



# Lagoon Tidings

## Calendar of Events

### Bird Counts

Second Monday each month  
7:30 am–Noon at Rios Ave trailhead  
Contact [birds@sanelijo.org](mailto:birds@sanelijo.org)

### Docent Meetings

Second Tuesday each month  
10 am–Noon at the Nature Center

### Guided Nature Walks

Second Saturday each month  
9 am–11 am at Rios Ave trailhead

Every Saturday  
10 am–11 am at the Nature Center

### Family Discovery Days

“Native Americans of San Elijo Lagoon”  
July 30–31, 1–4 pm

“Not-So-Scary-Estuary”  
October 22–23, 1–4 pm

### Volunteer Restoration Events (open to the public)

Saturday, Sept 17  
Coastal Cleanup Day, 9 am–11 am  
Saturday, Nov 19, 9 am–Noon  
Contact [info@sanelijo.org](mailto:info@sanelijo.org) for location  
and signups

### Docent Training

Become a trained naturalist at  
San Elijo Lagoon  
Training starts October 4 (see page 5)

..... Don't Miss! .....

## Birds of a Feather

### SELC's 25th Anniversary Birds of a Feather 2011

Saturday, September 17, 5–8 pm

- Fundraising gala for SELC's  
environmental education program
- Sponsorship opportunities available
  - Volunteers welcome
  - Auction items now being accepted

Contact Denise Stillinger  
[dstillinger@miracosta.edu](mailto:dstillinger@miracosta.edu)  
(Further details on page 7)

## Birds of a Feather Gala Benefits Conservancy's Environmental Education Program

Join in the fun and celebration of the *Birds of a Feather Gala*, a major fundraiser for the Conservancy's environmental education program and the launch of SELC's 25th anniversary celebration. Bring your friends and enjoy an evening under the stars at the lovely home of Libby and Doug Scott, in Olivenhain. For your listening and dining pleasure, there will be live music from the local jazz ensemble Endangered Speciez Project, and a scrumptious dinner catered by Ki's Restaurant, specializing in locally grown and organic produce. Our



Libby and Doug Scott Estate Photo: Denise Stillinger

*continued on page 6*

## Educating Upstream in the Watershed

By Tara Fuad, Education Director

For the past two years, the Conservancy has been developing and implementing “Our Living Watershed: Teaching Scientific Literacy in the San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve”. This is a pilot three-year curriculum-based science program where 3rd, 4th and 5th graders from Lincoln and Central Elementary schools in Escondido visit San Elijo Lagoon to learn about wetlands, adaptations, food chains, and water resources, all elements of the California State Science Content Standards for those grades.

While working with the schools, we encourage the teachers to have their students share their lagoon experiences through drawings and letters once they are back in the classroom. We learn a lot from their cards and notes, mainly that hiking in nature is not something they do with their families, and that they really enjoy their time at the lagoon and would like to return. The following quotes sum up many of the kids' comments: one child wrote, “I learned so much—everything is in my head and I will never forget San Elijo Lagoon,” while another wrote, “It *continued on page 4*

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# President's Message

*By Denise Stillinger, President*

As you read through this issue of *Lagoon Tidings*, you can take pride in knowing that your unwavering support makes these projects and programs possible. Whether you are passionate about protecting open space, committed to environmental education, or concerned about the health and integrity of coastal wetlands, rest assured that San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy shares your goals. Thank you for being a member. Among the league of Conservancy partners are the local businesses and individuals who have once again shown their support for our environmental education program by donating to or sponsoring our upcoming fundraiser, *Birds of a Feather Gala*. They are listed in this issue and I invite you to join me in thanking these special members of our community the next time you visit their place of business.

**HELP  
WANTED**

## Seeking Marketing/PR Professional to Join San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy Board of Directors

Are you passionate about environmental conservation and education and want to help further the Conservancy's leadership in the community? We are looking within our membership for an individual with outreach, communications, and social media expertise and experience. This is an exciting time to join the board of SELC as it embarks upon its 25th Anniversary year.

The Board is continually seeking and recruiting new members with diverse professional backgrounds who share a passion for wetlands. Previous board experience is helpful but not a requirement. Directors give of their time, treasure, and talents to advance our mission. We pride ourselves on our scientific monitoring and restoration projects, land acquisitions, and our community outreach and education programs, all of which are supported by private and public funds. Board terms are three year appointments and the Board meets bi-monthly in the early evening. On average, directors contribute five to eight hours a month.

For more information, please send your contact information to [info@sanelijo.org](mailto:info@sanelijo.org) with "board candidate" in the subject heading and a board representative will be in touch.

