

advertisement

Local Community News

Daily Pilot 7 Days A Week



Daily Pilot

Newport Beach and Costa Mesa, California

Forecast



Clear, 78-52

[REAL ESTATE](#) | [RENTALS](#) | [JOBS](#) | [AUTOMOTIVE](#) | [CLASSIFIEDS](#)

April 01, 2005

- [Home](#)
- [News](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Politics & Government](#)
- [Columns](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Features](#)
- [Public Safety](#)
- [Religion](#)
- [Obituaries](#)

- [Classifieds](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [Rentals](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Automotive](#)

- [How to Subscribe](#)
- [Contact the Daily Pilot](#)
- [Customer Service](#)
- [Display Advertising](#)
- [Classified Advertising](#)
- [DBA Advertising](#)
- [Media Kit](#)

- Other TCN Papers:
- [Burbank Leader](#)
- [Laguna Beach](#)
- [Coastline Pilot](#)
- [Huntington Beach](#)
- [Independent](#)
- [Glendale News-Press](#)

LOS ANGELES TIMES

TOP STORIES

Published April 1, 2005

Newport-Mesa on painted lady flight path

• Their timing serves as a perfect warm-up for the butterfly house opening at the Environmental Nature Center in Newport Beach.

By Marisa O'Neil, Daily Pilot

NEWPORT-MESA -- They're just passing through, but hordes of butterflies are adding some black and gold to Orange County this week.

Large clusters of the insects are winging their way north through Newport-Mesa. The painted lady butterflies, also known as *Vanessa cardui*, look like monarch butterflies, only smaller, with 2- to 3-inch wingspans.

MORE STORIES

[Fifth suspect faces charges](#)

[Consultant abandons post](#)

[Group reports rise in incidents of anti-Semitism](#)

[Council to decide committee's fate](#)

[OCC gets top new leader](#)

advertisement

apartments.com™
Get what you want.

It's a sure sign that spring is here.

"It seems like spring has sprung," Newport Beach Lifeguard Lt. Jon Mitchell said Thursday. "The ladybugs and butterflies are out in force."

Though the painted ladies make the migration each year, the recent wet weather led to more of the butterflies than normal, said UC Irvine biology professor and nature photographer Peter Bryant.

"They breed down in the desert Southwest and

Mexico," Bryant said. "In a rainy year like this one, there's a huge production and more growth of their food plant."

They lay their eggs and feed on weedy plants like thistle, mallow and nettles, said Liz Cooper, a member of the North American Butterfly Assn. The fully-grown butterflies feed on nectar from flowers.

The painted ladies then fly north to Canada, Bryant said.

The last time the butterflies made such a prolific appearance in Orange County was in the 1970s, he said.

Their timing serves as a perfect warm-up for the new butterfly house opening April 17 at the Environmental Nature Center in Newport Beach, executive director Bo Glover said.

"The migration is good timing for people to get enthused about the butterfly house," Glover said.

People have been calling the center to ask about the butterflies flitting around town, he said.

Those who somehow miss the many painted ladies in the wild will have a second chance when the butterfly house opens, Glover said. That variety and seven to 11 other native species are set to hatch by the time it opens, he said.

* MARISA O'NEIL covers public safety and courts. She may be reached at (714) 966-4618 or by e-mail at marisa.oneil@latimes.com.