



Solana Center for Environmental Innovation

25 Years of Positive Change...



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Upcoming Events:

- July 21 - Composting Workshop at Lakeside River Park Conservancy

The Solana Center Composter Quarterly Newsletter Summer 2012

Caring for Worms in Summer



- July 28 - Electronic Waste Collection Event
- August 4 - Composting Workshop at the San Diego Botanic Garden

Click [here](#) for our events calendar.

Thank you to all our Volunteers!
We would like to specifically acknowledge the following volunteers for their support:

Deryl Adderson
 Nora Adderson
 Jill Albright
 Jose Amular
 Charles Anacker
 Marysa Andriola
 Kerry Bauer
 Jim Beyster
 Byron Bohnet
 Cathy Bohnet
 Jim Carleton
 Michael Cassidy
 Sharon Clay Rose
 Debbie Dames
 Paige Decino
 Whitney Duenez
 David Emmerson
 Bryn Faris
 Jim Farrell
 Tim Fleming
 Carol Graham
 John Goodrich
 Heidi Hagen
 Dustin Hahn
 Diane Hazard
 Paula Hildebrandt
 Ann Hoepfner
 Rob Hughes
 Sura Katz
 Nancy Korchick
 Gilda Martinez
 Erin McConkey
 Tonya McNeill
 Elizabeth Mendelson
 Georgia Nally
 Olivia Olmstead

Summer is here! 2012 looks like it has another hot, dry summer season in store for San Diego. It is important to protect your valuable composting worms from high temperatures and dry conditions. Red wigglers cannot leave our vermicomposting bins to escape the heat, so it's up to us to keep them cool during the warm summer months. Here are a few tips:

- Keep the worm bin out of direct sunlight by placing it under shade, in the garage, on the patio or even inside the house (especially when temperatures exceed 100 degrees)
- Keep the bedding evenly moist with water but be sure the bin is also draining properly. You may need to add water periodically during the summer months.
- Consider freezing food scraps before adding to the bin during especially hot periods.
- Remember that it is the internal bedding temperature of the bin, not the ambient temperature that is relevant for worm comfort.
- Discourage ants, which tend to be more active in summer, by keeping the area of the bins free of debris, ensuring moist bedding, and putting the bin legs in dishes full of water.

These tips will help keep your worms cool and happy this summer!

Compost in Our Community

What's better than summer evenings filled with baseball, hot dogs, peanuts and...composting?! That's right, we said composting! "America's Pastime" and the valuable process of composting have joined forces at Petco Park in Downtown San Diego. In 2005, Petco Park (home of the San Diego Padres) started collecting and composting pre-consumer food scraps. Initially implemented as a way to save money on



Caroline Olsen Van-Stone
Judy Osman
Greg Paris
Lori Paris
Carol Prior
Mike Rahilly
Chris Raub
Emily Raub
Jim Renn
David Rick
Eric Romer
Lisa Roop
Linda Ruiz
Tiana Serro
Mike Shields
Nathan Smedley
Shawn Studer
Paul Taylor
Donna Uyeno
Shawn Vanderploeg
Wade Vernon
Marianne West
Roy Wilburn
Jami Wong
Kurt Wong
Rebecca Woolley

waste disposal, Petco Park has embraced the composting movement and has been recognized for its efforts by the City of San Diego, the Governor of California, CalRecycle, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Since 2005 the Park has saved over \$75,000 in trash disposal fees and now composts about 164 tons of organic waste ever year!

After each game or major event, food waste from the kitchen and dish-washing stations is collected into a compactor and sent to the City of San Diego's composting facility, Miramar Greenery, where it is turned into valuable compost. Any edible food is donated to the San Diego Rescue Mission, a local homeless shelter. In 2011, Petco Park donated 6,740 pounds of edible food

to the Rescue Mission. Between donations, recycling, and composting, Petco Park has diverted over 1 million pounds of trash from our landfills every year. The program has also been successful in educating its employees, fans, and contracted partners about waste diversion, further spreading the impact of composting beyond the stadium walls. Composters and Padre fans couldn't be more proud!

*Photo courtesy of BioCycle.net

Using Compost in the Summer Season



Are you excited to enjoy your summer harvest of squash and tomatoes but worried about keeping these plants well-fed and watered throughout the hot months? As usual, our answer is compost! Adding compost to your garden during summer can help reduce your water needs and add valuable nutrients for the heavy feeders in your garden like corn, squash and tomatoes.