FEATURED PHOTO



*Tussock Moth Larva (Caterpillar)*

*Photo: Herb Knufken*

Submit your own photos taken in the lagoon! Send as an attachment with a description and your name in the subject line to [photos@sanelijo.org](mailto:photos@sanelijo.org)

**Images for submission:** We prefer RGB files with minimum pixel dimensions of 2100 x 1600, minimal image manipulation and no recompression before submission. Please see image submission info at [SanElijo.org/lagoon-image-drop-box](http://SanElijo.org/lagoon-image-drop-box)



# Link to Invasive Species Website

## SanElijo.org/invasives

By David Varner, Restoration Ecologist

Did you know that San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy is managing the Invasive Species Control Program for Carlsbad Watershed Network? This means that staff at SELC identify and locate invasive plants throughout the Carlsbad Hydrologic Unit (CHU), and then make arrangements to have them removed and native plants put in their place. The CHU spans from Solana Beach to Escondido to Oceanside and includes all lands drained by the following streams and lagoons: Buena Vista, Agua Hedionda, Encinas, San Marcos/Batiquitos, Cottonwood, and Escondido/San Elijo. You can find a map of the CHU on our website at: [SanElijo.org/chu](http://SanElijo.org/chu).

Invasive plants are non-native, aggressive plants that are known to degrade habitat for our native species, especially those designated as Threatened and Endangered. They are known to take over certain landscapes, sometimes forming impenetrable stands that are very

difficult to control. Priority invasive plants are: giant reed (*Arundo donax*), pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), tamarisk (*Tamarix* sp.), yellow-flag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), and perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*). Do you have invasive plants in your yard? If so, and if you live within the boundaries of the CHU, then please let us know so we can arrange a site visit. Email us at [plants@sanelijo.org](mailto:plants@sanelijo.org).

Learn more about invasive plants and our control program, and download the Permission-to-Access form that we will need to visit your property, at our website: [SanElijo.org/invasives](http://SanElijo.org/invasives). ❖



A single pampas grass plant can distribute 100,000 seeds over 20 miles.

Photo: © Andrew Dunn, 2004

## WELCOME

The Conservancy is privileged to have Tim Stillinger and Miranda Kennedy join our team for the summer.



A 2010 graduate of UC Berkeley with a BS in molecular environmental biology, Tim has had a close association with the Conservancy throughout his life as a volunteer at numerous habitat restoration projects and community events. This summer he has been conducting water quality and biological monitoring at the lagoon, as well as annual conservation easement monitoring. Tim brings valuable experience as a research and lab assistant in a variety of interesting settings. In 2009, he spent forty days at sea as lab assistant and crew member of a scientific sailboat sailing from Puerto Vallarta to Tahiti in a study aboard program. More recently, Tim was employed on the Scripps Institute of Oceanography 3000-mile expedition to collect data in the "garbage patch" in the North Pacific Gyre. His adventurous spirit also took him to New Zealand for eight months following college graduation. In fall 2012, Tim plans to begin graduate studies in biology/ecology and genetics.



Miranda is currently enrolled as a junior at Oregon State University majoring in fisheries and wildlife science with a specialization in ornithology. The daughter of a San Diego Park Ranger, Miranda brings a lifelong commitment to wildlife conservation, and to birding in particular. This summer, Miranda has been helping the Conservancy by uploading 17 years of San Elijo Lagoon bird survey data to Point Reyes Bird Observatory and the Cornell Lab's eBird online databases. She comes well-qualified for this task. "I spend the bulk of my free time on the online photo-sharing Bird Identification Help Group because I enjoy researching species from other parts of the world and trying to work out a positive ID," says Miranda. She finds her role at the Conservancy, "perfect for learning about San Elijo Lagoon with its unique estuary habitat and key species such as the Light-footed Clapper Rail." Miranda looks forward to graduation from college in June 2013.

## Upcoming Informational Meetings on the San Elijo Lagoon Restoration Project

Late in 2011, SELC will announce public meetings in the cities of Encinitas and Solana Beach to seek important community input for the San Elijo Lagoon Restoration Project (SELRP). These meetings, mandated by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), are formally known as a Notice of Preparation, or NOP, of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The EIR will describe key elements and alternatives for the restoration of San Elijo Lagoon. The public will have an opportunity to provide input and comment on what is addressed

in the EIR. SELC and the reserve's municipal and government stakeholders have been meeting, planning and gathering baseline data for the last three years and are ready to share this information with our local community. The board and staff of SELC regard the San Elijo Lagoon Restoration Project as a community restoration project. For those of us who love San Elijo Lagoon for its quiet, natural settings, the critical refuge it provides for local wildlife, and its educational and recreational values, it is critical that we all weigh in on the components of this long-anticipated project and the future of this important resource. Please check our website and the Fall issue of *Lagoon Tidings* for details of these public forums.

*continued from page 1, Educating Upstream* was so awesome and I want to come again and again.” And although this program allows an opportunity for the students to return for three consecutive years, we felt strongly that it was equally important to provide an opportunity for the students to share their experiences with their families.

