



AL SEIB For The Times
NOAH CARO, left, Mason Areke and Lexi Thorpe, from Littlerock, Calif., watch the partial solar eclipse at the California Science Center.

In L.A., it’s a sun day on a Monday

Bhavini Lad’s three children were so fired up to experience their first solar eclipse on Monday that standing in line to pick up protective eyewear at the California Institute of Technology campus was almost too much to bear.

The 7-year-old twins and their 5-year-old brother buzzed and jumped, chatting with people in the line around them. They spoke with great enthusiasm about their space-themed bedroom that features a replica solar system hanging from the ceiling.

“They love to learn about it because they

City gets only a partial solar eclipse, but it fires up the thousands who fix their gaze skyward

BY HANNAH FRY, JIREH DENG AND CAROLINE PETROW-COHEN

have the stuff in their room,” said Lad, an aerospace engineer, adding that they’ve talked about how to view the phenomenon without risk of eye injury.

“You don’t look without the glasses because what will happen?” Lad asked her son.

He shouted his response: “You’ll get blind!”

The sense of excitement was mirrored in the rest of the crowd of roughly a thousand revelers, who donned protective eyewear to witness the scientific wonder of a partial solar eclipse on the athletic field near the Cahill Cen-

[See Eclipse, A7]

46% of Colorado River diversions go to hay

Study shows, amid declining flow, much of the water is used for cattle-feed crops.

BY IAN JAMES

With chronic water shortages afflicting the Colorado River, discussions about how to cut usage have increasingly focused on a thirsty crop that consumes an especially large share of the river’s water: hay that is grown to feed cattle and produce beef and dairy products.

In a new study, researchers found that alfalfa and other cattle-feed crops consume 46% of the water that is diverted from the river, accounting for nearly two-thirds of agricultural water use. The research also shows that agriculture is the domi-



CAROLYN COLE Los Angeles Times
PEDRO MENDEZ watches as bales of alfalfa are loaded onto trucks for transport to California. Agriculture is the dominant user of Colorado River water.

nant user of Colorado River water, accounting for 74% of the water that is diverted — about three times the combined usage of all the cities that depend on the river.

The study presents the most detailed analysis of its kind to date, including extensive data on where the river’s water goes across seven Western states and northern Mexico. The research sheds new light on how the river’s water is used at a time when representatives of the federal government, states and tribes are seeking long-term solutions to reduce water use and adapt to climate change.

“It’s important to understand where all of the water goes,” said Brian Richter, a researcher who led the study. “This is the first complete and detailed accounting.”

Richter said he hopes the

[See Hay, A9]

Trump issues abortion views

Presumptive GOP nominee says laws should be left to the states and evades talk of a national cutoff. **NATION, A4**

LAPD’s foreign ties raise issues

The agency’s training of officers from countries accused of human rights violations is criticized. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Weather
Sunshine.
L.A. Basin: 82/56. **B6**

Printed with soy inks on partially recycled paper.



Los Angeles Times

Terry Tang is executive editor

The Los Angeles Times’ owners remove the “interim” tag from her title, which she assumed in January. **BUSINESS, A8**

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A handyman who out-squats the squatters

Flash Shelton has built himself a business taking on those who take over people’s homes.

BY JACK FLEMMING

On a winter morning in Woodland Hills, the “Squatter Hunter” slowly approaches a posh two-story home dressed in all black, armed with a Glock 26 pistol, stun gun, pepper spray and baton. His body camera is on. His two-man squad lurks behind him.

They’ve spent four days in surveillance, learning the habits of the man squatting inside. They’ve waited for him to leave, but he never does. So they knock on the front door, and when the occupant opens it, they barge inside.

Their plan: Live with the squatter. Dirty the bathroom. Take the best spot



DANIA MAXWELL Los Angeles Times

FLASH SHELTON calls himself the “Squatter Hunter.” He has put his interactions on YouTube.

on the couch. Commandeer the TV remote. Blast music. Drink his coffee. Eat his Cheetos.

Out-squat him. And film it all for YouTube.

As the body camera footage shows, the team starts installing Ring cameras throughout the home to document every interaction. The Squatter Hunter, Flash Shelton, hands the man a lease with Shelton’s name on it.

“You’re an intruder in my house now,” he says.

Shelton explains that the man is there illegally, and the team is not going anywhere until he leaves. The squatter was out before they could even share breakfast together.

For homeowners in Southern California and beyond, run-ins with squatters can be a nightmare both emotionally and financially. For the Squatter Hunter, it’s just another day on the job.

[See Squatters, A5]



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