Kay Camphuis



WESTERN FENCE LIZARD AND EVIDENCE OF SURVIVAL CAMOUFLAGE

# Siobhán Burke: Thoughtful Advocacy for our Community

**Alison Wallace**

I recently spent a delightful hour with Siobhán Burke. Siobhán is about to conclude her five years of service representing Franklin Hills District E on the *Los Feliz Neighborhood Council* (aka LFNC), and I was curious about her experience on the board.

The LFNC is one of 99 Los Angeles neighborhood councils, serving approximately 50,000 people. It acts as a liaison between neighborhoods and Los Angeles City Hall. Council board members are city officials elected by the community and advise on issues such as development, homelessness, and emergency preparedness. Each council is allocated a taxpayer-funded annual budget to be used for operational expenses, outreach, service projects and local events.

Siobhán serves in several capacities on the LFNC. After her current term ends, she will continue to stay involved with the Transportation and Mobility Committee. She will also continue to Chair



BURKE NEAR HER HOME AT THE LYRIC HILLSIDE WITH STRIATED DECOMPOSED GRANITE IN THE BACKGROUND

© OCTAVIA KLEIN

the 400-member Hyperion Street Safety Coalition, which includes organizations, business owners, tenants, residents, schools, and students in the Los Feliz and Silver Lake communities. This group developed a safety action plan to prioritize safety and mobility on the 1.5 mile stretch of roadway extending from Hyperion Ave at Rowena Avenue to Fountain Avenue at Sunset Boulevard, on the southern border of the Franklin Hills community.

Siobhán's academic and professional backgrounds are well-suited for her role on the LFNC. She is a registered architect in California, with a Masters in Architecture from the Yale School of Architecture and undergraduate degrees in civil engineering and architecture. Siobhán leads Lyric Design & Planning, a multi-disciplinary architecture practice with expertise in vision plans, urban greening, and resilient infrastructure. Lyric's projects consist of wide-ranging scales and budgets. Siobhán collaborates and works with a diverse group of public agencies, community groups, landscape architects, engineers and non-profit organizations.

In speaking with Siobhán, I appreciated hearing her perspective on the importance of our "social infrastructure" and civic engagement. She stresses that small fixes in our immediate neighborhoods, like making the streets safer or daytime opening of the gates of the Rowena Reservoir, can make meaningful positive daily impacts on the lives of many local residents. She values walking and biking with friends and family throughout our hilly neighborhood. These positive engagements help keep the fabric of our community stitched together.

Siobhán encourages fellow community members to participate in the LFNC. Involvement can include serving on the board or on a committee. She specifically notes that the LFNC needs a Public Works and Beautification Chair, which works to look at opportunities for public inclusion at the Rowena Reservoir. She also urges local youth involvement by taking part in an LFNC committee or attending a governing board meeting.

Siobhán's optimistic attitude and thoughtful, thorough approach is inspiring. If you have the chance to meet Siobhán, please join me in thanking her for her recent service to our local community. We look forward to seeing her next set of civic projects!

An advertisement for Lyric Preschool. It features a photograph of a young boy in a white shirt standing in front of a large, ornate brick building. The text "Future Barrister" is overlaid in large, blue, stylized letters. Below the photo, the preschool's name and contact information are listed in a handwritten-style font.

**Future Barrister**

*Lyric Preschool*  
2328 Hyperion Ave.  
Los Angeles 90027  
323 667 2275  
www.lyricpreschool.com

(Be Prepared, continued from page 9)



RYLAN HELPS NEIGHBORS LEARN HOW TO HELP EACH OTHER IN THE CRITICAL FIRST HOUR FOLLOWING A DISASTER

Since January, we've served up bite-sized "Be Prepared" tips and resources via the FHRA Update, and our FB and IG feeds. We have a library of Emergency Preparedness information on Dropbox, and there's a new section on RYLAN under the Community tab of our [franklinhills.org](http://franklinhills.org) website.

Among the topics we've covered so far are: what to do during an earthquake; where to buy a preparedness kit or how to make your own; how to make a family plan and tips for using your mobile phone after an earthquake.

For the remainder of the year, we'll continue to share tips and resources; identify RYLAN block captains to build neighborhood contact lists and host workshops; and schedule Zooms with local and SoCal emergency management experts.

In our earthquake-, fire- and flood-prone SoCal home, it's good for all Franklin Hills residents to remember Benjamin Franklin's wise words: "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."

Contact me at [shawnsites@gmail.com](mailto:shawnsites@gmail.com) if you'd like to lend your time and talents to this critical effort. You'll feel so fine if you do!



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# Introducing Jennifer Hull

## An interview with CD4 Field Deputy

Dave McDonald

I recently had a chance to catch up with Jennifer Hull, who is the new Council District 4 Field Deputy for our neighborhood.

**Q: What does a field deputy do? What are the core responsibilities?**

A: A field deputy serves as a manager of a neighborhood. A major role included in this is serving as a liaison between the community and their government; both their council office and the variety of departments within the city. Our core responsibility is making sure that the issues communities face are heard and addressed. Navigating the city can be very difficult, so it is our responsibility to help in any way we can.

