

Fall  
2017

# LAGOON TIDINGS



*Inside:* Reviving Your Wetlands ■ Your Impacts ■ Events & Tours

### Cover Image

Conservation Leaders Summer Camp connected youth with nature and science. (See page 7)

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L–R: Gibson and Gillingham

## President's Welcome

*Doug Gillingham, Board President*

**trail** (trāil) / noun

1. a mark or a series of signs or objects left behind by the passage of someone or something
2. a beaten path through rough country such as a forest or m̄or lagoon

**Trail** comes to us from the Latin *trahere*, to pull. It took until the early 14<sup>th</sup> Century for the first noun form of the word to emerge, meaning the trailing part of a robe or gown. It was not until the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century that its meaning expanded to encompass the Beaten Path definition above.

One of my favorite initiatives of our new Strategic Plan is our goal to develop, over the next few years, a **Trails Master Plan**. To do so we will work with the County Department of Parks and Recreation, the cities of Solana Beach and Encinitas, and other interested parties to craft a long-term plan for the management of a trail network in balance with nature, and to explore possible new trail connections linking additional communities to the lagoon and to each other. Who knows, maybe one day we'll be able to extend a walk or run in the lagoon up into the beautiful Manchester Reserve portion of the City of Encinitas trail system. Stay tuned.

As we celebrate the Conservancy's 30<sup>th</sup> year, we are thankful to all those who have laid down trails—literal and figurative—for our use today in our work to protect nature and connect communities. The Conservancy wouldn't be where it is today without them, nor without the generous support of you, our members. Thank you for that.

See you on the trail—Doug

## Director's Welcome

*Doug Gibson, Executive Director | Principal Scientist*

As I reflect on the coming fall, a hint of coincides with migratory birds arriving at our important wetlands. When I'm on the trails I enjoy the changing views hour to hour. And soon, beneficial changes will be underway as we revive our wetlands through **lagoon restoration**. Your Conservancy will guide this multi-phase project simultaneously occurring alongside highway and rail construction.

Imagine the flow of healthy waters and an increase in wildlife diversity. As a runner, I am also excited about new trail connections. For example, running from the nature center across the wetland to Rios trail, and connecting under the highway to the East Basin trails. Or I can head west through the railroad pedestrian under crossing to Harbaugh Seaside Trails and Highway 101.

Look inside for new **specialized tours**. Let's also celebrate 30 years. **Birds of a Feather: Rooted in Flight** is our signature anniversary fundraiser on October 7. Together, we're supporting the protection of nature and the involvement of everyone. Thank you for your membership in our organization that's entering its fourth decade of service for nature and for you.  
Cheers!—Doug



Sign up for news & blogs:  
SanElijo.org/RevivingWetlands

# LAGOON RESTORATION for Nature & You

## Project Begins December 2017

Imagine the flow of **healthy waters** and an increased diversity of **wildlife** at San Elijo Lagoon. **New trail** connections are on the way. Reviving our wetlands is about **nature and community thriving** now, and in the future of our changing climate.

Lagoon Restoration will occur in defined phases and updates will be provided as we begin.

**The Conservancy will guide Lagoon Restoration.** We are working with County of San Diego and US Army Corps of Engineers, in addition to many stakeholders who have helped shape planning for years. Since the transportation corridor construction began this past January, our biologists are onsite daily to monitor wildlife and water quality. Restoration funding is administered by *Transnet* tax revenue.



### TIDAL FLOW *Mudflat*

**Striped Shore Crabs** on mudflats can eat algae by the clawful. A natural recycler, carrion—tidbits of decayed animals—is also on the menu.

Photo: Jo Quinn



### HABITATS *Saltmarsh*

**Salty Susan** adds bright pops of yellow from May to October. Like Pickleweed, these native plants concentrate seawater in special spaces, using the remaining fresh water to grow.

Photo: Denise Stillingner



### PACIFIC FLYWAY *Bird life*

The reserve is home to more than 300 species of birds including: year-round residents, winter visitors—like the pictured **Semipalmated Plovers**, summer breeders, and migrants passing through to rest and refuel. Photo: Chris Mayne

# EVENTS

## On the Horizon

### Birds of a Feather: *Rooted in Flight*

#### Early Auction Bidding

September 18–October 5

Birds of a Feather gala sold out. But you can still make a difference. Joining the **Gala Auction** is a great way to support our programs for nature and community. Bid on chef's dinners, sailing, luxe and handcrafted items, getaway destinations and more. Winners notified October 7. Visit [SanElijo.org/BF17](http://SanElijo.org/BF17)

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*Birds of a Feather* 2017



Rooted In Flight

### Kumeyaay Series Family Fun Days

Sep 3 | Oct 1 | Nov 5

Free

Explore how the Kumeyaay (KOOO-m-e-yi), who lived along these shores, worked with natural resources. In September, families can learn about tools and hunting skills in **Arrowhead Crafters**, including flint knapping demonstrations and soapstone bead necklace making. Make and play acorn games in October's **Yummy Acorns**. November's **Nature in Fashion** introduces hands-on skills for making cloth and dolls. Co-presented by Conservancy & County.



