

August 1, 2013

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**San Elijo Lagoon CONSERVANCY**  
*Connecting communities. Protecting nature.*

**ENVIRONMENTAL  
EDUCATION**

## **Nature Ambassadors Needed:**

*San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy Announces Fall Docent Training*

ENCINITAS – Thousands of people explore the trails of San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve each year. Many of these visitors are guided into nature with trained volunteer naturalists. Naturalists reveal the beauty and mysteries of wetlands: pointing out a fanciful butterfly, mule deer rustling in streamside habitat, or identifying the call of an endangered bird.

San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy announces its Docent Open House and Fall Docent Training for leading science-based school field trips and public walks in 2014. The eight-week training covers the ecology and history of the reserve. Docent training also offers practical tips in interpretive techniques and how to lead groups of students and adults.

"San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy's environmental education program is expanding and we need volunteers to join our core of docent-naturalists," said Doug Gibson, executive director and principal scientist with the conservancy. "We are extremely grateful to our dedicated docents. These volunteers are ambassadors of environmental stewardship by connecting people of all ages with one of San Diego's largest and most diverse coastal wetlands."

What is a reserve without its expert guides? When school children descend from the field trip bus, they discover trails with nature ambassadors who can point out little secrets along the way: how the Argiope spider weaves its web in Coast Prickly Pear cactus; why the Great Egret stands so perfectly still in lagoon waters awaiting its next fish. On weekends and summer evenings, all ages can participate in wildlife walks designed to reveal the diversity of habitats, animal life, and seasonal highlights in San Elijo Lagoon.

Since the founding of San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy more than 25 years ago, docents have interpreted the wonders of San Elijo Lagoon for visitors from around the world.

The conservancy is a non-profit organization dedicated to conservation, interpretation, and public enjoyment of San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve. The reserve of nearly 1,000 acres is located between Cardiff-by-the-Sea and Solana Beach, extending inland from historic Pacific Coast Highway to Rancho Santa Fe.

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### **Docent Open House**

*Sunday, September 8: 3-5 p.m.*

Learn about the 2014 docent-naturalist program, see photos and tools of interpretation, and meet current and prospective volunteers. Refreshments will be served. Free.

San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center

2710 Manchester Avenue, Cardiff-by-the-Sea

More information and to RSVP: [SanElijo.org/Docent-Training](http://SanElijo.org/Docent-Training)

### **How to Apply**

*Apply by September 20, 2013*

Applications are online at [SanElijo.org/Docent-Training](http://SanElijo.org/Docent-Training). The eight-week training is held Tuesday mornings from 9 a.m. to Noon (and two Saturday mornings) at San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center, from October 1 through November 19.

### **Docent-Naturalist Profiles**

The conservancy regularly profiles a “Docent in the Spotlight”. Learn more about the diversity of volunteers’ motivations and backgrounds at [SanElijo.org/Docent-Quarter](http://SanElijo.org/Docent-Quarter).

### **San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy**

The mission of the community-supported nonprofit land trust is to protect and restore the resources of San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, its watershed, and related ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations. For more information, the conservancy’s website is [SanElijo.org](http://SanElijo.org), or phone is (760) 436-3944.

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Media Access for High Resolution Images: [www.SanElijo.org/news-releases](http://www.SanElijo.org/news-releases)

Media Contact: Lydia Cobb, PR

Email: [cobblydia@gmail.com](mailto:cobblydia@gmail.com) • Office: (760) 230-1355

Note: Doug Gibson, Executive Director / Principal Scientist of San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy is available for phone interviews:

Office: (760) 436-3944 x 707 • Cell: (760) 803-4824 • Email: [doug@sanelijo.org](mailto:doug@sanelijo.org)