

Native American Indigenous Plants used by the Tongva Gabrielino, Chumash and Cahuilla Indians

November 2022





FRIENDS OF
BALLONA
WETLANDS

Presented by:



Loyola Marymount
University
Center for
Urban Resilience



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LMU Land Acknowledgement

As part of Loyola Marymount University's recognition of our history, location, and relationship to the indigenous communities in Los Angeles, we acknowledge the Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (the Los Angeles basin and southern Channel Islands) and the presence of LMU on this traditional, ancestral, and unceded land. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live, study, create, and be in this place.











Tongva Monument

By Robert Dorame

Swimmer Medicinal Plant Garden in Ballona Discovery Park



A GARDEN OF MEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY NATIVE AMERICANS

Welcome Visitors!

The plants displayed here are representative of the hundreds of plants used by local Native Americans for medicinal purposes. These plants were experienced and learned over generations of people of exceptional talent and were passed from one generation to the next. The word *Chumash* comes from the Tongva in the San Diego region, the *Diegueño* across the valley, and the *Cahuilla* in the desert areas. Many of these plants are still used by those traditions for local ceremonial activities.

Various parts of the plants were harvested and processed into teas, or as ointments, or salves. A *Chumash* called a *shamán*, administered the treatments, which often included sacred rituals, dreams, and healing songs. Many of these rituals have been lost to our modern way of life.

But fortunately, not all has been lost, and some practices today are continuing research and healing patients with these same native remedies. Modern medical research continues to be developed by CHUMASH Native medicinal plants specialists and the use of plants like this to get the most from modern medical knowledge is focused on being gentle, starting with what plants that could become the cure for some of our most difficult modern ailments.

We hope this story you read in this beautiful and beautiful garden, which was developed to honor the traditions of modern medicine by the Native American tribes who taught us this knowledge. This garden is well cared for by the memory of Dr. Gary Swimmer, a physician in Santa Barbara, who was a pioneer in the use of native medicinal plants in his medical clinic.

The garden was constructed in 2017 with the loving hands of those expert horticulturists:

- Michael Sedener - Garden and Arboretum Director
- Lisa Tompkins - Garden Director and Horticulturist
- Corey Mauder - Native Plants and Herbal Plant Expert
- Sergio de Leon - Horticulturist, Garden and Horticulturist
- Harold de Leon - Garden and Horticulturist

For more information, please contact the Swimmer Family Trust.

CAUTION

1. Do not attempt to use these plants for any medical purpose without the supervision of a licensed medical professional. The abuse of any plant or animal can be DANGEROUS, especially for children, the elderly, and pregnant women.

2. These plants are wild and not harvested. They are here for display and education purposes only. Do not touch.

Location:

Ballona Discovery Park
13110 Bluff Creek Drive
Playa Vista, CA 90094

"WE ARE
CONSTANTLY
WALKING
ON HERBS
THE VIRTUES
OF WHICH
NO ONE
KNOWS."

—CHUMASH TRADITION

Swimmer Medicinal Garden



<https://www.swimmermedicinalgarden.com/>



Justin Farmer, Ipay, gave the blessing in 2011 at the first garden dedication, with Friends' Board Member Susan Gottlieb



Mike with David's children, Lara and Chad



David and Mike Swimmer

Swimmer Medicinal Garden

This garden is a tribute to David Swimmer, by his brother Mike Swimmer and the Swimmer family. David Swimmer was a western trained doctor who went back to the Native American ways of treating his patients in Santa Barbara



David and Mike with their Parents at David's Clinic



New Medicinal Plant Signage June 2018

Dr. David Swimmer Medicinal Plant Garden







LMU students learning about Medicinal Plants in 2019



It's all about the plants!



Healing with Medicinal Plants of the West

cultural and scientific basis
for their use - second edition



Cecilia Garcia
James D. Adams, Jr.

Dr. James Adams from USC School of Pharmacology, visiting the Medicinal Garden



The image shows the entrance to Ballona Discovery Park. A large wooden pergola with a grid pattern of beams covers the walkway. Below the pergola, a concrete wall features the name 'BALLONA DISCOVERY PARK' in raised, dark letters. To the right, a dirt path leads into the park, flanked by greenery and a signpost with informational panels. The background shows a grassy hillside under a clear blue sky.