**Q: What are some of your personal priorities in this role?**

A: One major personal priority I have is to bring back the trust between the community and their government. I want to be sure that folks in our community know that I am only an email away, and they can come to me, and our office, for any issue.

**Q: How did you become interested in this role?**

A: I always knew that I wanted to do something community based, where I could help people in a meaningful way. I started my political career with grassroots campaigning, but when I first landed a job in CD11 for constituent services, I fell in love. I knew then that I wanted to continue working for city government, specifically in city council, so I can help make positive change in the daily lives of people!

**Q: Tell us a little bit about your background.**

A: I grew up in San Jose, California but moved to Los Angeles to attend UCLA, where I majored in Political Science and



JENNIFER HULL

JENNIFER HULL

minored in History. I currently live on the Westside, but frequently come over to the CD4 side, where I enjoy going on long walks in Griffith Park, near the Hollywood Sign, and around the Silver Lake Reservoir.

**Q: Anything else you'd like to add?**

A: I am really excited to serve the people of CD4 and Los Angeles. I have fallen in love with field work and am excited to work for and help this community for many years to come. You can reach me at [Jennifer.Hull@lacity.org](mailto:Jennifer.Hull@lacity.org)



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# Conservation Efforts Begin at Home

Jenni Chang

Last year, California was the first and only US state observer to join the UN's Conference on Biodiversity to help shape a 10-year international framework to protect the world's wildlife and natural resources. As one of the most biodiverse regions in the world, California was a robust and deeply-knowledgeable champion in the effort to conserve more of the world's lands and seas.

California's voice on biodiversity on the global stage is a reminder of how much our own communities can do to strengthen our coexistence with nature. Franklin Hills boasts an uncommon richness of biodiversity, as populations of coyotes, owls, lizards, skunks, gophers, hummingbirds, butterflies, and so many other creatures roam this unassuming but magical pocket of Los Angeles. So, what can we do at the local level to preserve wildlife at large? Below are some helpful habits that, if we all do our part, can make a big difference.

**Conserve water:** The drought has been psychologically taxing for many Californians, but no one suffers from a watering ban more than plants and wildlife. Despite the rains over recent months, it's important to continue to use water wisely as the state focuses on building water resiliency. Our water conservation efforts in times of seeming abundance will allow us to foster healthy communities and environments for all life. Here are a few ways to conserve water:

- Run the dishwasher only with a full load of dishes
- Rinse produce in a basin rather than running the water
- Shut off the water while brushing teeth
- Opt for short and sweet showers rather than filling the tub for baths
- Keep water in the fridge instead of running the water until cold

**Cut back on emissions:** The less energy we have to create, the better our commitment to preserving wildlife. The harms of fossil fuels are widely understood, but renewable energy also threatens wildlife and natural habitats. Here are some helpful tips to reduce energy consumption:

- Keep tires properly inflated for optimal performance
- Practice active transportation (walking, biking, etc.) instead of driving
- Eat locally sourced foods, which will taste better and also support the local economy
- Plant trees and help reduce some of the carbon dioxide from the atmosphere

The international policy conversations and goals are awesome and necessary, but the real work happens at home. And Franklin Hills is a wonderful place for us to put bold ideas around coexistence with wildlife into practice.



## Struggling with Mixed Signals?

If mixed economic signals in the real estate market have you in a quandary wondering if now is the right time to sell, you're not alone. Opportunity lies ahead. The upcoming months are usually the best time to put a house on the market. Prices remain higher than in 2021 or 2020, though buyers are fewer. More than ever, it's prudent to work with the most experienced market leader both regionally and locally: Coldwell Banker.

Value matters. In real estate, "value" means market recognition, longstanding experience and results—here in Los Feliz. There's no need to hire an out-of-area agent or one seeking on-the-job training. I've worked and lived in Los Feliz for 35 years. In that time, I've been my office's top agent most years. Plus, I love questions and answers—and the opportunity to chat with you anytime about any real estate matter. Just ask me!



**Richard Stanley**

*Estates Director  
Architectural and Historic Properties*

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# THE END OF AN ERA

## Memories of P-22 Rick LaRocca

The term “Concrete Jungle” takes on a whole new meaning when an actual lion comes to live in your neighborhood. Against all odds, that’s what happened 11 years ago. I remember the exciting news that a mountain lion made it from the Santa Monica Mountains all the way across town to Griffith Park. Anyone who’s tried to get from Santa Monica to Los Feliz after 3pm can appreciate the force of will that must have taken for him to make the trek.

It made us feel like we were a little different, even special, that a mountain lion chose to be our neighbor. I remember the time he decided to take a nap under a house in the Los Feliz hills, requiring the Park Service to come up with a very California way of getting the big cat, now named P-22, to move along: they lobbed tennis balls at him in hopes he would reconsider his makeshift den. Personally, I think a feather on a stick would have worked just as well.