### Beginning Birding Tour

September 23

Members \$5 | Public \$10

Birds are everywhere. Who's who? Meet our year-round residents and early "snowbirds"—winter visitors flying in for a landing along the Pacific Flyway. Join **Naturalist Bill Thompson**, an avid birder and habitat volunteer, to learn how to recognize our common birds.

### Doggy Trick or Treat Tour

October 14

Members \$5 | Public \$10

Does your dog do tricks for treats? Or simply like treats? Make pawprints on the trail with furry friends and guardians. **Naturalist Edie Berendsen** will point out unique geologic features that make this a special place, and share updates on the benefits of lagoon restoration. Treats provided, tricks encouraged!



Register

[SanElijo.org/Events](http://SanElijo.org/Events)



# Keep Touring

Free **Lagoon Discovery Tours** First & Last Saturdays at the Nature Center



## Not-So-Scary Estuary Family Discovery Day

October 22

Free

Join the annual costume contest and nature's **trick-or-treating** adventure. **Our theme is Changing Climate**, with performances about sea level rise, a zero-waste



activity and animal meet and greets. When nature is more familiar, it's not so scary after all. Co-presented by the Conservancy & County.

## Lagoon Boot Camp

November 18

Members \$10 | Public \$15

Feel like an animal on the move. Deanne Ryder, owner of **Forever Fit San Diego**, is our expert fitness leader and a lagoon trail runner. In our Boot Camp we'll move throughout the trails—stretching, running, and discovering with naturalists the best of nature on show.

## Landscape Drawing

December 3

Members \$10 | Public \$15

What's better than leaving only footprints? Capturing your experiences on paper. Back by request, **guest artist Irina Gronborg** will guide us on a visualization tour. We'll learn her techniques for imagining landscapes by sketching what we most admire.



## Holiday Guided Tours

November 25 & December 30

Free

Enjoy festive colors in the red "holly" berries of toyon and white flowering coyote brush. Migrating birds are making a splash. See shorebirds and ducks. Experience life between the tides with **Conservancy Naturalists** in one of our region's most diverse coastal wetlands.



# Volunteer For Coastal Habitats

Sep 16 | Oct 21 | Nov 18 | Dec 16

Feel good about volunteering. Meet others who love the outdoors and getting dirty as you improve coastal habitats. **Planting season resumes** with anticipated fall rains. But first, we'll get to work in the **California Coastal Cleanup** on September 16, clearing invasive iceplant and debris. In October and December we're planting along Santa Carina trail. In November we enhance riparian habitat at La Orilla trail.





## Nature Is Beautiful

When students are sparked with imagination in nature it builds meaningful connections. "How beautiful nature is with its gentle breeze, warm temperature, soft sounds and songs from birds," shared a child in our field trip. **SDG&E is a proud grantor of Our Living Watershed, our elementary school conservation program connecting youth in the upper Escondido watershed.**

"SDG&E is firmly committed to improving the quality of life in the communities that we serve by collaborating with organizations that address needs in the area of environmental stewardship," said Morgan Justice-Black, Community Relations Manager for SDG&E. "Through support for the Our Living Watershed program, we are pleased to partner with San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy to further our shared goal of fostering environmental stewardship among underserved youth. Congratulations on your 30 year anniversary!"



## Opening the Outdoors for Escondido Families

Several Pioneer Elementary students and their families enjoyed a **Saturday adventure at Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve**. They stood at the summit of the Way Up Trail and gazed at the lands and landmarks below. They journaled. The students and their siblings analyzed creek life for evidence of healthy waters. "I got to spend the day with my dad," said one student about the best part of his outdoor family adventure.

Families together—it's called GOIN', or **Get Out Into Nature**, and is funded by the **Opening the Outdoors** grant administered by **The San Diego Foundation**. The Foundation maximizes the impact of charitable giving by mobilizing philanthropic resources to advance quality of life, increase social impact and champion civic engagement. Our adventures are joined in the GOIN' partnership with: Outdoor Outreach, I Love a Clean San Diego, and The Escondido Creek Conservancy.

# Welcome

New Foundation Member

*Our Living Watershed* introduces science concepts, including habitats and adaptations, food chains, waters and wetlands. Classroom lessons are delivered by partner schoolteachers, preparing students for their hands-on, place based field trips.

## Sparkles on the Water

“Why are there little sparkles on the water?” we were asked in a field trip. Children love to wonder and explore. Another child added, “Why are some birds in the water, and why do some birds like mud and some don’t?”

**Inspiring childhood explorations in nature is important to Brian Malk and Nancy Hietel of the Malk Nature Fund.**

Their foundation assists organizations to build awareness and support for nature in our communities. “We believe that children benefit greatly when given the chance to experience the wonders and joys of nature, and that this should



be considered an important part of a child’s education,” said Brian Malk.