BALLONA DISCOVERY PARK

13110 Bluff Creek Drive
Playa Vista, CA 90094

Entrance to the Park



Interpretive Panels showing the history of the area, below Loyola Marymount University

THE CYCLE OF LIFE
In the Bañeros Wetlands

EVERYTHING IN NATURE IS CONNECTED

All of the life forms that you see in the wetlands are closely interconnected and work together with the cycle of nature.

WHAT IS A WETLAND?

Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil or is present near the surface of the soil during most of the year. Wetlands are important because they provide a home for many plants and animals, and they help to filter pollutants from the water.



THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE:
Then and Now



Native American people gathered to trade goods and services. The people in the background are the same as the people in the foreground.

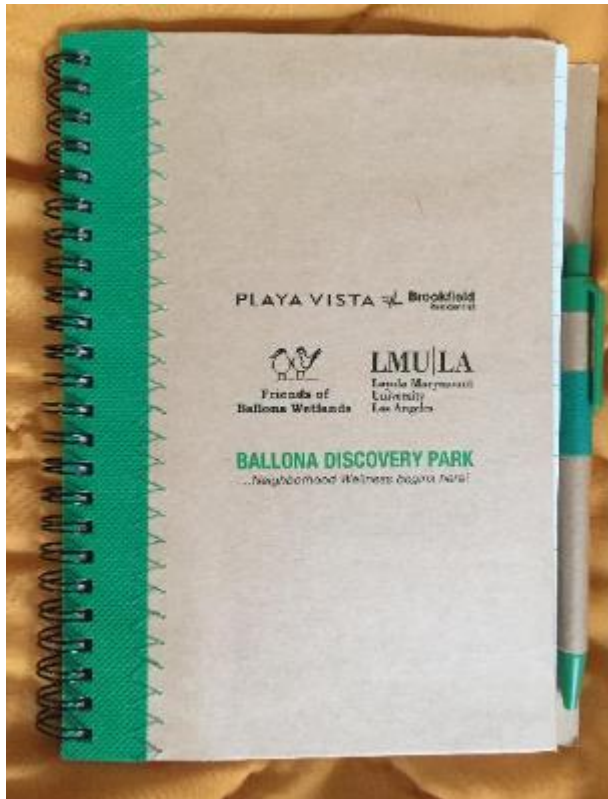
Humans have depended upon the Bañeros Wetlands for thousands of years. The earliest inhabitants of the area were Native Americans.

Over several millennia, many groups called the region home. The most recent Native residents of the area were the Tongva, referred to as the Gabrielino by the Spaniards.

The Tongva depended on the wetlands for most aspects of their lives. They relied on wetland resources to create baskets and food storage. Rabbits and other small mammals provided most of the meat, and berries, fish and crops that could be used around the wetlands served as additional food sources. The fresh water areas of the wetlands provided important drinking water.

Neighborhood Wellness begins here!

Students using Journals to record their experiences in the Park



Visiting the Ki-ish... (aka mah-mah-har-ke(ch))





LMU students smelling California Sagebrush



A Garden of Medicinal Plants used by Native Americans

Dear Visitor,

The plants displayed here are representative of the hundreds of plants used by local Native American tribes for medicinal purposes. These plants were discovered and identified over thousands of years of experimentation and were deemed by tribal healers to be effective in treating various ailments. The main tribes considered here are the Tongva, in the Los Angeles area, the Chumash along the coast, and the Cahuilla in the desert areas. Many of these plants are still used by tribal members to treat numerous ailments.

Various parts of the plants were harvested and processed into teas, or poultices, or salves. A tribal healer-called a 'shaman'- administered the treatments, which often included sacred rituals, dreams, and healing songs. Many of these rituals have been lost to our modern way of life.

From Signage in the Swimmer Medicinal Plant Garden,
located in Ballona Discovery Park



Medicinal Native Plants

Local Resources:

- Ojai: Herb Walks with Lanny Kaufer <https://herbwalks.com/>
- Santa Barbara: EthnoHerbalist with Dr. Kevin Curran <http://www.ethnoherbalist.com/>

Southern California ethnobotany: traditional use of native plants author: Dr. Kevin Curran updated: 4-17-2017
Southern California is home to a diverse collection of native plants. These plants have successfully adapted to the mostly dry and warm climate of the region. Certain southern California native plants evolved to survive in the extreme heat of the Sonoran Desert while others enjoy the cool, sea breeze of the Coastal Sage Scrub plant community. On this page, we provide a clickable list of native California plants that have been useful in some way to the early settlers of southern California. This page is updated every year, so please email us to share additional plant usage information.

