



Nature Area Programs at Wagner Ranch

The Friends of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area (FWRNA) is continuing the innovative programs for Orinda children in grades 3-5. These outdoor investigations are educationally rich and use multisensory methods to engage students in hands-on activities.

In 2009, FWRNA stepped forward to support the Nature Area programs. Donations from parents have supported the food and supplies, and FWRNA has been covering the majority of program costs with the help of the local community and in collaboration with the Orinda Union School District.

ANIMAL CAMP - 3rd Grade

This is a one-day, "hands-on" program designed to enhance 3rd grade science standards through exciting outdoor springtime activities.

Students are introduced to food chains, animal and plant adaptations, microhabitats, life cycles, and cooperative simulations that give them a sense of ecosystem dynamics.

During their adventures children will:



- ⊗ Tour the Nature Area - tally the evidence that animals, large and small, live in the meadows and woods
- ⊗ Observe and learn about the homes for bluebirds, owls, wood ducks, bats, and native bees that scouts have created.
- ⊗ Work in small groups to create puppet shows and role-play energy flow games
- ⊗ Savor snacks, lunch, and conversations under the canopy of oaks to the tunes of phoebes, chickadees, and wrens
- ⊗ Explore the frog pond and observe up close dozens of amazing aquatic creatures
- ⊗ Reflect on their experiences and share ideas for conserving Orinda's wildlife.

RANCHO DAYS - 4th Grade

This engaging two-day experience enhances 4th grade history standards. Students explore life as a Californio by cooking, building, crafting, and celebrating daily life on a rancho. Sources of food, tools, clothing, and building materials are examined.



- ⊗ Make and use adobe bricks for building
- ⊗ Go on a native plant hike and learn how the plants were used at the ranchos
- ⊗ Investigate the location and history of local ranchos and land grants
- ⊗ Make a riata and measure land area
- ⊗ Discuss relationships between Native Peoples and Californios
- ⊗ Make tortillas from ground corn
- ⊗ Prepare frijoles, red chile sauce, Mexican hot chocolate, jicama salad, and other rancho foods
- ⊗ Hand dip candles
- ⊗ Card wool using teasel brushes
- ⊗ Make Ojo de Dios and discuss it as a cross-cultural craft
- ⊗ Make paper flowers for Rancho Days fiesta

Friends of the Wagner Ranch Nature Area (FWRNA) support stewardship of the Nature Area, with an emphasis on high quality educational programs that benefit Orinda students, teachers, and community partners. FWRNA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity. The Nature Area is owned by the Orinda Union School District.