



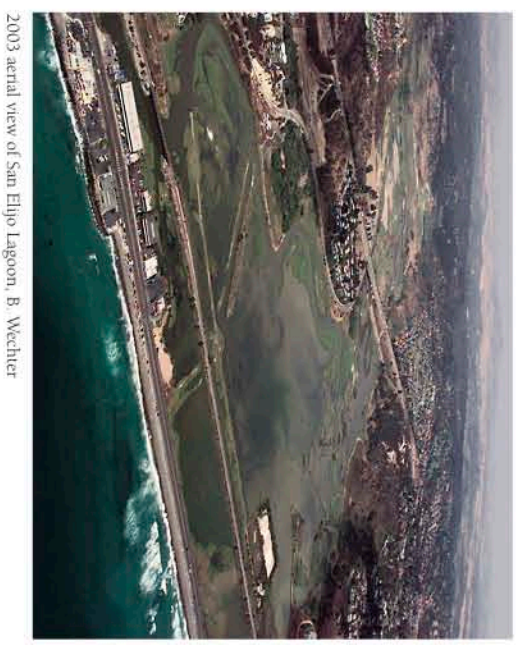
The Conservancy focuses on:
 Carrying out a biological management plan for the reserve including keeping the inlet open, habitat restoration, invasive plant control and land acquisition.
 Cooperating with government agencies to administer and protect the lagoon.
 Working with private property owners and local jurisdictions to minimize development impacts.
 Increasing public awareness and appreciation of the reserve through an environmental education program.

Successful efforts by the county, state, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy have improved the water quality, habitat and biodiversity by periodically dredging open the inlet allowing a tidal exchange critical to the health of the estuary.



Red-tailed hawk, B. Wechter

A Little History...



2003 aerial view of San Elijo Lagoon, B. Wechter

1769	1912	1925	1932	1940	1965	1970	1976	1977	1983	1987	1988	1999	2000	2001	2004
Spanish explorers named the area San Elijo.	Pacific Coast Highway was constructed across the sand dunes.	The present Santa Fe Railroad was constructed.	The present coast highway was paved and bridges built.	Sewage effluent discharge begins for 30 years.	Interstate 5 freeway was constructed.	San Elijo Alliance was formed (1970-1986).	San Elijo Lagoon Foundation was formed (1976-2001).	Management agreement for the reserve was reached between county and state.	Public dedication of San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve.	San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy was formed.	Nature Center, park and county offices were built.	Inlet endowment was funded.	Ford Wildlife Habitat Preserve was established.	San Elijo Lagoon Foundation merged with SELC.	SELC Wildlife Habitat Preserve was established.
1887	1895	1937	1969	1973	1995	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
A narrow-gauge railroad was built.	Lake Wohlford Dam was built.	Berns and shallow ponds were created for waterfowl hunting.	Housing developments were proposed for the lagoon.	Sewage effluent from Esccondido Creek ceased.	San Elijo Dam was built.	Coastal Act of California was enacted.	San Elijo Lagoon Foundation was formed (1976-2001).	Management agreement for the reserve was reached between county and state.	Public dedication of San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve.	San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy was formed.	Nature Center, park and county offices were built.	Inlet endowment was funded.	Ford Wildlife Habitat Preserve was established.	San Elijo Lagoon Foundation merged with SELC.	SELC Wildlife Habitat Preserve was established.



Nesting Great Egrets, B. Wechter

- This mosaic of habitats supports over:**
- 400 species of plants
 - 23 species of fish
 - 20 species of reptiles and amphibians
 - 24 species of mammals
 - 296 species of birds
 - 65 nesting bird species

San Elijo Lagoon is primarily a shallow-water estuary. It is divided artificially into basins by Highway 101, the railroad, and the I-5 freeway. Over a century of human modification of the estuary has resulted in reduction of its natural exchange with the ocean. When the lagoon is blocked from receiving oxygen rich seawater, biological parameters can deteriorate to the point where fish die and troublesome insects reproduce in great numbers. Food supply for birds and other animals is then greatly reduced. When the inlet is closed the beaches also lose a source of sand.

Migration



The Pacific Flyway

Each year millions of shorebirds and waterfowl migrate along North America's western coastline.

This migration creates a river of birds stretching between northern breeding areas and southern wintering areas, along what is called the Pacific Flyway. Some birds travel thousands of miles between breeding and wintering areas during a single seasonal cycle.

Southern California coastline contributes over 19 bays and estuaries to this flyway. These wetlands constitute the surviving 5% of our historical coastal wetlands and are essential for sustaining migratory birds. Each bay and estuary provides critical feeding, roosting and layover sites along the way.

San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve plays an important role in the migration of many birds. Over the years, 40% of all bird species in North America have been sighted at the reserve.

Endangered or threatened birds:



California Gnatcatcher



California Least Tern



Belding's Savannah Sparrow



Brown Pelican



Light-footed Clapper Rail



Least Bell's Vireo



Western Snowy Plover



Clean up at the lagoon, B. Wechter

You can make a difference in preserving COASTAL WETLANDS

Get inspired

Get out and experience the reserve for yourself. There are over six miles of hiking trails accessed by eight trailheads. SELC leads a free guided nature walk on the second Saturday of each month.