Humans have occupied southern California for about 12,000 years. During this time, people have relied on local plants for food, tools, medicine, shelter and clothing. As you read more about each native plant, you'll understand the way early Native Americans relied on these plants for their survival.

Excerpt taken from: <http://www.ethnoherbalist.com/southern-california-native-plants-medicinal/>

Books to read:

1. Chumash Ethnobotany: Plant Knowledge Among the Chumash People of Southern California, by Jan Timbrook
2. Healing with Medicinal Plants of the West, by James D. Adams, Jr. - Associate Professor of Pharmacology at USC, and Cecila Garcia- Chumash Indian Healer
3. Medicinal Herbs of California, A Field Guide To Common Healing Plants, by Lanny Kaufer
4. Temalpakh: Cahuilla Indian knowledge and usage of plants, by Lowell Bean and Katherine Siva Saubel
5. The Drought Defying California Garden, by Greg Rubin and Lucy Warren

2019: Osprey Pole
Goes Up at LMU!



View from Ballona Discovery Park

LMU Honoring our Native American Ancestors

Dedication of our osprey pole and platform made possible by Susan and Dan Gottlieb,
Southern California Edison & The Center for Urban Resilience

Tuesday,
Sept. 17,
2019



SPECIAL BLESSINGS BY:

Robert Dorame
Tribal Chairman,
Gabrielino Tongva Indians

Fr. Randall Roche, S.J.,
Director,
Center for Ignatian Spirituality
Loyola Marymount University





BLESSING FOR THE OSPREY

COME FISH HAWK AND NEST YOUR EGGS

come = ke mah

fish hawk = hahts a nar ke-kur

and = we'k chot

nest = ah hoo-ahn

your = mo-hin

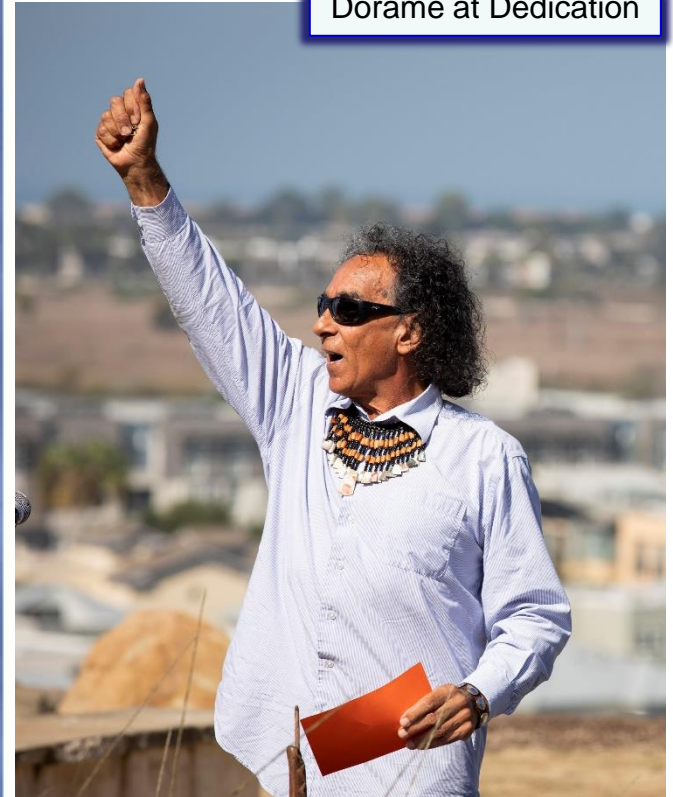
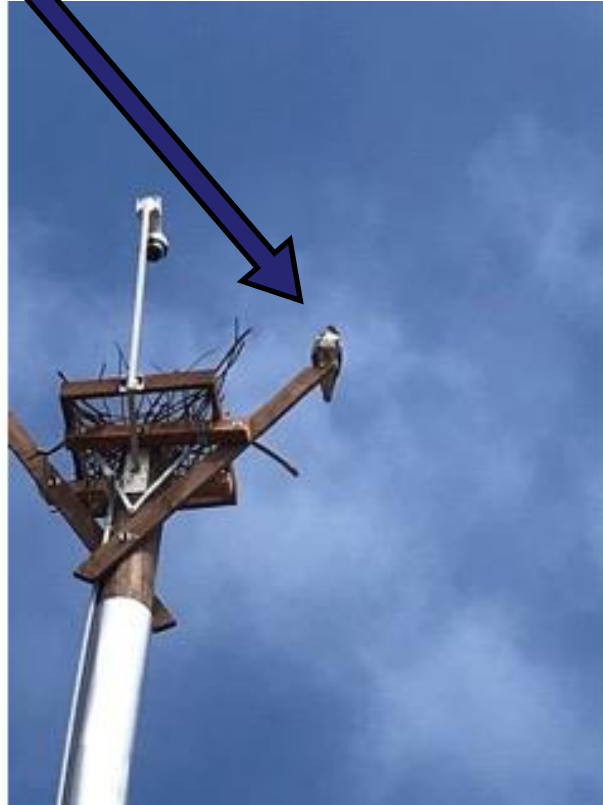
eggs = ah-hah-nehe