Next came the worldwide news event: he was photographed by National Geographic photographer, Steve Winter in front of the Hollywood sign. P-22 became a super star in our midst! His image was everywhere and brought attention to the issues surrounding wildlife in urban areas and invigorated the conversation about how we could best live together.

As time went on, we got used to each other, and we lived in relative harmony. There were some bumps in the road like the koala incident at the zoo, then the rat poisoning, but he persevered.

Last summer was different. In the past, P-22 roamed the surrounding neighborhoods but stayed in the shadows. There was the occasional glimpse on a security camera, but now the sightings came fast and furious. He was spotted in Silver Lake and Los Feliz, then he was in front of our house down by the Shakespeare Bridge! I couldn’t believe it when I checked my security camera footage, there was P-22 nonchalantly strolling by our driveway at 3am. Dog walks became more exciting knowing he was roaming so far from the park. Neighbors shared stories and wished each other well. The encounters became more than passing glimpses on cameras. People began seeing him during the day, and then the unfortunate attacks on pets came. This was not his normal behavior. Something was wrong. P-22 was getting up in years and perhaps it was too difficult to hunt up in the park, or maybe he was searching in vain for a mate.

Each night I would cautiously let out my dog, Jake, on the side of the house for his pee patrol. One night he intently stuck his nose up in the air and sniffed for minutes in the direction of our hillside. It seemed odd, but I figured he





smelled the coyotes. The next day I ran into our wide-eyed neighbor. He told me his wife had come down to their driveway and ran into a Park Service ranger who told her to immediately get back in the house. They were trying to trap P-22 on the hillside behind our house! Someone called in a report of a large cat hit by a car, and the Park Service tracked his collar to our hillside. He was injured and recovering in the brush behind a neighbor's house. Well that settled it, P-22 must have been up on the hill for the last week, and Jake could smell him!

Ultimately, it was a tragic end for our local celebrity cat. He had a long run in the most unlikely of habitats. During his reign, he helped shine a light on the challenges of wild animals living in urban environments.

In many ways P-22 was our mascot and certainly left his mark on our community. His absence is felt every day. My neighbor Nicole set up a fundraising page: *Franklin Hills: Save L.A. Cougars*. They are committed to building safe crossings for California wildlife. Nicole says it best: "California big cats need our help to avoid extinction. They are stunning and magnificent. Let's build something to protect them."



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# A Fragile Détente between pets & wildlife

Jim Cushinery



ROCCO 📷: JIM CUSHINERY

Like many a Franklin Hills resident, our house is upside-down – structurally, not financially. The public rooms sit on street level while bedrooms cascade two stories downhill. Beyond spill another three stories of terraced yard, landing against a six-foot-tall chain link fence that separates our yard from our neighbor Vivien’s. In addition to an entertaining view, Vivien’s devil-may-care garden provides refuge to all manner of wildlife, including roaming coyotes.

When it comes to the safety of our cats, Rocco and Mr. Kimmel, that fence brings a moderate peace of mind. Though a mature coyote could effortlessly jump it with a dead adult tabby in its jaws, our local song dogs had always respected the boundary – until one dark and very stormy night.

The morning after the downpour, sunlight dappled puddles on our rear deck. Job one every day is to provide the cats food, water, and access to the back yard, affectionately known as “the world is my litter box.” Failure on my part is never pleasant. Cats being cats, their absence raised no flags as I approached the door to the rear deck.

*(Continued on page 20)*

## Volunteer Today!

We’re always looking for new volunteers and interested board members.

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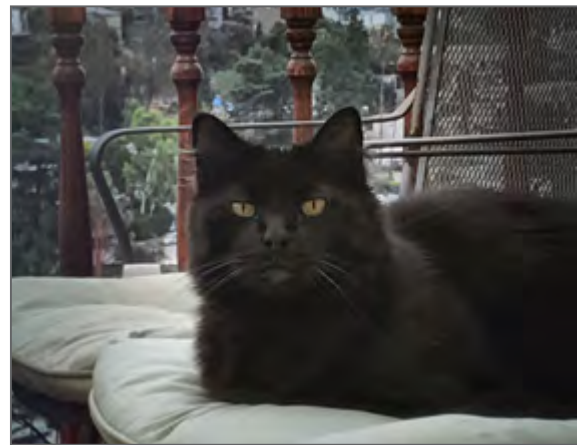
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(Détente, continued from page 18)



NEIGHBORHOOD HILL DWELLER

📷: HEIN MEVI



MR. KIMMEL

📷: JIM CUSHINERY

But the instant I twisted the knob, all became clear as an adult coyote shot past me, leapt over the forty-one-inch-high railing, landed ten feet below, sprinted another forty feet to the fence and jumped, disappearing into Vivien's garden. All in four seconds.

It wasn't the muddy mess he made of our loveseat cushion or the plants he trampled on his sleep-and-dash that irked me. We had an agreement: The coyotes don't threaten our cats' safety and I don't threaten theirs. That deal was in place long before this guy was a leer in his father's eye.

