

Summer 2018

LAGOON TIDINGS

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Cover Image

Snowy Egret Fishing, by Bob Serling
1st Place Photo Contest
Thank you: MiraCosta visual judges
Susan Asato & Cheryl Pronchick

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President's Welcome



Nicolle Selby-Thomas, Board President

This has been an exciting time as I settle into my position as your Board of Directors President. So many leaders before me have helped to grow our Conservancy leadership. It is an honor to serve our region as we connect communities and protect nature *together*.

We are fortunate to build upon three decades of collaborative stewardship. Our ongoing commitment and progress has been made possible through the generous support of our members, volunteers, staff, founders and partners. Growth is our prevalent theme as we continue: connecting communities through our current land acquisitions, fostering conservation education programs, and restoring habitats and reviving our wetlands. Your board members look forward to continuing our focus on governance and accountability, policy, advocacy and development.

I have lived near San Elijo Lagoon for more than 20 years. It is one of my favorite places to walk with friends and my dog. I look forward to seeing you on the trails this season, and in our special events and tours for all ages.

Here's to summer at San Elijo Lagoon! —Nicolle

Fluttering By

Butterflies are among the important pollinators for our native plants. Spring is a wonderful time to bring your binoculars and cameras for a fluttering frenzy of fun. Colors and markings that are beautiful to our eyes often serve as warnings to butterfly predators. The yellow-on-black pattern of the Anise swallowtail is a message, expressed in the universal language of color. It means *I taste terrible*.

Butterflies are on a mission to eat. The Mourning cloak butterfly is so territorial, it will chase other butterflies and even dive-bomb intruding birds.

Many butterfly names are as intriguing as their appearances. Have you seen the painted ladies here in the lagoon? Or the Western tiger swallowtail, umber skipper, cabbage white, Sarah orangetip and Funereal duskywing? These species were observed in our Butterfly Tour last spring.

One of the ways we are helping butterflies is by planting the species they need for their migratory or resident life stages. The new Butterfly & Pollinator Amphitheatre, along the Rios trail, was created last year with the help of school children. Students not only come to admire the buzz over blooms, but are learning about nature's connections by installing butterfly host plants grown in our San Elijo Nursery.



Anise swallowtail



Sand replenishment at Cardiff State Beach Spring 2018

Director's *Welcome*

Doug Gibson, Executive Director | Principal Scientist

With Reviving Your Wetlands lagoon restoration in full operation, it is amazing to see how efficiently everything is coming along. Have you seen the new beach!

Your Conservancy is guiding Reviving Your Wetlands. We are on the ground, every day. Our role is providing continuous water quality and wildlife monitoring. We are the team that is monitoring the health of our biodiverse wetland.

We are in Phase I of four phases in Reviving Your Wetlands. We are building the 30-foot deep overdredge pit that is providing beach quality sands to Cardiff State Beach and Fletcher Cove. Next, we'll begin sculpting the bottom topography of several key channels in the Central and East basins that will increase tidal circulation by deepening and widening them. We'll be removing mud, basically, that is currently constricting tidal flow, and depositing it into the overdredge pit located onsite. By removing these sediments, we are improving the lagoon's natural filtering services by allowing nature to get a fresh start.

With our Build NCC engineering partners we are continually identifying ways to be efficient. When the project was designed, innovation was a major contributing factor. We have identified another opportunity for further innovation by decoupling the Highway I-5 expansion project and the restoration project.

In the original project design, sand from the Highway I-5 berm was slated to provide some of the material to cap the lagoon overdredge pit.

Since the initial design, Build NCC and San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy have identified an opportunity that would keep sand out of an offshore borrow site and instead place up to 80,000 cubic yards of sand on one of our local beaches.

We invite you to our 2nd **Reviving Your Wetlands Restoration Open House**—a forum for our communities—where I will to share details of this comprehensive habitat enhancement project. I look forward to seeing you at our Open House on May 8 at the Encinitas Senior & Community Center.

See you on trails this summer! —Doug

Join the conversation about Reviving Your Wetlands in our *Lagoon Connections* blog.
Follow: SanElijoConservancy.blog

Events & Tours

Register

SanElijo.org/Events



Reviving Your Wetlands Restoration Open House

Tuesday, May 8: 6–8 pm

Free

Encinitas Senior & Community Center

Conservancy members and the public are invited to our 2nd **Reviving Your Wetlands Open House**. This is a forum for our communities to learn details about current and upcoming actions in this comprehensive habitat enhancement project. Learn the latest in North County beach sand replenishment and be in the know on what's occurring next in San Elijo Lagoon's Central and East basins. RSVP: SanElijo.org/RevivingWetlands