As a result, and with the assistance of the San Diego County Parks and Recreation and the City of Encinitas, we will be launching a new program called Family Discovery Days. This hands-on interactive program will be offered one weekend each quarter at the San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center from 1–4 pm. While this program will be open to the general public, a special effort will be made to reach out to the Escondido Union School District to encourage participation of Escondido families. The health of the lagoon is dependent on the health of the watershed, so we understand the value of targeting inland communities and teaching them about the relationship between upstream and downstream water systems, and the potential impact their actions may have on the lagoon and ocean habitats.

Our Living Watershed is a comprehensive educational program that provides pre- and post-classroom curriculum for the teachers, busing for 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students, docent-guided walks and quarterly weekend events for students to share their experiences with their families. The third Teacher Guide for this program “Adaptations: Secrets to Survival” is now complete, and the final guide in this series, “Watersheds and Water Resources”, geared towards 5th graders, is slated for completion in December 2011. ❖



## Volunteers Vital to Habitat Restoration

Summer has been a busy and productive time for our habitat restoration volunteers. In June, volunteers cleared a stand of fennel from Santa Carina and laid seed balls in adjacent areas. In July, they erected a fence line at Santa Carina, minimizing disturbance to recovering habitat. The next event will be the statewide Coastal Cleanup Day on September 17th. Join the fun and RSVP at [SanElijo.org/volunteer](http://SanElijo.org/volunteer).



Henry and Lindsey Rappaport remove fennel along the Santa Carina Trail at June restoration event  
Photo: David Varner



Find us at  
[www.facebook.com/sanelijo](https://www.facebook.com/sanelijo)

### Summer Solstice Docent Luncheon

Docents relax and enjoy each other's company after a busy spring of leading walks in the reserve. Thank you to docent Suzanne McAllister who hosted the luncheon at her home in Rancho Santa Fe.

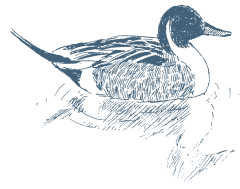
Photo: Suzanne McAllister





# Docents of the Quarter— Bob and Cindy Moore

By Tara Fuad, Education Director



As they approach their 50th wedding anniversary, Bob and Cindy Moore reflect on how they have been involved in protecting the San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve for nearly half of their married life. From patrolling and picking up trash in the reserve, to creating and maintaining the Conservancy's first donor database, constructing the Conservancy's first outreach display, serving on the Board, participating in numerous outreach events, and being super docents, one wonders: Is there anything they haven't done for the Conservancy? Bob can often be seen with his scope, sharing his knowledge and love of the lagoon birds with others, while Cindy is a natural with the kids, making them laugh and bringing joy to their eyes with her lovely voice and endless supply of nature songs. "I so very much enjoy being with kids...seeing their eyes light up, and witnessing them experience an "aha" moment in nature," reflects Cindy. Bob adds, "I really enjoy sharing interesting facts and helping people look differently at the reserve...showing them something they might not have noticed on their own."

One would think that with all the time they commit to the Conservancy, Bob and Cindy wouldn't have time for much else. But they are both active with their church and family and continue to enjoy long-time hobbies. A retired engineer, Bob has built numerous cages for their dozens of pet finches and enjoys sailing in the San Diego Bay. Cindy, a former Girl Scouts employee, remains very active in the organization, volunteering her time to train new scout leaders. She is also active in the San Diego Children and Nature Collaborative and enjoys caring for and riding her horse, Lance.



Bob and Cindy Moore

Photo: Tara Fuad

Bob wraps up the interview as Cindy nods in agreement, "I find the docents of the Conservancy a truly remarkable group of people. They are one of the nicest and most cooperative groups I have ever worked with, and that in itself is a big reason for remaining involved."

Thank you Bob and Cindy for sharing your many talents with the Conservancy, and for your years of dedicated service. You are role models to us all! ♦

## Become a Docent! Training Begins in October

Have some free time on your hands? Kids going off to school? House seems a bit quiet these days? Perhaps the volunteer program at SELC is just what the doctor ordered. With the help of volunteer docent-naturalists, the Conservancy keeps its mission alive. Docents come from all backgrounds including educators, engineers, a flight attendant, therapist, oceanographer, and even an amateur beekeeper. SELC is currently looking for volunteers to serve as these nature ambassadors. A comprehensive training program will prepare docents to lead interpretive walks for school and scout groups, as well as for weekend visitors and other community groups. Previous interpretive experience is not required. "I think we're all a little nervous at first," said Elizabeth Venrick, a retired oceanographer, SELC board member, and docent, "but every walk I lead I learn something new



Docent Emmy Garnica introduces Escondido 3rd graders to the lagoon

Photo: Tara Fuad

and exciting, and sometimes I learn from the people on my walk." Becoming a docent is a wonderful way to expand your knowledge of our local natural resources. You will meet others with a love of the outdoors and enjoy the challenge of finding out that every walk you lead is unique and different. All the tools to lead walks will be provided in the eight-week training that begins October 4th, and takes place on Tuesdays at the Nature Center between 9–Noon, with the exception of Thanksgiving week. The application deadline is September 23, 2011. The program cost is \$125 and includes membership, a docent manual, and uniform. Applications received by September 16th

will receive a \$15 discount.