Once my righteous indignation cooled, I came to understand that, like my wife and me, and my boys, the coyote was just in need of a dry place to ride out the storm. He wasn't trying to cause trouble or eat family members. We hill-dwellers must make allowances for all the animals that roam the neighborhood, even the ones that feed on our four-legged loved ones.



# Jacques the Squirrel

**Alix Soubiran**

In the twelve years I have lived in Franklin Hills, I have often felt like I was in a Disney cartoon. I live in a white 1920s “French cottage-style” house surrounded by bougainvillea, blooming wisteria and lovely neighbors. In the morning, I like to go on my terrace, look at Griffith Park and smell the fresh smells of nature. I feel the magic, and half expect the turtle doves who come nest on my terrace to put bows in my hair as I am getting dressed.

My dog, Raphaël, a very dashing mutt, is no stranger to that feeling; he likes to sleep with his head on a pillow and enjoys a cup of tea in the morning. He also likes to drink lukewarm PG Tips out of a cup. Raphaël takes his duty of guarding the house very seriously and becomes ballistic around squirrels, even those who are not trespassing and are way above him, doing Cirque du Soleil tricks on phone lines and treetops.

However, when Jacques first showed up, sitting on the balcony outside my art studio, Raphaël didn't interrupt his sunbathing session. He opened an eye and went back to sleep, and so Jacques the squirrel soon became a regular visitor. That was in autumn 2022.

Jacques is a very handsome gray squirrel with a velvety yellow belly, and he is unmistakably a male. After observing me from the balcony, he got gradually closer. Just a couple days after his first appearance, he was standing up on the top of a chair, climbing on my worktable and supervising my ceramics production. I introduced him to my favorite nuts: walnuts. Some I half-cracked, and he would eat on the table in a messy manner. Some I left whole outside for him as a to-go meal. A couple times when I had left the French doors closed, he came knocking, showing his face on all the bottom glass panes, doing a little tap dance. I enjoyed his visits



**RAPHAËL, THE SPECIAL-RELATIONSHIP ENABLING DOG**

tremendously, and it was very entertaining to see him make his way between my clay tools, glazes, paint brushes and bucket of water which he enjoyed drinking from. He would strike a pose on an artbook, sniff around a pencil sharpener, and even do a little twister dance a couple times on the keyboards of my laptop. He also almost knocked over some of my ceramic pieces and scared himself a couple times, slipping on a piece of tracing paper or on a paper clip.

For about three months, Jacques came to visit almost daily, at which point I was convinced I lived in a Disney cartoon. Then, Jacques stopped coming so regularly, and he never came again.

I hoped nothing bad happened to him. And then about a month ago, I was walking Raphaël on a nearby street, and I heard a small whistle in the tree above my head. I looked-up and saw my friend Jacques with a half walnut in his mouth. Raphaël looked up too and didn't bark at him.

I was so happy to see him, and to this I wonder about the relationship between Raphaël and Jacques.



**JACQUES AT THE ART STUDIO**



 ALIX SOUBIRAN

# Be Prepared: Planning for Your Pets

Shawn Sites

As important members of your family, your pets should be part of your emergency preparedness plan. Having the basics for survival at hand are core to all plans, but here are some tips specific to the four-legged members of your household during an earthquake, wildfire, flood or other disaster.

Know what to do with your pet during an evacuation. Not all public shelters and hotels allow pets inside, so identify a safe place where you can take your pets before disasters and emergencies happen.

Develop a buddy system or local pet reunification plan. Reach out to neighbors, friends or relatives to make sure someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so. Share your information with them, as well as an emergency contact outside of your immediate area.

Add the L.A. Dept of Animal Services to your mobile contacts in case you get separated from your pet: 888-452-7381. The North Central shelter that serves Franklin Hills is at 3201 Lacy St. in Cypress Park.

Prepare your pet's emergency kit, and refresh it regularly, including:

- **Food and water** – at least several days' supply (store food in an



JAN HYNEK OF LYRIC AVENUE, AND K9 KIDS LILY, CALLY, JEWEL, AND SCOOTER THE CAT (SCOTCH WAS HIDING) WITH THEIR EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS SUPPLIES AND THEIR BAG OF KIBBLE

© DAVID AHRENDTS

- airtight, waterproof container, and have a water bowl handy)
- **Medicine** – keep an extra supply in a waterproof container
- **Backup collar** with ID tag and a harness or leash
- **Registration, vaccination record, adoption and/or microchip info**
- **A photo of you and your pet(s) together** to document ownership and help others to identify your pet
- **Familiar items** such as favorite toys, treats, and bedding

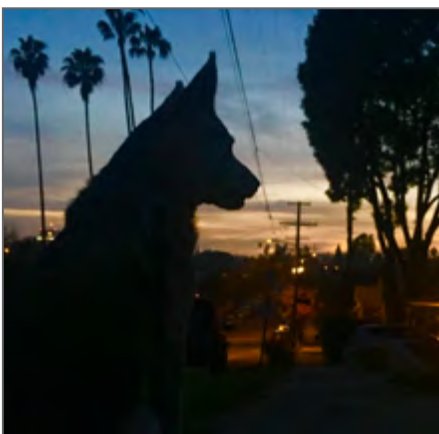
- **Traveling bag**, crate or sturdy carrier for each pet
- **Grooming items** like pet shampoo and towel
- **Sanitation supplies** including pet litter, litter box, scooper and trash bags

More info is at [Ready.gov/pets](https://www.ready.gov/pets).



