

WILD L.A.

Thursday, September 7, 2017, at 7 p.m.

Friends of the USC Libraries Lecture Hall, Doheny Memorial Library 240

ABOUT THE PANELISTS

- **Beth Pratt-Bergstrom** is the California director for the National Wildlife Federation and a strong advocate of national parks. She is the author of *When Mountain Lions Are Neighbors*—and she has a tattoo of L.A.'s best-known big cat, P-22.
- **Nicholas Hummingbird** is the manager of the Hahamongna Cooperative Nursery, which provides low-cost native plants for restoration, conservation, and park uses. He has done large-scale habitat restoration on the Channel Islands.
- **Nathan Masters** is a writer specializing in L.A. history and the host of KCET's *Lost L.A.* He is also the manager of academic events and programming communications for the USC Libraries.
- **Char Miller** is an environmental historian and the author of books including *Not So Golden State: Sustainability vs. the California Dream* and *America's Great National Forests, Wildernesses, and Grasslands*. His research interests include the intersection of U.S. environmental policy, history, and politics; arguments around immigration and borderland security; and the dilemmas that urban growth and development pose for the booming southwestern states.

TIMELINE: CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS IN MODERN U.S. HISTORY

1890–1920 The Progressive era brought social reforms such as child labor laws, food and drug safety regulation, and women's suffrage. Progressivism also included a wave of conservationism, advocated by people including Henry David Thoreau and John Muir. Laws were passed to establish national parks and national forests and to protect fish and wildlife.

1940s–1950s The mid-20th century saw another wave of concern for the environment, leading to the passage of the Federal Water Pollution Act in 1948 and the Air Pollution Control Act in 1955.

1960s *Silent Spring*, a 1962 book by Rachel Carson, sparked the modern environmental movement. Numerous pieces of legislation were passed in this decade to protect and preserve the environment, including the landmark Wilderness Act of 1964.

1970s The first Earth Day was celebrated in 1970, and the '70s saw the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act, among other legislation.

1980s to the present In recent decades, the conversation about the environment has expanded into multifaceted movements for environmental justice, to mitigate the effects of climate change, and more.

THE CA GRIZZLY BEAR: A CASE STUDY IN HUMANS, HISTORY, AND WILDLIFE

The California grizzly is the official state animal and the familiar figure on the California state flag. But the bear, a subspecies of the grizzly, has been extinct almost the entire history of the state. California grizzlies roamed the area in large numbers for millennia, and they coexisted with indigenous people. In fact, the relationship was so close and important that some indigenous cultures considered them ancestors. After the arrival of European and American settlers, bears and humans became competitors instead of coexisting species. People wanting to control nature by establishing farms and ranches felt motivated to suppress predators in the area, including the big bear. In the mid-19th century, people began intensively hunting California grizzlies. By the second decade of the 20th century, they were gone. The bears' extinction had ripple effects throughout the ecosystem.

WILDLIFE IN L.A.

You don't have to leave L.A. to find wildlife. There is abundant wildlife right in the heart of the city, at Griffith Park, the L.A. River, and other sites all over town.

Griffith Park is one of the largest urban wilderness areas in the United States, with more than 4,000 acres of natural chaparral-covered terrain. P-22 lives here.

There was once a wild, free-flowing river running through what is now Los Angeles. Frequent floods prompted people to contain it in a concrete channel, but in the last few decades, a movement has emerged to re-green the L.A. River. Today, an abundance of fish and bird species live in or near the river.



DEFINITIONS

Biodiversity: The variety of both animal and plant life in the world or in a particular ecosystem.

Chaparral: A community of shrubby plants widely distributed in Southern California that are adapted to dry sunny summers and moist winters.

Ecosystem: A community of living organisms and the non-living components of their environment such as air, water, and mineral soil. An ecosystem is self-supporting, and is defined by the network of interactions among organisms, and between organisms and their environment.

Environmental justice: A movement that looks at the intersections between environmentalism and race, often addressing the environmental racism that has led to a disproportionate share of environmental burdens such as pollution being placed in communities of color.

Wilderness: A tract of land uncultivated and uninhabited by human beings.



FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- What wildlife do you observe on campus and in the neighborhoods surrounding USC?
- Do you think there are ways to balance development and wildlife preservation? If so, how?
- National parks preserve and protect wilderness areas all over the country. But in order to establish them, in many cases indigenous people were displaced—sometimes violently. This is just one example of the tensions between U.S. environmental laws and indigenous rights. Is there a way to reconcile the two? If not, how would you address this dilemma?

TO LEARN MORE, EXPLORE THESE RESOURCES:

- The “Wild L.A.” episode of KCET’s *Lost LA*: kcet.org/lostla
- KCET’s *Tending the Wild*: kcet.org/shows/tending-the-wild
- Books by tonight’s panelists, including:
 - Not So Golden State: Sustainability vs. the California Dream* by Char Miller
 - When Mountain Lions Are Neighbors* by Beth Pratt-Bergstrom
- Modern Hiker: modernhiker.com
- The City Project: cityprojectca.org
- Friends of the L.A. River: folar.org

DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

NATHAN MASTERS of the USC Libraries has selected the following resources to help you learn more about L.A.’s relationship with its natural environment. To access the full text of these books and articles online (where applicable), search for them on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu.

Recommended Books

- Anderson, Kat. *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California’s Natural Resources*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

The full text is available online through the USC Libraries. You can also check out a print copy from Doheny Memorial Library (E78.C15 A676 2005).

- Cunningham, Laura. *A State of Change: Forgotten Landscapes of California*. Berkeley, Calif.: Heyday Books, 2010.

Print copies are available at the VKC and Leavey libraries (QH105.C2 C86 2010).

- Deverell, William., and Greg. Hise. *Land of Sunshine An Environmental History of Metropolitan Los Angeles*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014.

The full text is available online through the USC Libraries. You can also check out a print copy from the VKC or Architecture and Fine Arts libraries (GF504.C2 L36 2005).

- Hise, Greg, and Deverell, William Francis. *Eden by Design: The 1930 Olmsted-Bartholomew Plan for the Los Angeles Region*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

Print copies are available at the Architecture and Fine Arts, VKC, and Doheny Memorial libraries (HT394.L67 E34 2000).

- Miller, Char. *Not So Golden State: Sustainability vs. the California Dream*. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2016.

A print copy is available at the VKC Library (GE185.C2 M56 2016).

- Minnich, Richard A. *California’s Fading Wildflowers: Lost Legacy and Biological Invasions*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.

The full text is available online through the USC Libraries. You can also check out a print copy from Doheny Memorial Library (QH353.M56 2008).

- Robinson, John W. *The San Gabriels : The Mountain Country from Soledad Canyon to Lyttle Creek*. Arcadia, CA: Big Santa Anita Historical Society, 1991.

A print copy is available at Doheny Memorial Library (F868.L8 R52 1991).

Recommended Articles

- Cronon, William. “The Trouble with Wilderness; Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature.” *Environmental History* 1, no. 1 (1996): 7–28.
- McPhee, John. “The Control of Nature: Los Angeles Against the Mountains.” *The New Yorker* 64, no. 32 (1988): 45–78.
- Pratt-Bergstrom, Beth. “Where the Wild Things Are.” *Earth Island Journal* 31, no. 2 (2016): 18–20.