



Robert Fisher/USGS

Family Fun at USGS Open House, May 19-20

This weekend is the **2012 USGS Open House** in Menlo Park, California — a great family-friendly event that takes place every three years and gives USGS a chance to showcase its amazing science and scientists to the public. Games, exhibits, lectures and films span the gamut of USGS science topics, including volcanoes, earthquakes, minerals, deserts and more. The **USGS Western Ecological Research Center** will be represented on several fronts, including a booth on California sea otter biology; an exhibit about wetland science at the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge; guest lectures on salt pond restoration along the Silicon Valley shoreline; and a film showing of the USGS documentary *The Heat Is On: Desert Tortoises and Survival*. The event is free to the public and will go from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on both days.

<http://openhouse.wr.usgs.gov>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/173418226108525/>

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/outreach.aspx?RecordID=135>

NEW WERC PUBLICATION BRIEFS

Translocation as an Effective Conservation Tool for Desert Tortoises

The potential for success of translocation in Agassiz's desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) have not been subjected to thorough scientific peer review, despite a growing need for management tools for desert tortoise populations which intersect with urban and industrial development actions in the Mojave Desert. Now, WERC scientists **Ken Nussear**, **Phil Medica**, and colleagues from **USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center**, University of Nevada-Reno and the American Museum of Natural History have reported on the survivorship, reproduction and habitat use of post-translocation tortoises in *The Journal of Wildlife Management*.

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/ProductDetails.aspx?ID=4694>

EVENTS

May 21, 2012 (Sacramento, CA)

WERC scientist **Laura Valoppi** will give a preview of her USGS Public Lecture on the **Sacramento State campus**. Valoppi will present research findings from USGS researchers working on the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/Event.aspx?ID=108>

May 31, 2012 (Menlo Park, CA)

Laura Valoppi will present the lecture **Restoring the Wild Heart of South San Francisco Bay** at this month's USGS Evening Public Lecture and Webcast.

<http://www.werc.usgs.gov/Event.aspx?ID=107>

IN THE NEWS

Safeguarding Mammoth Trees, Champs of the Ecosystem (*New York Times*) interviews **Nate Stephenson** and cites research by Stephenson and **Phil van Mantgem** on the increased mortality of old-growth forests in the American West.

<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/05/05/safeguarding-massive-trees-champs-of-the-ecosystem/>

Urban Barriers to Wildlife: Effects on Gene Flow and Pathogen Transmission Among Bobcats (*The Vector of The Wildlife Society*), written by Colorado State graduate student Justin Lee, profiles collaborative research with **Erin Boydston** and **Lisa Lyren** on urban carnivores in southern California.

<http://wercnet.wr.usgs.gov/Outreach-Docs/2012/The%20Vector%20Winter%202012.pdf>

Wildlife Disease at the Urban Fringe (USGS GeoHealth)

also highlights research by **Erin Boydston** and **Robert Fisher** on wildlife disease transmission in suburban areas in the American West.

http://health.usgs.gov/geohealth/v09_n02.html

This Biweekly Update is produced as a service to USGS/WERC staff, colleagues, partners and the interested public. To add your email address to the mailing list or to report errors/suggestions, please contact blandis@usgs.gov. Download this issue at <http://www.werc.usgs.gov/outreach.aspx>.



WERC Profile: Laura Valoppi, Salt Ponds Research Coordinator

As the first of a new series profiling WERC scientists, Laura Valoppi answers a few questions about her career path in natural resources and shares her advice for kids and students aspiring to careers in science. Valoppi serves as the lead scientist for the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project in San Francisco Bay. <http://www.werc.usgs.gov/outreach.aspx?RecordID=136>

IN THE NEWS (CONT'D)

Another Sea Otter Reported Off San Diego (*U-T San Diego*) includes input from **Tim Tinker**, who explains the historic geographic range of the southern sea otter as context for this uncommon sighting. <http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2012/may/07/another-sea-otter-spotted-san-diego/>

New Tool Being Used to Protect County from Wildfires (*10News San Diego*) quotes WERC scientist **Jon Keeley** and his new textbook, *Fire in Mediterranean Ecosystems*, and discusses the relationship between wind and powerlines. <http://www.10news.com/news/31051119/detail.html>

Yellow-Legged Frog Restoration Slows, But Positive Signs Show (*Idyllwild Town Crier*) quotes WERC scientist **Adam Backlin**, who reports on captive breeding setbacks and promising tadpole sightings of the endangered Southern California mountain yellow-legged frog. <http://idyllwildtowncrier.com/2012/05/10/yellow-legged-frog-restoration-slows-but-positive-signs-show/>