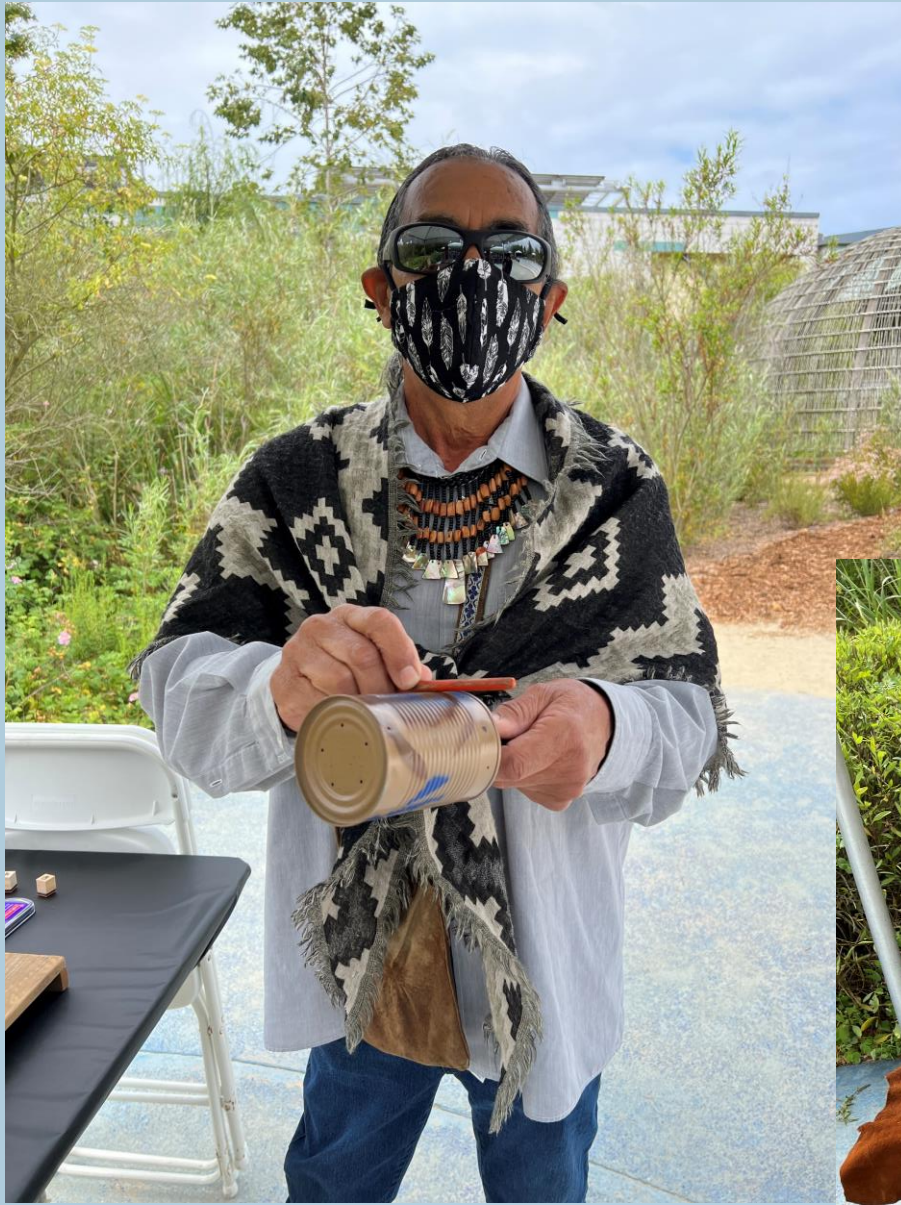
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California

Poem blessing written
and read by Robert
Dorame at Dedication

Osprey spotted on
nest platform by
LMU Facilities
Management Team
shortly after being
installed in 2019

Now we wait!