# The Way of the Dog Journeying Through Franklin Hills

Philip Craven



ARWEN SURVEYS FRANKLIN HILLS AT SUNSET.

Like many residents of Los Angeles, I knew the city mainly by car. Walk in L.A.? How? All the exciting places you want to go are so spread out! I never knew, until I got my first dog and brought her home, that my spirit of exploration would be rekindled walking the streets of Franklin Hills with a leash in my hand and a partner by my side.

Dogs have a natural talent for exploration. Noses tucked to the ground, or lifted in the air; ears perked to the sounds on the wind; eyes scanning the path ahead. The thrill of discovery runs

in their blood, and when you walk with them, it flows through the leash and into you – if you keep your head up and your mind curious.

How better can you get to know your own neighborhood than by walking around it day after day, meeting the people and dogs who live so close by? You learn the interconnectedness of all the roads, the staircases (sometimes hidden), and the fences and hedges where other dogs keep watch, and you read the signs. A dog who stares intently, shoulders high, walking tucked

(Continued on page 28)

# White Sapote

## The Messy, Annoying, and Delicious Fruit

**Didi Bok**

The *white sapote*, famous in the Franklin Hills as the most messy and annoying fruit in the garden (and on driveways), is also a treat for the squirrels and an integral ingredient in one of my favorite sweet desserts.

With the exception of the seeds, the entire fruit, (pulp and skin included), is edible. Underneath the thin skin, is a buttery textured flesh that is sweet, nutty and creamy. Besides being sweet and great for baking, the white sapote has even more to offer you! It is great for weight loss, since it is very low in fat, but high in carbohydrate content. It is also a treatment for diabetes, arthritis, and rheumatism, promotes hair growth and is ideal for dermatitis.

You can make several sweet desserts with this fruit, including fluffy meringue, upside-down tart French style, and sorbets.

### Sapote Tart

#### Ingredients:

- 60 grams (¼ cup) butter
- 300 grams (1 ¾ cups + 2 Tbsp) sieved flour
- 165 grams (⅔ cup) water
- 6 grams (1 tsp) salt
- 160 grams (⅔ cup) butter
- Gather as many ripe (sometimes overripe) *white sapote* as you can find in the neighborhood (10 - 20 *sapotes*).

Knead the flour with the 60 grams (¼ cup) of butter, the water and the salt into a ball of dough. Do not knead too long. Let the dough rest for 15 minutes. Flatten the dough and roll four points on it. Place the 160 grams (⅔ cup) of butter in the center and fold the points over it.



COMPLETED SAPOTE TART

📷: DIDI BOK

(Continued on page 29)



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# Butterfly Discovery

Jessica Luebke



SEBASTIAN INSPECTING THE CATERPILLARS' PROGRESS

📷: JESSICA LUEBKE



CAPTIVE CATERPILLARS IN THEIR ENCLOSURE

📷: JESSICA LUEBKE

I've always loved exploring my environment, keeping an eye out for all the many creatures with whom we share our spaces. Insects have long been fascinating to me, especially butterflies in all of their life stages. During the pandemic, while our family was staying home, I had the opportunity to notice and appreciate all of the many butterflies that visit our yard.

One Spring day in 2020, I came across an unfamiliar caterpillar inching its way along our Astroturf. It was a little shorter than my pinky finger, orange with grey stripes, and covered with spikes. Having spent twelve years in New Orleans, constantly dodging the dreaded spiky, stinging buck moth caterpillar, the spikes on this new discovery gave me pause. I gently scooped the creature up on a leaf and deposited it in a sheltered area where I hoped it wouldn't end up squished or as a meal for one of the many birds flying by. After a little research, I learned that this caterpillar was quite harmless and was the larval stage of the Gulf Fritillary Butterfly. The Gulf Fritillary is a mid-sized butterfly with bright orange wings lined with black markings. Its host plant is the Passion Flower Vine, which is where the eggs are laid and on which the caterpillars feed.

After the initial discovery, I started noticing Gulf Fritillary butterflies flying all over our yard. My family and I inspected the leaves of our large, some may say overgrown, passion flower vine and were happy to find many more caterpillars. My sons and I collected a few of the caterpillars, placed them in a butterfly habitat, and kept them fed on passion flower vine leaves until the caterpillars reached the end of their larval life cycle and constructed their chrysalises. We then anxiously waited until the butterflies emerged, ready to be released into our yard. The boys were thrilled to be able to watch this metamorphosis. In the ensuing years we have raised and released more than 50 butterflies.

The entire family has become experts in locating caterpillars, and even eggs, and we have found joy in the release of the butterflies. We have let our passion flower vine grow larger, and our yard has become quite a butterfly habitat.