Get informed

Learn more about the lagoon by becoming a member of San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy and receive our quarterly newsletter, *Lagoon Tidings*. Individual memberships are the foundation of SELC's efforts.

Get active

Join SELC's volunteer groups that help to improve the reserve through habitat restoration and trail improvements. Volunteers also help with mailings and special events.

Contact SELC to find out more about current projects in the reserve.

San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy

P.O. Box 230634
 Encinitas, CA 92023-0634
 (760) 436-3944
 www.saneljo.org

Brochure design by Artefact Design, www.purecorn.com
 Illustrations by Carol Unites, www.carolunites.com
 Bill Wechter photographs, www.billwechterphotos.com
 Robert Harrington photographs, www.robertharrington.com



White-tailed Kite, P. Brady

San Elijo Lagoon ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

San Elijo Lagoon is one of San Diego County's largest coastal wetlands. It lies along the coast between the cities of Solana Beach and Encinitas, extending inland to the community of Rancho Santa Fe. The reserve covers approximately a thousand acres of diverse habitat composed of six distinct plant communities: coastal strand, salt marsh, freshwater/brackish marsh, riparian scrub, coastal sage scrub, and mixed chaparral.



San Elijo Lagoon CONSERVANCY
 Preserving, protecting and enhancing the San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve and its watershed.

San Elijo Lagoon

ECOLOGICAL RESERVE



Shooting Stars
S. Welker



Wind Poppy
S. Welker



Miner's Lettuce
L. Hedlund



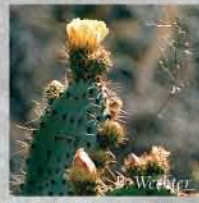
Bush Sunflower
L. Hedlund



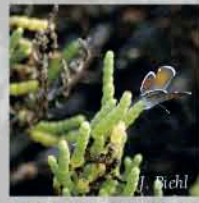
Southern Sun Cups
L. Hedlund



Toyon berries
B. Bichl



Coastal Prickly-Pear
B. Wechter



Pygmy Blue Butterfly on Pickleweed
J. Nichl

Olivenhain

La Bajada Bridge

SELC Wildlife Habitat Preserve

Escondido Creek

Ford Wildlife Habitat

Rancho Santa Fe

ENCINITAS

El Camino Real

Mira Costa College

5

Cardiff-by-the-Sea

SELC Office

San Elijo State Park

Lagoon Inlet

Cardiff State Beach

What's a watershed?

A watershed is an area of land from which surface water drains. The area that drains into the San Elijo Lagoon and ultimately to the ocean is known as the San Elijo Lagoon-Escondido Creek watershed. It covers approximately 80 square miles and extends to Lakes Wolford and Dixon, and includes the San Dieguito and Olivenhain Reservoirs. The main tributary to San Elijo Lagoon is Escondido Creek.



- Nature Center
2710 Manchester Ave
- Trailhead
- Trail
- Surf break
- Camping



101

EXIT 39

Manchester Ave



N. Rios

Holmwood Canyon

Sta Inez

Sta Carina

Sta Helena

La Orilla

El Camino Real

La Orilla Creek

Seaside State Beach

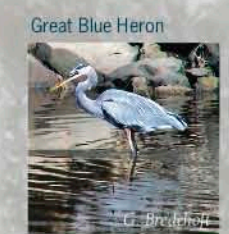
SOLANA BEACH

Solana Beach Train Station

Lomas Santa Fe

5

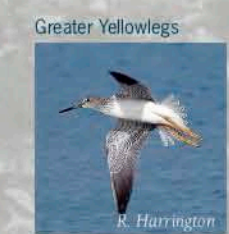
EXIT 37



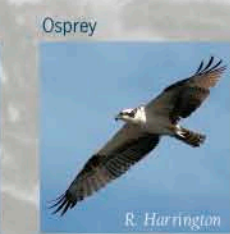
Great Blue Heron
G. Bredholz



Red-tailed Hawk
P. Smith



Greater Yellowlegs
R. Harrington



Osprey
R. Harrington



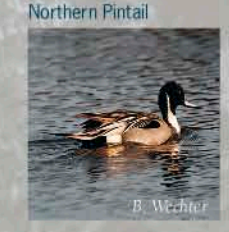
Great Egret
J. Bichl



Snowy Egret
B. Wechter



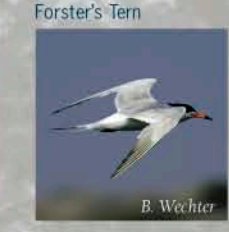
Black-necked Stilt
B. Wechter



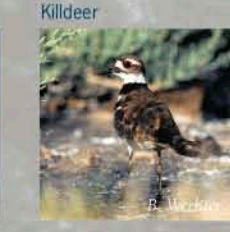
Northern Pintail
B. Wechter



American Kestrel
B. Wechter



Forster's Tern
B. Wechter



Killdeer
B. Wechter