Robert Dorame brought traditional musical instruments for people to play
During the Friends' 6th Annual Migration Celebration in May of 2022



Robert Dorame teaching Friends' Staff and Docents how to play traditional musical instruments in October of 2022





Our Indigenous Experiences Throughout the Years
Grateful!



Loyola Marymount
University
Center for
Urban Resilience

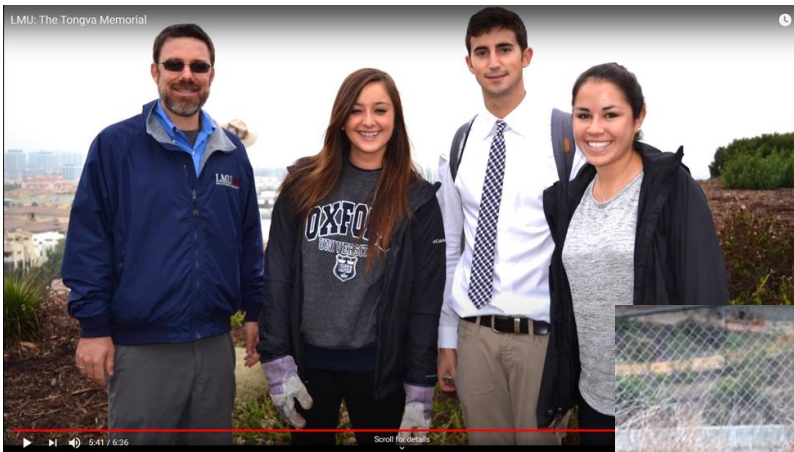
1987 - 2022

LMU Honoring our Native American Ancestors

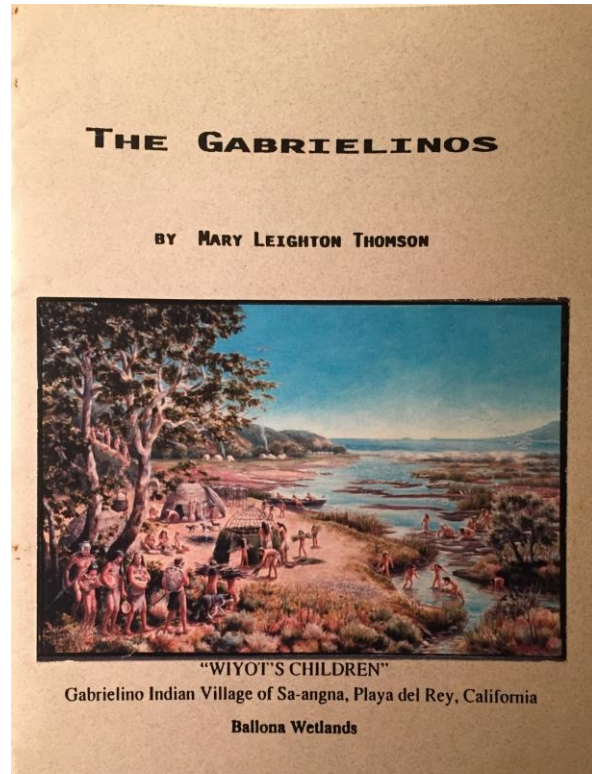
In November of 2012 Joseph Rasmussen and his class did a video on the Tongva Memorial, with Lisa Fimiani, CUREs Gottlieb Environmental Fellow (former Executive Director of Friends of Ballona Wetlands at the time, and Garden Naturalist).

LMU: Tongva Memorial <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxFnGqrhcBE>

Posted on YouTube January 5, 2013 Video by Shannon O'Brien. This video documents a brief history of the Tongva Memorial on LMU's campus, as well as the EVST100's revitalization project on it.