ENZO AND SEBASTIAN, CATERPILLAR SEARCH TEAM

📷: JAMES LONGERETTA



SEBASTIAN WITH A BUTTERFLY FRIEND

📷: JESSICA LUEBKE



# Red-Tailed Hawks

## Thriving Above Lyric Avenue

**Greg Macek**

It started with an owl. Two, actually. We heard them often in the evenings after moving into our house in Franklin Hills several years ago. As former New Yorkers, we were enthralled. One offered a soothing low hoot of “WHO-whooo-WHO.” The other answered in a higher and faster retort of “WHO-who-WHOooo-who.”

Before we ever saw them, a recording of their calls was enough for a birding friend to identify them as a mated pair of Great Horned Owls. My family has nicknamed them Orville and Ophelia. We’ve gotten tantalizing glimpses of them, and we’ve even heard them broadcast through our fireplace, hooting down into our chimney from outside.

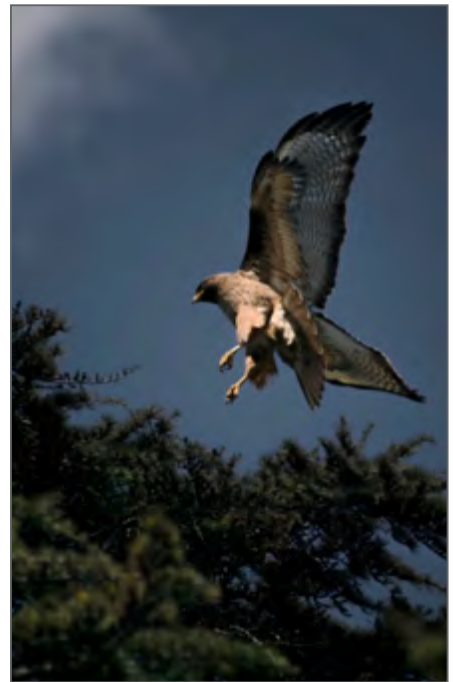
After seeing an article in the Los Angeles Times about the L.A. Raptor Study – a

community science project sponsored by the Friends of Griffith Park that has volunteers monitor nests to gather data on the city’s raptor population – I signed up to learn more about Orville and Ophelia. As an elusive nocturnal species, it turns out they move around from year to year, often reusing old nests of other species, and they are difficult to find during the day.

I did, however, identify a red-tailed hawk nest high up in a eucalyptus tree off Lyric Ave. Unlike owls, red-tailed hawks usually reuse the same nest each year. This nest, which sits securely in the “V” of an overhanging limb with good sightlines, offers prime daytime viewing.

In the three years I have been observing the nest, it has proven a robust operation. The adults are majestic in flight, dutiful

*(Continued on page 28)*



📷: HEIN MEVI

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# Humming Along on Ronda Vista Farm

Tim Cowell

My morning shuffle to the kitchen to get coffee started begins my day. But before the sound of hot water starts gurgling upward, and coffee infused water drips into the pot below, another noisy event finds my ears. Outside the kitchen widows, the chit-chitter chattering of our resident hummingbirds fills the air. Starting at the break of day, they fight for turns at the three feeders on our balcony. Rain or shine, they need their nectar to keep their fiery metabolism going. Coffee keeps my much slower heartbeat thumping; they need continuous energy resources to keep theirs at 1250 beats per minute. The fighting for position at one of the 8 tiny holes is furiously under way. One bird arrives and hovers. Another appears and chases the first away. The loser flies down to hide in trees below, chittering angrily at the forced retreat. The winner alights and plunges their long beak into the hole.

The symphony of fighting is daylong. There are six total feeders here at Ronda Vista Farm. My husband dubbed our house a "farm" after I moved in 13 years ago and decided to grow tomatoes; a passion that has since moved to the Franklin Hills Community Garden.

Everyone gets a chance to feed. Recently we saw a hummingbird bonanza, a feeder with a bird at all eight holes! Seven varieties live in Southern California. Our most common visitor is Rufous.

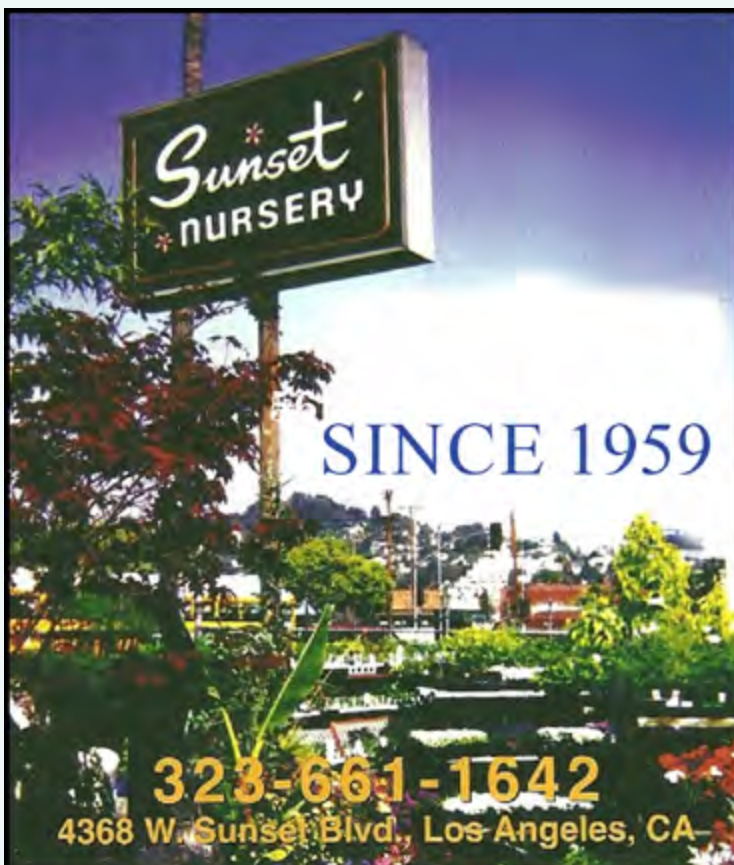
(Continued on page 30)