In the dry, summer months it is critical that we conserve water to avoid water shortages, and one of the best ways to do so is through resource-conscious landscaping. Over 50% of urban water usage in San Diego is spent on landscape irrigation and other outdoor purposes. A great way to tackle the water challenge is to incorporate compost into your summer garden or yard. In addition to providing valuable nutrients, compost has been proven to increase soil's water retention capacity, particularly increasing the amount of plant-available water. Here are a few ways to incorporate compost into your garden or landscape throughout the summer to conserve water and boost plant health:

1. Mulch - Compost or other organic material spread around plants, trees, and shrubs helps suppress weed growth, regulate soil temperatures and hold moisture near plants' roots.
2. Soil amendment - Work compost into the soil around your plants (side-dressing) to revitalize old soil and give vital nutrients to your summer crops. Doing this in combination with mulching will give you the best water-saving results!
3. Compost tea and leachate - Consider using compost tea or vermicompost leachate as a soil drench around plants that may be stressed by heat, dry conditions, pests, disease, or heavy yields. Many composters report improvements in plant health by applying compost tea throughout the season.

As always, keep collecting and composting your garden trimmings and food scraps, so you can continue supplying your garden soil with this valuable amendment throughout the seasons!

**Volunteer Spotlight:
Michelle Young**



Michelle Young completed the Master Composter course and began volunteering with the Solana Center in 2009. This spring, after hearing that the students at Toler Elementary in the City of San Diego were in desperate need of a new worm bin, Michelle immediately signed up to help. The bin was in a sad state: termite-infested with almost no worms and a collapsed top (see below).



Despite the challenge, Michelle was confident that the worm bin could be saved. After assessing the needs and securing the materials, Michelle began work immediately. In a single day, she completely dismantled and reconstructed the bin. Thanks to her hard work, the students at Toler Elementary now have a new bin and a thriving worm population. The garden coordinator reports that the bin is doing better than ever and that the students are enthusiastically caring for the worms daily. Michelle's story is a great example of the impacts that compost "ambassadors" are making in San Diego communities.



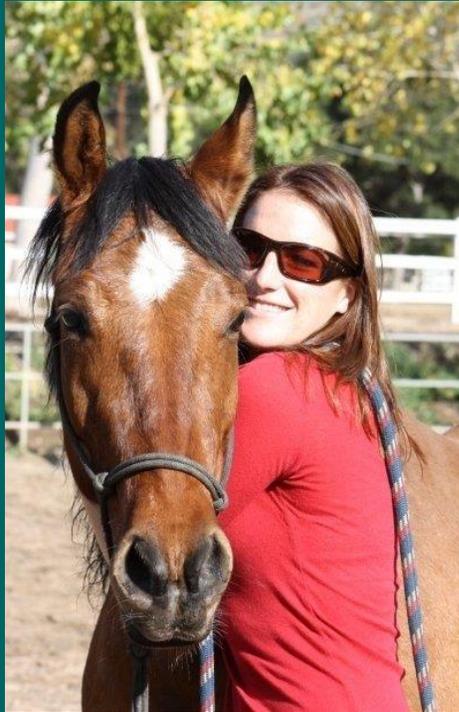
Solana Center Volunteers

Michelle isn't the only volunteer making a difference in our community! Take a look at our volunteer recognitions for spring (see left). Our volunteers are an invaluable part of our programs and accomplishments. Ready to make a difference? Get involved and become part of a rewarding community of passionate and dedicated volunteers! To register as a Solana Center volunteer, please click

[here](#). To sign in to your volunteer account, click [here](#).

Contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Dominique Navarro, at dominique@solanacenter.org with any questions about volunteer opportunities or how you can get involved in a project you love!

Meet our New Environmental Educators!



Erin Short joined the Solana Center in March 2012. The Solana Center philosophy and focus on the local community's efforts to help the environment through sustainable practices is what initially attracted her to the position. She graduated from the University of Redlands with a B.S. in Environmental Science and a minor in Biology. While at the Solana Center, she and Carrie have been busy teaching local students about how they can prevent stormwater pollution and getting them excited about starting their own compost bins. Erin recently enjoyed teaching a family gardening workshop and is

excited about many upcoming projects. She is especially excited about developing a mapping tool to display where runoff travels in our local communities and continuing to educate the public about horse manure management. (Worm poop isn't the only poop she's excited about!) Outside of work Erin enjoys hiking with her cattle dogs, riding her horse, and tending to her garden and Worm Factory.

Carrie Schwartz is a graduate of the University of California Santa Barbara with a B.A. in Environmental Studies and a B.A. in Film and Media Studies. A San Diego native, Carrie has been involved with environmental programs at local nonprofits, and is working to manage a backyard garden that has been taken over by an unruly, compost-fueled tomato plant. Carrie has been enjoying the opportunities for research, curriculum



writing, and creative design work at the Solana Center and is looking forward to the upcoming beekeeping program!

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