<https://mission.lmu.edu/cis/gracefulsites/tongvamemorial/>



Mary Leighton Thomson
1923 - 2004



"Wiyot's Children" by Mary Leighton Thomson. Prints are available on the Friends Website: <http://www.ballonafriends.org/history.html>

Justin Farmer, Ipay, Teaches Girl Scouts how to Basket Weave
in the sacred village of Guespet (FKA Sa Angna), Ballona Wetlands
September 11, 2010

In 2004, Justin authored, and his foundation published, "Southern California Luiseño Indian Baskets"
http://www.kumeyaay.info/california_indian_artists/justin_farmer/







Here are two of the sacred Tongva plants that you can find in the Ballona Watershed

Sacred Datura
Datura wrightii



http://southwestdesertflora.com/WebsiteFolders/All_Species/Solanaceae/Datura%20wrightii,%20Western%20Jimson%20Weed.html



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datura_wrightii#/media/File:Datura_wrightii_flower2.jpg



White Sage
Salvia apiana



Here are some of the native plants that you can now find in 8 acres of the Ballona Saltmarsh and Dunes, thanks to the restoration efforts of the Friends of Ballona Wetlands

Silver Dune
Lupine



Coastal Buckwheat



Lemonade Berry



California Sunflower

LMU Honoring our Native American Ancestors

Dr. John H. Dorsey and CUREs Fellow Lisa Fimiani, participated in a listening session at the invitation of Kristen Dorsey to assist renowned artist Nanibah Chacon with ideas for her Mural about El Segundo, Unveiling at the El Segundo Public Library on **May 29, 2019**.

Come see this beautiful tribute to the Tongva people and the El Segundo Blue butterfly!





Mercedes Dorame with Nanibah Chacon

Portals to Memory Mural by Nanibah Chacon

Located in the Sue Carter Friends of the Library Community Room, Diné and Chicana Artist Nanibah Chacon's mural, "Portals to Memory," was created as a part of the library's Book to Action program in May 2019. Listening sessions with community members and the artist contributed to the collaboratively developed and site-specific mural content.

The piece incorporates various landscapes present in Tongva territories and strategically placed "cog stones." Beginning with the ocean, crossing lands and local plants (silver dune lupine and coastal buckwheat), and ending with sky and constellations. The mural celebrates the beauty of wonder and our innate need to create objects that are reflective of what we see in nature. Nature has always been our first teacher with its vast mysteries and abundant systems of knowledge.

Nanibah Chacon is known for her murals and large scale public works created nationally and internationally as well as her personal philosophy that art should be an accessible and meaningful catalyst for social change.

<https://www.instagram.com/nanibah/?hl=en>

<https://www.elsegundolibrary.org/services/arts-and-culture/art-in-the-library/portals-to-memory-mural-by-nanibah-chacon>

UCLA's American Indian Studies Center (AISC) Event Oct 2019

Lighting a Path Forward: UC Land Grants, Public Memory, and Tovaangar

<https://www.aisc.ucla.edu/events/lightingapathforward.aspx>



Song Led by Cindi Alvitre:
<https://youtu.be/-TWg8fcz1Eo>

Wendy G Teeter, PhD, RPA
Curator of Archaeology, Fowler Museum at UCLA
Lecturer, UCLA American Indian Studies
UCLA NAGPRA Coordinator, <https://coah-repat.com>
Co-Director, Pimu Catalina Island Archaeology Project
Co-PI, Mapping Indigenous Los Angeles,
<https://mila.ss.ucla.edu>

Cindi Alvitre
NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act 1990),
Lecturer, Cal State University, Long Beach
Director, Saltwater Productions,
Former Lecturer, Otis College of Art and Design
UCLA, ABD, World Arts & Cultures
MA Public History Mgmt Program and BA Anthropology, UC Riverside
Ti'at Society: <https://www.kcet.org/shows/tending-nature/episodes/rethinking-the-coast-with-the-tiat-society>