HEIN MEVI



HEIN MEVI



AT ONE OF SIX FEEDERS

TIM COWELL

# Native Plants Bring Native Animals to our Gardens and Our Park

Mary Frances Smith-Reynolds

The profusion of native plants in beautifully designed front yards and parkways is a highlight of Franklin Hills walks. As more people cultivate water-wise gardens, plants indigenous to this part of Southern California are taking center stage. And, as of January, Griffith Park has a new native plant garden as well.

The Tom LaBonge Memorial Park Forest, adjacent to, and just below the Tom LaBonge Panorama, showcases a variety of native species. It is a lovely reward for hikers at the top of Mt. Hollywood. Honoring our late CD4 City Councilmember Tom LaBonge, who died in 2021, the forest features eight native oak trees that the intrepid councilmember, also a daily hiker, dragged up and planted there himself with the help of staff and friends. Four coastal live oaks were recently added as part of the forest project.

The ribbon was cut for this new garden on January 7 of this year, the anniversary of the councilmember's passing. It was planted and is managed by the Los Angeles Parks Foundation, in partnership with the Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department.

This new garden, designed by USC landscape design professor Esther Margulies, provides inspiration and ideas for our own spaces. Carolyn Ramsey, executive director for the Los Angeles Parks Foundation, said that this installation helps to demystify native plants for gardeners considering these species. More importantly, it reminds us and demonstrates for us that more native plant species beget more native animal species. Birds, insects, and other critters find the right food in these environments, which helps them thrive.



BLADDERPOD PLANT AT THE LOS ANGELES PARKS FOUNDATION'S NURSERY

📷: MARY FRANCES SMITH REYNOLDS

(Continued on page 30)

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📷: HEIN MEVI



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(Red Tailed Hawks, continued from page 25)

in purpose, and stoic in demeanor. I have seen them do battle in midair with menacing crows, and insolently ignore pesty mockingbirds who unsuccessfully try to make the hawks perch elsewhere. The hawks repair and maintain the nest using pine branches to build it up and line it with soft needles. The male actively hunts, bringing back pigeons, small mammals, and rodents to the female as she incubates the eggs. After the eggs hatch, the male goes into overdrive providing for the chicks as the female feeds them bits of each meal. The juveniles are demanding and vocal as they grow and slowly challenge gravity and themselves by hopping to the branches above the nest before eventually attempting their first flights. Finding a juvenile triumphantly sitting in an adjacent tree means it has fledged, and the nest is a success. Of the six chicks I have seen (two each year), all but one has successfully fledged. The fledglings stick around the nest rent-free for a few more weeks before heading out on their own leaving the adults to start the cycle again the next year.

We still see the owls from time to time, but where they live remains a mystery to me. After an evening of trick-or-treating with our daughter on Halloween this past year, we were walking home,



📷: BY GREG MACEK

happy to see so many people out and the neighborhood enjoying a sense of normalcy again. I turned to my wife and said, "To complete the night, now we just need an appearance of the owls."

Sure enough, moments later, they both swooped in right in front of us, landing on a couple of telephone poles for a lively chat. It was as if central casting heard my request and sent the owls out on cue. Only in LA, I guess. In our very own Franklin Hills.

For more information about the *Friends of Griffith Park Raptor Study* or to volunteer go to: [friendsofgriffithpark.org/raptor-study/](http://friendsofgriffithpark.org/raptor-study/)



(Dogwalking, continued from page 22)



TACO AND ARWEN TAKE A BREAK ON THE SHAKESPEARE BRIDGE

in close may not be ready for a friendly greeting. Like my German Shepherd mix when I adopted her, some dogs aren't used to the meet-and-greet. Only with practice and gradual gains in confidence

will the dog be open to peacefully sniffing and being sniffed. There is no better reward than to see a fearful dog emerge from the shadows and learn to become friendly.