Misunderstood Plants Tour

Sunday, May 13: 3–5 pm

\$5 Members | \$10 Public

Unravel the mysteries surrounding a variety of spring bloomers—those that are pretty, toxic, or invasive—and that represent some of the 400 plant species in the lagoon. Learn about our non-native species, good plants in the wrong place, and about some native plants often mistaken for weeds. You can brush up on your lagoon plant knowledge before and after the tour by visiting: SanElijo.org/PlantGuide

Led by Conservancy botany enthusiasts Mark Jenne and Elizabeth Venrick



Lagoon In Bloom Family Discovery Day

Sunday, May 6, 10 am–3 pm

Free

Join the spring festival celebrating nature's renewal with a spotlight on meeting lagoon animals, insects and seeing wildflowers. Take a run through our animal athletes obstacle course. Enjoy arts and crafts, face painting, interactive songs and onsite cash food truck. Co-presented by: *San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy & County Parks & Recreation*



Family Fun Days Series

Jun 3 | Jul 1 | Aug 5: 11:30 am–1:30 pm

Free

Enjoy hands-on activities and crafts each month in a new spring-summer theme: Learn about life cycles. Discover why flowers and pollinators need each other. Increase your fire safety awareness. And, read the clues that identify which animals are on the trails. Co-presented by: *San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy & County Parks & Recreation*

Events & Tours

SUNSET TOUR *Series*

Jun 28 | Jul 26 | Aug 23
Series: \$20 Members | \$30 Public

Thursday, June 28, 6:30–8 pm

How do plants survive our dry, hot summers? Discover the adaptive features of the reserve's native plants that are rooted in drought. Learn how to identify diverse plant communities and the unique physical factors that shape these plants into summer survivors. *Led by Denise Stillinger, Biology Professor at MiraCosta College, and a Conservancy founding board member and past president.*

Thursday, July 26: 6:30–8 pm

Step into the world of healing and edible plants in an ethnobotanical tour. We will discuss the western herbalist uses of many native plants we'll encounter on our hike. Bring a journal or we recommend downloading free apps: Plant Album Lite for iPhone and Plant Diary for Android. *Led by Conservancy Lead Ecologist Shirley Innecken*

Thursday, August 23: 5:30–7:30 pm

Imagine living off the land using resources mostly found in and around the lagoon. Learn about the plants and animals that influenced the lives of Native Americans over the last 10,000 years. Toast to sunset with naturally sourced foods and drinks infused with lagoon-inspired ingredients. *Led by Conservancy naturalists Kathy Dickey and Susan Elliott*

Community Habitat Restoration

May 19 | June 16 | July 21
9 am–12 pm

We have a nature workout for you. Join community volunteers to assist with invasive plant species control and native seed collection for the San Elijo Nursery. It's a great way to be rooted in soil and experience our different habitat restoration sites: May at La Orilla; June at Rios Trail; and July at Santa Carina. Thank you for loving your lagoon.

Have Time Wednesday Mornings? Learn and apply technical habitat restoration practices while enjoying the beauty of San Elijo Lagoon. Wednesday stewards work behind the scenes to prepare habitat sites throughout the reserve.



Thank You



The California Coastal Conservancy is one of our valued partners dedicated to children and adults exploring their coast. Funding this year and into next year will provide for unique outdoor nature programs that will embrace an extensive geographic range. We will announce these tours in upcoming seasons!



Beginning May, join **30x30 Nature Challenge** with daily inspiring ideas to love nature even more: SanElijo.org/30x30

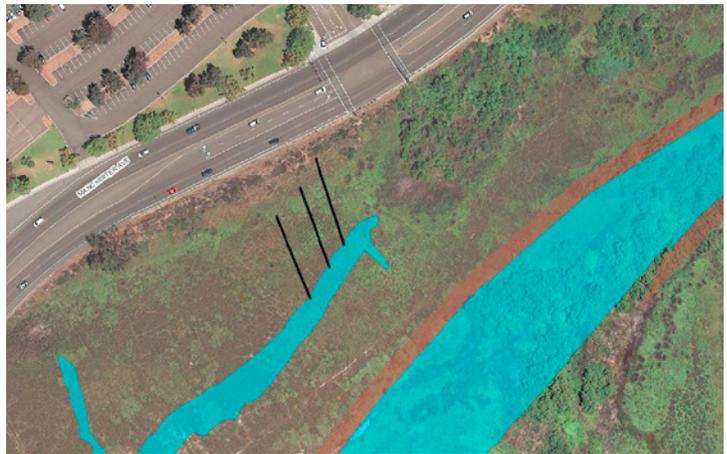


Living Lab in the East Basin

MiraCosta College Biology Professor Janelle West has partnered with San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy to create a living lab at San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve. She is working with Tim Stilling, Conservancy Scientific Program Director. Tim helped the college obtain access permits from the County of San Diego Department of Parks & Recreation. He established three 30-foot transects along a portion of the lagoon's East basin to create a field study site.