Local Indigenous Resources

- 1) El Segundo Library Portals to Memory Mural by Nanibah Chacon <https://www.elsegundolibrary.org/services/arts-and-culture/art-in-the-library/portals-to-memory-mural-by-nanibah-chacon>
- 2) Friends of Ballona Wetlands <https://www.ballonafriends.org/history-of-ballona-wetlands>
- 3) Historic Site #12: Culver City's First Park <https://www.culvercityhistoricalsociety.org/historic-sites/site12/>
- 4) KCET Gabrieleno Tongva Mission Indians <https://www.kcet.org/shows/departures/gabrieleno-tongva-mission-indians>
- 5) Kuruvungna Sacred Springs <https://www.smconservancy.org/property/kuruvungna-sacred-springs/>
- 6) LA's Tongva descendants: 'We originated here' <https://www.kcrw.com/culture/shows/curious-coast/las-tongva-descendants-we-originated-here>
- 7) Loyola Marymount University Indigenous Website: <https://resources.lmu.edu/dei/indigenous/>
- 8) Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society <https://smbasblog.com/the-tongva/>
- 9) SEARCHING FOR GUASPET: A MISSION PERIOD RANCHERIA IN WEST LOS ANGELES: <https://www.scahome.org/publications/proceedings/Proceedings.22Stoll.pdf>
- 10) SEARCHING THE FOOTPRINTS OF TONGVA ANCESTORS <http://classes.dma.ucla.edu/Fall18/173/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NEXT-STEP.pdf>
- 11) 10,000 Years of History: Tongva Historic Sites <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74dzQzyFcUs>
- 12) Tongva Gabrielino: First People of Los Angeles <https://silo.tips/download/tongva-gabrielino-first-people-of-los-angeles>
- 13) Tongva People http://www.tongvapeople.org/?page_id=696
- 14) UCLA's American Indian Studies Center (AISC): <http://aisc.it.ucla.edu/w/>
- 15) Western Digs <http://westerndigs.org/history-of-ancient-los-angeles-was-driven-by-its-wetlands-8000-year-survey-finds/>

Ballona is a Sacred Site

The Tongva (their name means “People of the Earth”) are thought to have first settled what’s now the Los Angeles area between 9,000 and 2,500 years ago



Justin Farmer, Ipay, Teaches Girl Scouts how to Basket Weave in the sacred village of Guaspet (FKA Sa Angna), Ballona Wetlands September 11, 2010



Ruth Lansford, Founder of the Friends of Ballona Wetlands and Robert Dorame, Most Likely Descendant of the Gabrieleno Tongva Indians in 2018

10 Years Earlier:

<https://www.dailybreeze.com/2008/02/10/finding-a-resting-place-for-the-gabrieleno-tongva-ancestors/>



