

## CALENDAR ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—May 20, 2013  
Attention Event Calendars, Arts, Nature & Entertainment

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

### **Summer Programs at San Elijo Lagoon**

*San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy connects the wonders of wetlands with all ages*

ENCINITAS – Summer is a time of comfortable, warm evenings at San Elijo Lagoon, and a brilliant season in which to explore one of San Diego’s largest estuarine reserves. Listen for the “voice of the chaparral”, the wrenit, which makes a sound sometimes described as a bouncing ball. Late-blooming plants include the tarplant, with its small yellow-orange flowers that attract native insects in search of nectar. Mule deer and their fawns might be seen east in the reserve. The mallards and their chicks are much more conspicuous and are often seen at the nature center.

Free, public programs will occur in the serene environment of San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve. This county and state regional park protects nearly 1,000 acres of habitat that hosts more than 700 species of plants and animals, many of them sensitive or endangered. Eight trails wind through diverse vistas including salt marsh, riparian, and coastal sage scrub habitats.

From morning and evening guided walks, to the gala, and restoration events, there’s something for everyone. All walks are free. Registration is required for Lagoon Platoon. The Conservancy’s biennial gala is a ticketed event; all are welcome.

#### ***Birds of a Feather***

Saturday, August 17: 5-8:30 p.m.  
Rancho Santa Fe Garden Club

San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy’s biennial gala, *Birds of a Feather*, is a garden-style benefit for environmental education in San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve. This year’s theme is *Growing Future Stewards*. The fun-filled evening features natural and organic cuisine, live entertainment by Randy Fontaine and the Swingers, and auction opportunities, all with the focus on introducing children to the beauty and wonder of wetlands through guided nature walks and public programs. The 2013 gala Honorary Chairs are Carol Childs and Peter House. Gala tickets are \$150 per person. Tables for 6

or 8 can also be reserved, with discounted incentives until June 30. Seating is limited. Suggested attire is garden cocktail.

Rancho Santa Fe Garden Club is located at 17025 Avenida de Acacias in Rancho Santa Fe. More information and ticket sales are online: [SanElijo.org/gala](http://SanElijo.org/gala)

### **Summer Evening Walks**

June 19, July 17, August 21, and September 18: 5:30-7 p.m. (Sep. is 5-6:30 p.m.)  
Santa Carina Trail (3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays)

As the sun begins to descend over the ocean, some animals that live in San Elijo Lagoon emerge from daytime slumber. Explore the reserve in a guided pre-sunset walk along Santa Carina Trail. Enjoy the fragrance of sage scrub on warm evenings and listen for the call of the elusive Clapper Rail nestled in pickleweed. Santa Carina trail has moderate inclines in some areas. More information is online: [SanElijo.org/eve-walks](http://SanElijo.org/eve-walks)

### **Nature Center Loop Trail Guided Walks**

Saturdays: 10-11 a.m.  
San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center

Glimpse the magic and mystery of life between the tides. Focus your binoculars to birding and marine invertebrate sightings that move to the rhythms of the ocean. The ¼-mile Nature Center Loop Trail is ADA-accessible and winds along the edge of salt marsh and sage scrub habitats with shade along the riparian boardwalk. Walk begins and ends at the nature center, located at 2710 Manchester Avenue in Cardiff-by-the-Sea.

### **Wildlife Walks in San Elijo Lagoon**

June 8, July 13, August 10, and September 14: 9-11 a.m. (2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays)  
Rotating Trails in San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve

Conservancy naturalists lead Wildlife Walks on four distinct trails that rotate each season. June is the last spring month featuring Santa Carina Trail. Set out traversing coastal sagebrush with chaparral communities on the hills in the lagoon's south side. Underfoot are broken bits of shells, reminders of the native people who once lived here. You will see the freshwater marsh below, and if lucky, you might glimpse mule deer that reside in this eastern region of the reserve.

As summer heats up, Wildlife Walks rotate to Rios Avenue Trail in July. Focus your binoculars and cameras for incredible opportunities to see osprey, cormorants on the power poles at the inlet, waterfowl, and the rare Clapper Rail that nest in this area. This is San Elijo Lagoon's south side featuring riparian woodlands and coastal sage scrub, with intimate views of the salt marsh, all hosting a wide variety of birds and plants.

All conservancy walks are free, and are made possible through the membership support of San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy. More information is online: [www.SanElijo.org/walks](http://www.SanElijo.org/walks)

## **Lagoon Platoon**

June 15, July 20, and September 21: 9 a.m.—Noon

Locations Vary

Join the thrill of hands-on conservation in San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve. Lagoon Platoon restores native habitat and our community's connection to it. All the tools we need for restoration are provided. Restoration activities include: invasive weed removal, planting native species, debris removal, and trail maintenance.

This summer, we'll focus on a freshwater riparian site in the Ford Wildlife Habitat Preserve of San Elijo Lagoon, where we will control invasive plants to protect the native willows and other shrubs planted this past winter.

Our September Lagoon Platoon occurs on California Coastal Cleanup Day (Sep. 21), and we'll focus on several areas for debris and invasive weed removal. Community restoration events are great opportunities to meet others with a shared interest to improve native habitats. San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy biologists lead each Lagoon Platoon event, and teach participants about the surrounding plants and animals on a tour of the site.

Lagoon Platoon is part of Citizens Restoring Coastal Habitat, made possible with funding from Earth Island Institute and USFWS Coastal Program, and support from California Coastal Conservancy, The Wildlife Conservation Board, and Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project.

Register (ages 13+) online: [SanElijo.org/restoration-events](http://SanElijo.org/restoration-events) or call (760) 436-3944 x 709 for more information. Groups of six or more please call for arrangements.

## **Docent Open House**

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

San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center

For those interested in sharing their passion for nature, this Open House will acquaint participants with the joys of volunteering to lead hikes for school children and the general public. See photos and tools of interpretation, and enjoy opportunities to meet other prospective and current docents. Light refreshments will be served.

As a naturalist with the conservancy, docents help support the mission to protect and enhance San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve, by fostering stewardship and appreciation of the protected wetland environment. The application deadline is September 20. The eight-week training course is held Tuesday mornings from 9 a.m. to Noon (and two Saturday mornings) at San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center, beginning on October 8.

RSVP: (760) 436-3944 x 701 (Open House)

Docent Application: [www.SanElijo.org/volunteer-docent](http://www.SanElijo.org/volunteer-docent)

**About San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy**

San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy (SELC) is a community-spirited nonprofit land trust dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve. For more information, visit the conservancy's website at [www.SanElijo.org](http://www.SanElijo.org) or call (760) 436-3944.

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NOTE: Doug Gibson, Executive Director & Principal Scientist of San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy is available for phone interviews at (760) 436-3944 x 707 or cell (760) 803-4824. His email is: [doug@sanelijo.org](mailto:doug@sanelijo.org).

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