"The primary goal of the vegetation monitoring project is to develop a long-term data set that can provide valuable information for both MiraCosta students and lagoon managers," shared Professor West. "We're hoping to document how the plant community changes over time, with particular focus on the abundance of halophytes versus freshwater plants and the presence of exotics." This spring students began collecting baseline data of the native, endangered and exotic plants, and will be returning this fall.

The Living Lab is in an area that will go through changes with the Reviving Your Wetlands restoration project. With the expansion of tidal channels salt water will enter at least twice a day during high tides. Changes in water salinity will have an effect on plants in the East basin.



This rendering shows how water flows will look following restoration. The three lines show the transects in the Living Lab field study site.

"About 180 students a year will have an opportunity to experience the lagoon firsthand and develop an appreciation for the importance of restoration and subsequent monitoring projects," added West. "These data will be a potential source of undergraduate research and honors projects in the future."

Our Living Lab partnership ensures that MiraCosta's biology students are gaining valuable fieldwork experiences and professional mentoring for careers in wildlife conservation, marine science and conservation education.



Conservancy Education Director Tara Fuad engages California State University San Marcos graduate students in scientific observation strategies.

Training Educators in Outdoor Science

Our nationally recognized conservation education program is growing. It embraces lifelong learning, from our youngest students, to all ages in naturalist-led tours and events. While our focus continues on mentoring youth in science-based curricula for conservation—from local schools—to formalized partnerships with Del Mar Union and Escondido Union School Districts' elementary students, we are moving into higher level learning.

One of our recent milestones included a full day training for 25 California State University San Marcos graduate students enrolled in the multi-credential K-8 program. These educators were engaged with the tools and confidence to incorporate outdoor natural places and schoolyards as the setting for teaching science lessons. Teachers honed their observation skills and engaged in science practices, such as asking questions, engaging in argument from evidence, and communicating information. This training supports the Science Framework and Next Generation Science Standards that were written to create a vision for science education. This vision involves meaningful learning experiences that inspire students to want to learn more about the natural world.

Your Legacy

The Spirited Leadership of *Bob Moore*

Bob and Cindy Moore were among the first 20 volunteers that joined the San Elijo Lagoon Citizen's Watchdog Patrol in 1986. This county-sponsored group watched over the lagoon before the Conservancy formed in 1987. Bob was a former board president and a loyal supporter of our mission. Bob and Cindy joined our Legacy Circle because of their love for the lagoon and for future generations who will enjoy our treasured open spaces.

Bob was the Conservancy's 4th president and a board member from 1989–2011. He was all about hard work and details. Whether he was rolling up his sleeves to remove old mattresses dumped in the lagoon or straightening his tie to represent the Conservancy as president, Bob always showed up with passion and leadership. His motto was: *Get It Done!*

The Conservancy is rooted in caring, action-oriented people like Bob Moore; people that show up, dive in and stay at it. He embodied our mission and vision and believed in conserving this special place for future generations. He left a legacy far beyond his leadership with us.



Cindy and Bob Moore are pictured at the far right in a conservancy celebration.



Margaret introducing her daughters (L–R) Caroline and Susan to the outdoors near Boulder, Colorado (1964)

The Natural Legacy of *Margaret Chivers*

Nature was a part of Margaret Chivers' life at every step. Margaret was a 40-year resident of Solana Beach and a member of San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy. She wanted to leave something special for future generations so she began estate planning with an intent to protect wild lands, healthy waters, and long and winding trails for everyone.

Margaret grew up in England and found her lifetime home in Solana Beach. San Elijo Lagoon was a special place for Margaret and her family. Her daughters, Caroline Brown and Susan Chivers, fondly recall visiting the trails countless times, as the lagoon was their backyard playground. Susan and her husband followed a lagoon trail that literally took them to the front steps of what would be their new home in Solana Beach.

Margaret was a physical therapist. In the early 1990s she joined The Walking Ladies of Cardiff. Five mornings a week she ventured onto local beaches and trails and would often wear a bathing suit under her clothes and go for a swim in the Pacific. She valued her open spaces, the lagoon, and keeping the ocean healthy. Margaret included San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy in her trust. Her gift is the ultimate legacy.

Have you already included the Conservancy in your planning? Let us know.
Enjoy the benefits of Legacy Circle events & news: Visit: SanElijo.org/YourLegacy





San Elijo Lagoon CONSERVANCY
Connecting communities. Protecting nature.

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Go Green!

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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.

Tarweed is one of our native yellow
fellows of summer

Photo: SanElijo.org/PlantGuide