This is Howard Towner holding a feather

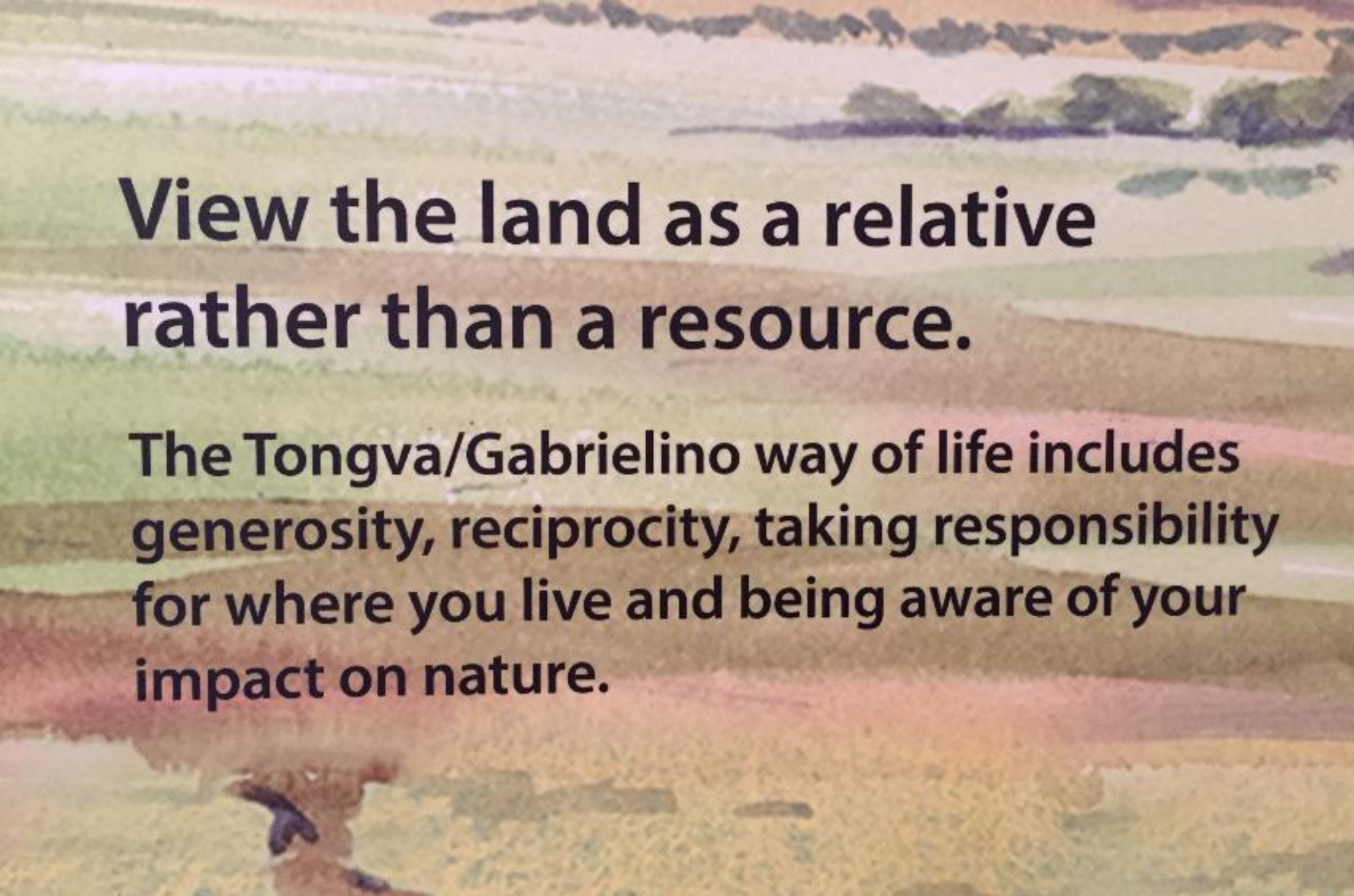


The connection between Loyola Marymount University and the Ballona Wetlands goes back to the founding of the Friends, when the late Dr. Howard Towner joined the original Board of the non-profit back in the late 70s. The Friends' YouTube video, *The Ballona Wetlands: Freshwater Marsh Story*, shows Dr. Towner in the Wetlands in the very beginning, proving the degraded property was marshland: https://youtu.be/4O_-m3wjX3A. Thus began a 40 year battle that has resulted in most of the restorable land to be saved and designated an Ecological Reserve.

You can read about it here: <https://curesblog.lmu.edu/friends-of-ballona-wetlands-founders-commemorative-bronze-installed-in-ballona-discovery-park/>



HISTORIC SACRED SITE
OF A
GABRIELINO/TONGVA
VILLAGE



**View the land as a relative
rather than a resource.**

**The Tongva/Gabrielino way of life includes
generosity, reciprocity, taking responsibility
for where you live and being aware of your
impact on nature.**

Loyola Marymount University and Friends of Ballona Wetlands Programs!

1. Advocacy
2. Tours
3. Restoration
4. Education
 - Formal and Informal
 - Internships
 - Community Service
5. Opportunities
 - Personal
 - Business





We have been actively engaged in saving and restoring the Ballona Wetlands for over 40 years!



Your GO-TO Organizations

Ballona Discovery Park (Playa Vista)

13110 Bluff Creek Drive, CA 90094

(310) 306-5994

Check the Friends' website for Gardening Club, Classes, and Workshops

<https://www.ballonafriends.org/grow-native>

Learn how to recognize and take care of native plants in a demonstration garden. Tasks include: weeding, trimming, planting, mulching, watering



GARDENING CLUB



FRIENDS OF
BALLONA
WETLANDS



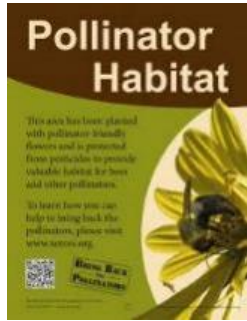
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**BALLONA
DISCOVERY
PARK**



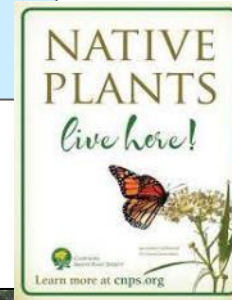
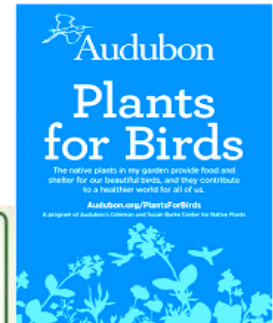
Online Information about Ballona Discovery Park

Located at: 13110 Bluff Creek Drive,
(off Lincoln Boulevard) Playa Vista, CA 90094



Center for Urban Resilience (CUREs)
<https://academics.lmu.edu/cures/partners/ballonadiscoverypark/>

Friends of Ballona Wetlands
<https://www.ballonafriends.org/ballona-discovery-park>



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<https://academics.lmu.edu/cures/>



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<http://www.ballonafriends.org/>