## In Their Own Words | Conservation Leaders CAMP

**Ten students from Central Elementary in Escondido were awarded a full summer camp scholarship.** Camp applications included a teacher recommendation and personal reflections.

Camp got underway. We hit the high points and the lower ones exploring our watershed—from the calm waters of Lakes Wohlford and Dixon—to the coast for slithering through sandstone canyons at Annie’s Canyon Trail.

We collected and planted native seeds in the San Elijo Nursery, and got our feet wet in Escondido Creek. We even balanced in the ocean while paddle boarding at Tidelands Park—farther away in Coronado. As these children enter middle school, we’ll continue to nurture their love for the outdoors in Our Living Watershed school programs.

### What Part of Nature Most Interests You?

- I just love seeing all the animals and smelling all the flowers. One day I hope to become a vet!—Leslie
- I love being outside in nature with wilderness. I also love visiting new places.—Axel
- I’m most interested in animals because of their ability to do stuff that we can’t do like fly, lay eggs and have fur.—Jazmyne

### Thank you Camp Supporters:

Cox Cares Fund at The San Diego Foundation, The San Diego Foundation, Mona Baumgartel and San Diego County Parks & Recreation



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

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suggest editorial online.  
Magazine published  
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### *Our vision*

is a world where biodiversity is preserved and people act to conserve nature and embrace it as central to a healthy community.

### *Our mission*

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.

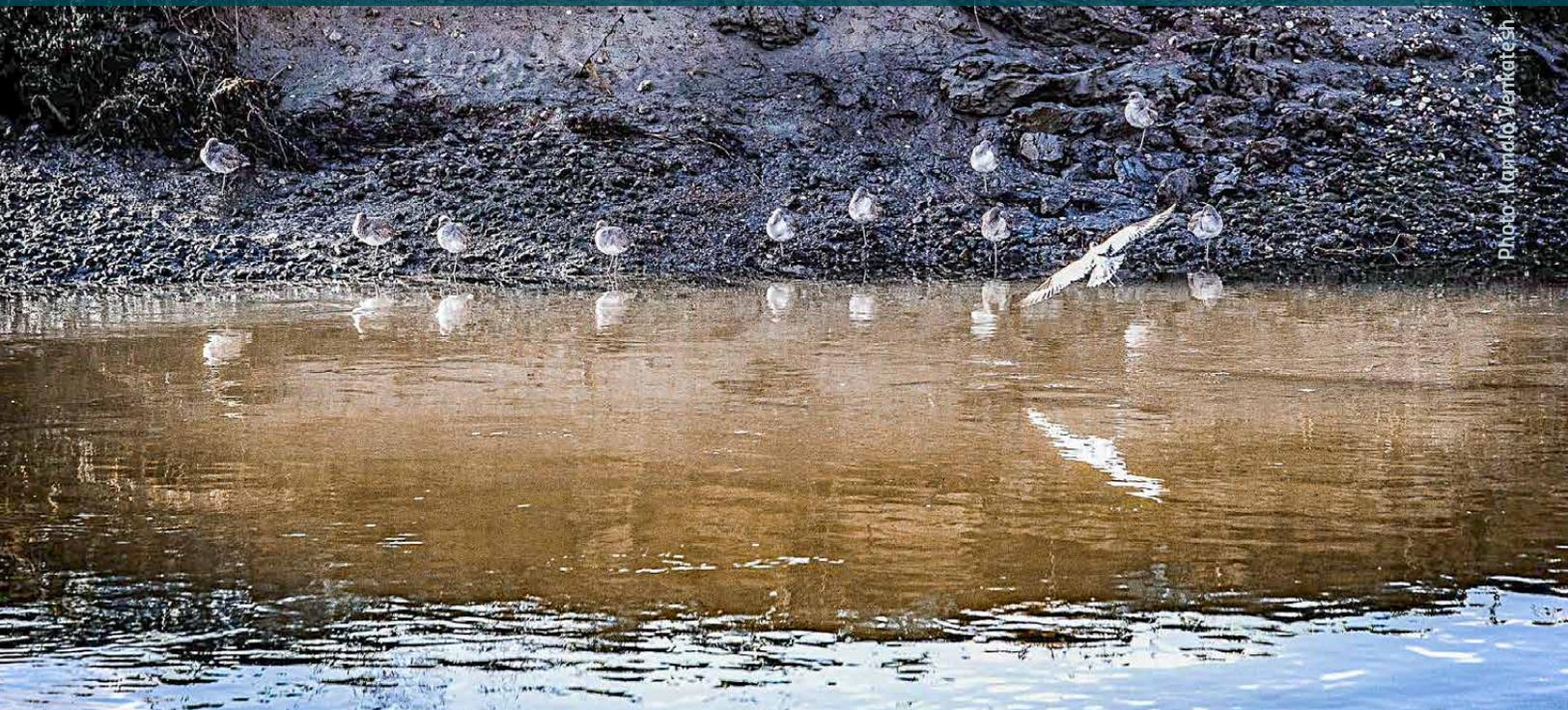


Photo: Karida Vermetes