In my experience, these rewards come with faithful exercise, patience, and getting out there. It may be easier to drive than walk, and easier to avoid letting your anxious dog explore the dangerous world. But as I have seen with my Arwen, and with other local dogs who have come out of their shells, the time and effort spent roaming these beautiful hills will pay off. If you are walking a wayward pup that you know has the potential to be as nice to everyone as he is to you, just remain patient. Practice exposing your dog

to the things he finds scary until he realizes that you aren't scared and the thing isn't such a threat after all. Some dogs are traumatized and need special training. But many just need patience and practice with a determined human.

Like many residents of Los Angeles, I had a dog who needed time and effort, but her needs also taught me to practice patience, and just keep exploring. After six years of walking Arwen, I've learned that it takes time. And seeing her gain the confidence to enjoy the world makes me want to continue journeying through it with her. (And yes, sometimes we take that journey in my car. She just loves it.)



📷: Phillip Craven



THE MESSY SAPOTE

📷: JAMES LONGERETTA

(Delicious White Sapote, continued from page 23)

Flatten the dough and let it rest again. Then roll it out lengthwise and fold the dough in thirds, so that three layers are created. Twist it a quarter turn, then roll it out again and fold it in thirds again. Let it rest for 30 to 60 minutes and then repeat this entire procedure three more times (so four times in total). The puff pastry is now ready to use.

Use a spoon to scoop the pulp away from the thin *sapote* skin, or carefully peel it off as you might with a plum (no worries if there is some skin left, it's edible). Most *white sapote* will have several large seeds, which shouldn't be eaten since they are bitter and toxic in large amounts. Heat the oven 200° C (392° F). Cut the fruit in thin slices/layers.

Add a little avocado oil to a frying pan on the stove (I always cook with avocado oil, as it's the best for heating). Put the thin sliced fruit into the pan. Let the fruit cook/warm up slowly. Cut the puff pastry in the shape of the pan and place the puff pastry sheet on top of the fruit up to the edge of the pan. Bake in the oven for about 20 minutes or until golden brown and cooked through. Once out of the oven, let it cool briefly and then carefully turn it over.

And voilà.....best sweetest Franklin Hills dessert!

Also great the next day. After one bite, you immediately forget all about the mess this fruit makes in the garden!



📷 wemajormajor

(Native Plants, continued from page 27)

Cameron De Anda, the nursery manager for the Los Angeles Parks Foundation, explained that there are more than 200 native plants, representing about 18 species, in this new Griffith Park garden. They are plants that are all native not just to this area, but specifically to Griffith Park's largely chaparral conditions.

"We want to be as hyper-local as we can," said Cameron. All of the plants were propagated at the Los Angeles Park Foundation's nursery in Griffith Park at the top of Commonwealth Drive.

On a recent visit to the foundation's nursery, Cameron, not unlike a proud parent, showed off more than 1,000 plants in the nursery, which were started from seeds and seedlings. Bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds buzzed among the California buckwheat; yarrow; lupine; narrow leaf milkweed; toyon; Conejo buckwheat; white, black, and purple sages; California bladderpods; California fuchsias; and many others.

"It is important to bring back the food sources for our native animals, like milkweed for monarchs and acorns from native oak species for California gray squirrels," explained Cameron. Carolyn Ramsay said, "Native plants are vital to supporting bird life. They feed a spectacular array of birds."

If you would like to create your own native ecosystem in your outdoor space, these are a few local places that sell native plants: Theodore Payne Nursery in Sun Valley; Plant Material in Altadena, Silverlake, and Glassell Park; Baller Hardware and Garden Center in Highland Park; Hahamongha Native Plant Nursery in Pasadena; Artemesia Nursery in El Sereno; and Sunset Nursery in Silverlake.



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TOYON PLANT IN GRIFFITH PARK

📷: MARY FRANCES SMITH REYNOLDS

(Humming Along, continued from page 26)

They are the most aggressive of our natives, which explains the air raiding and dive bombs. It is a glorious battle to determine "Top Gun". I would name them "Maverick" or "Goose" if I could tell them apart.

During COVID I created a game called "Find Red Belly". I sent a picture of our neighbor's Loquat tree to my family text group. My nieces and nephews furiously searched the picture to find the tiny "hidden" hummingbird amongst the leaves. The game was a bit like "Where's Waldo", but there's no striped shirt or red hat, instead a beautiful iridescent coppery one usually hiding in plain sight.

Other Southern California hummers are Black Chinned, Broad tailed, Anna's, Costa's and Allen's. The Calliope is one of the most spectacular, with iridescent magenta feathers covering the male's head. They even hunt insects. Hummers need to feed up to 1800 times a day to keep their energy levels. It's no wonder I'm always buying sugar.

Homemade nectar is a 1:4 ratio; 1 cup of sugar to 4 of distilled or filtered water. Bring the mixture to an easy boil and remove from heat. Cool it completely before filling the feeders. Change out the nectar every 3-4 days. Avoid the presence of mold/mildew as it endangers the bird's health. I clean the feeders with a diluted bleach solution and rinse several times.

Our noisy feathered neighbors have become the official mascot here at Ronda Vista Farm, even though one might expect it to be a tomato.





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