



A Publication for Concordia Elementary School:
LEARNING THROUGH NATURE is a *Junior Gardener Program* for K-5 sponsored by the San Clemente Garden Club and the Concordia PTA.

If you plant it...they will come!

Cultivators Corner

Through the Learning Through Nature (LTN) program at Concordia, the PTA and the San Clemente Garden Club partner with teachers, parents, and administrators to teach and encourage enthusiastic K-5 students to appreciate nature, botany, and scientific discovery. The collaborative program, based on schoolyard butterfly habitats, promotes environmental stewardship and social responsibility through gardening with future generations. Earlier this year, the Concordia LTN program received the *Outstanding "Garden" Project" Award for the 2009 Environment Fair by It's Your Environment*, which promotes environmental science education projects involving youth. For project details, check out the Concordia Junior Gardeners web page at www.itsyourenvironment.org (then Gardens tab).

Doesn't everybody want to DO THE ROT THING? Well, 4th graders will get their opportunity beginning October to learn from *The Worm Lady (retired teacher, Diane Cheek)* who loves to teach children about how decomposers can reduce our kitchen waste and help the environment! Then in April, during Earth Week, students will learn how to harvest the compost from the bin and use it in the school garden.
PARENT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.

Concordia Celebrates National School Garden Week
- October 25 - October 31, 2009.

Going Buggy

The Butterfly Lady (Kris Ethington)
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With school back in session, we started the year off with 2nd Grade Junior Gardeners learning that the life cycle of the plant begins and ends with the seed. They learned the role pollinators play in producing the seeds they collected; why butterfly pollinators prefer certain flower shapes (landing pads); what other insects pollinate plants; and they observed the different shapes of the three seeds they collected for their home gardens (sweet pea, pincushion, and hollyhock).

I also shared how Milkweed seeds that split from the pod fly through the air on silk parachutes. Students enjoyed witnessing the Monarch Butterflies in the garden and observed Monarch and Gulf Fritillary caterpillars on host plants. When visiting the 2nd Grade garden, be sure to look at the butterfly/caterpillar/plant signs for information about what is growing nearby.

Exciting News! Over the summer the Concordia gardens attracted the Queen Butterfly (and caterpillars)...a relative to the Monarch whose caterpillars also eat milkweed! This was a special event since coastal gardens in San Clemente haven't witnessed visits by the Queen in years! **Great Job Junior Gardeners!!**

It's Time to Get DIRTY!!

Jr. Gardener Weeding Workday - FALL GARDEN CLEAN-UP! Did we MISS you in September for the Workday? Well, you'll have more opportunities monthly on the 3rd THURSDAYS at 2:15. Our next workday is October 15th; everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate! Students learn to take pride and ownership of their garden through this after school activity.

Our September Workday in the 2nd Grade garden was enjoyed by all. Students in grades 1-5 collected seeds from butterfly plants, found worms and small carrots in the veggie/sweet pea planter, and lots of other bugs! They also filled watering cans with rainwater collected in the rain barrels and watered their butterfly garden! Parents and teachers assisted with weeding and learned how to deadhead plants. Several expressed how much they learned working alongside garden club members.



Gardeners Know the Best Dirt...check these out!

- Concordia Junior Gardeners - www.itsyourenvironment.org (then Gardens tab)
- Children's Butterfly Site: www.kidsbutterfly.org
- Casa Romantica's Butterfly Garden: www.casaromantica.org
- Concordia's District Website - Butterfly Garden Link: <http://cces.capousd.ca.schoolloop.com>
- ALL LINKS Past/Present go to the San Clemente Garden Club - Junior Gardener Page www.sanclementegardenclub.com

Sowing The Seeds of The Future!

More than 400 Concordia students became engaged in the science of gardening and nature in 2008-09 through the hands-on Junior Gardener Program. With 100% class participation in 2009-10, that number could grow to more than 600 students in its second year! Join your student in this worthwhile project and become a garden volunteer. You will be amazed at what they learn. With the larger class sizes parent volunteers are essential to the success of this program.

All summer long I received updates from Concordia families who incorporated at home what they learned from their experiences in the garden. The benefits shared by all ages and generations are endless.

O.C. Sheriff's Dept. hosts CHARACTER COUNTS JAMBOREE, Sat. Sept. 26th 11-3 pm - SCGC Jr. Gardener Booth/displays & kids pot a plant!

Dew Drops...

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to the following dedicated families who kept our school gardens growing over the Summer: Michelle Crane Family; Stephanie Dougherty/ Meyerhofer Family; Susan Nelson Family; Michael Bertrand Family; Christine Kramer; Cathy Godlewski Family; Robin Ankrom Family; and Isobel Pelham.

We NEED more parent volunteers to water K, 2nd, and 3rd gardens this school year. Thank you to our new recruits who've offered their time to water: Staci Lassiter (K parent of Vivian) and Bette Langford (San Clemente Garden Club member)!