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Wagner Ranch Nature Area opens its gates for a day of fun and learning

By Sora O'Doherty

On Sunday, April 23, the public will have the rare opportunity to enjoy the Wagner Ranch Nature Area, adjacent to Wagner Ranch Elementary School.

Once a year the historic ranch and 18-acre nature preserve is open to the public for a wildlife festival. From 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. families and children can join in a variety of activities for all ages. Visitors can enjoy wildlife fun at the pond (red-legged frogs and the resident western pond turtle, Mr. T), meet animals in the garden (goats and beautiful parrots from the Contra Costa Avian Society), try DIY gardening projects, hands-on nature arts and crafts, and play Earth Day games. There will be a rare docent tour of the meadows, woodland, ponds and streams, and the historic home site of Theodore Wagner, California's first Surveyor General.

Food and beverages will be available for purchase, or visitors may bring picnics to enjoy at the many available picnic tables. Several community organizations will present earth-friendly endeavors and there will also be a silent auction table. Children can get their Wildlife Guides stamped at 10 stations and receive a free honey stick at the Bee Station.

The Nature Area is located at 350 Camino Pablo in Orinda.

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