For more information, visit [SanElijo.org/volunteer-docent](http://SanElijo.org/volunteer-docent) or call 760 436-3944, x 701.

*continued from page 1, Birds of a Feather Gala*

Master of Ceremonies is the incomparable Richard Houk, who will keep the evening and the bidding lively. A glamorous array of silent and live auction items has been assembled, including: original art work, getaways at romantic destinations and exquisite jewelry. Here are just some of the unique items up for bid...

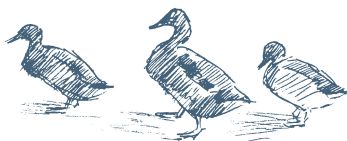
- **Del Mar Beach Party for 12**—including a tour of the lifeguard tower and rescue boat ride.
- **Scripps Institution of Oceanography**—a private tour for two of the oceanographic collections and lunch with the curator. A perfect outing for you and your budding scientist!
- **Two VIP passes to the 2012 Long Beach Grand Prix**—passes good for Saturday and Sunday, one night hotel accommodation and meals included.
- **Sushi at San Elijo**—a private party of 14 will be treated to an after-hours dinner prepared by Zenbu's master sushi chef and served on the deck of the San Elijo Lagoon Nature Center.
- **Ski Deer Valley**—a one week stay in Deer Valley, Utah at a luxury condo located mid-slope, [www.skicondodeervalley.com](http://www.skicondodeervalley.com).

Preview all of the auction items on the SELC website.

In addition to celebrating 25 years of watershed moments, we will announce our “**Docent of the Year**” as well as honor a member of the SELC family for their many years of service with a **Life Time Achievement Award**.

Visit [SanElijo.org](http://SanElijo.org) for more information, buy tickets online, or by calling the office (760) 436-3944 ext 706. Tickets are \$150. Seating is limited, so advanced registration is required. We anticipate a sold out event again this year, so don't delay in buying your tickets.

It would not be a party without you! Come and join in a fun-filled evening to raise needed funds to bring more young people to the San Elijo Lagoon where they will learn about the importance of this vital watershed and its conservation. ❖



2009 Birds of a Feather Gala guests enjoy an evening of gourmet cuisine, live jazz, friendship and fun.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

### Rare Sightings at Rookery Event

On Saturday, May 21st supporters of the Conservancy were invited to view the heron and egret rookery adjacent to the estate of Jack and Patty Queen. Guests were treated to refreshments and a private viewing of Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets nesting in eucalyptus trees in the reserve. The photo on the left is of Martha Barnette, from Public Radio's “A Way with Words”, looking through a spotting scope at the nests. According to Andy Mauro, former SELC board president, “The photo on the right is of an adult Great Egret at its nest, with two almost fully grown nestlings begging for their lunch. A third sibling can be seen in the back of the nest. The adult could be either male or female, since both help tend to the chicks until they fledge (leave the nest). The size of the chicks indicates they were probably hatched about five weeks prior to the photo, and are within a week or so of fledging. Being able to successfully fledge three offspring is considered normal for Great Egrets, and reflects the healthy foraging habitat at the nearby San Elijo Lagoon.”



Martha Barnette, “A Way with Birds”  
Photo: Jennifer Nelson



Queen Rookery Egrets  
Photo: Abe Ordover



# Ways of Giving

The following businesses and individual are supporting our *Birds of a Feather* Gala. Please join the Conservancy in expressing gratitude and appreciation, especially the next time you step through their doors.

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- Limited Edition
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**To Order:**

For details & order form, please visit the Birds of a Feather page at [SanEliso.org](http://SanEliso.org)

**\$10 of every tote purchase  
is donated to SELC.**



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*Preserving, protecting, and enhancing San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve and its watershed*

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*San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy's 25th Anniversary Celebration*

# Birds of a Feather *Gala*



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**SEPTEMBER 17, 2011**  
5 PM - 8 PM

**All Proceeds to Benefit SELC's  
Environmental Education Programs.**



San Elijo Lagoon CONSERVANCY  
*25 years of watershed moments*

For information on sponsoring upcoming issues, please contact Elaine Dodge at (760) 436-3944 x 708 or [elaine@sanelijo.org](mailto:elaine@sanelijo.org).