



SAN DIEGO HABITAT CONSERVANCY (SDHC) MANAGES THE SONATA PRESERVE

Please contact SDHC if you have any questions about the purpose and restrictions associated with the preserve, or if you would like to report any illegal activity within the preserve. We appreciate your willingness to support our stewardship activities and to help protect the natural resources and beauty that surrounds your home.

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LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

As the managers of the Preserve, it is SDHC's responsibility to ensure that the habitat is healthy and free of disturbances for the plant and animal species that rely on these natural resources.

SDHC's management duties include:

- Triannual Monitoring & Reporting
- Vegetation Mapping
- Special Species Surveys
- Invasive Plant Control
- Trash Removal
- Sign Inspection/Replacement
- General Coordination
- Public Outreach



Checkered Skipper
Photo by Koji Shiraiwa

SENSITIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Habitat and Plant Communities

The preserve consists of a number of habitat types, including Diegan coastal sage scrub, non-native and native grasslands, riparian forest and woodland, southern mixed chaparral, southern willow scrub, streambed, freshwater marsh, and open water. These habitats are host to a vast number of sensitive plants and animals in the region. The health and integrity of these habitats is critical to ensuring the sustainability of threatened and endangered species.

Sensitive Wildlife Species

Protection of the preserve is not only important for the entire San Diego ecosystem but also improves the beauty and serenity of your neighborhood, providing a visual buffer typical of the topography and vegetation unique to Carlsbad.



Thread leaved brodiaea
Photo by Salvatore Zimmitti

A number of sensitive plant species occur within the preserve, including species considered to be threatened or endangered by state and federal wildlife agencies, such as Thread leaved brodiaea, Orcutt's brodiaea, Small flowered morning glory, and Southwestern spiny rush.



SONATA PRESERVE CITY OF CARLSBAD

The Sonata Preserve is located near your property just south of Camino de los Coches in Carlsbad. Protecting 2.98 acres of native habitat for wildlife that utilize the area, the preserve was set aside to mitigate for impacts to sensitive habitat and species that resulted from development of La Costa Town Center Residential, Office, and Commercial Development project. The natural resources that are being preserved are important to our local ecosystem and regulated by the City of Carlsbad, California Depart. of Fish & Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

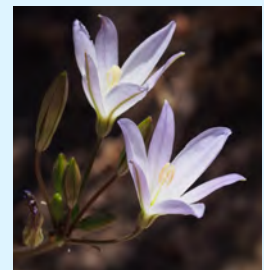


CONNECTION TO SAN DIEGO ECOSYSTEMS

The preserve is part of a larger system of preserved natural habitat in Carlsbad and part of a regional vision to link open space preserves throughout the area. The City of Carlsbad has set a goal of establishing a preserve system of at least 6,786 acres. The preserve is also within the County's Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP) area. The MHCP set a more regionally goal of establishing a preserve system of over 20,000 acres throughout the Cities of Carlsbad, Encinitas, Escondido, Oceanside, San Marcos, Solana Beach, and Vista.



White-crowned Sparrow
Photo from Bird Fellow site



Orcutt's Brodiaea
Photo by Keir Morse

2023 PRESERVE UPDATE

This year, SDHC conducted surveys for thread-leaved brodiaea and Orcutt's brodiaea, both of which are sensitive plant species covered by San Diego County's Management Strategies Plan (MSP). Monitoring methods were performed per the MSP's inspect and manage (IMG) objective, in which we documented 28 and 11 individuals, respectively. This is a relieving increase from last year, when no flowering individuals were observed.

Maintenance efforts in the preserve focus on excluding competition from nonnative plant species growing in the vicinity of these rare plants, but future management efforts will consider seed collection and propagation if the population does not show a positive trend towards historic numbers.



Flagged thread-leaved brodiaea individuals in flower.

RATTLESNAKE INFORMATION AND SAFETY

The preserve is home to many species that are part of our local ecosystem. It is possible that some of the animals living in the preserve will make their way into the developed area surrounding your residence. The southern Pacific rattlesnake, red diamond rattlesnake, and speckled rattlesnake are the only local snakes in the San Diego region that are venomous to humans. An average adult rattlesnake is about 2½ feet long, but can grow to as large as 4 to 5 feet in length. These rattlesnakes are light gray or brown and shed their skin about 3 to 4 times a year, usually getting a new rattle segment each time. Rattlesnakes eat rodents such as mice but also forage on birds, reptiles, and amphibians. The benefit they provide in rodent control far outweighs their potential danger to humans. Please respect them from a safe distance and let them do their job.



WATCH OUT FOR RATTLESNAKES

In case of emergency, call 911 or go directly to a hospital.



PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

Access and Pets

Access to the preserve is prohibited due to the sensitive nature of the habitat and the species that dwell and forage there. Hiking, biking, camping or any human recreational activity is strictly prohibited. Dogs and cats are prohibited in the preserve. Please respect the natural condition of the open space ecosystem and enjoy it from afar to ensure that these resources are around for all time.



HOW YOU CAN HELP THE PRESERVE

Trash & Hazardous Materials

Please help keep the preserve healthy by disposing of trash in receptacles. If you see trash along or in the preserve, help us out by disposing of it or calling SDHC to address it. Hazardous materials, including vehicle fuel and oil, household cleaning products, paints, and solvents are extremely detrimental to the health of the preserve. Please call SDHC if you observe illegal dumping or signs of hazardous materials in the preserve.

Use Humane Pest Control

Poisonous chemicals such as rodenticides used at your home can have an indirect harmful effect to wildlife that live in the area. Whether consumed by target pests or other native mammals, such as squirrels or skunks, these poisons can cause secondary poisoning when the poisoned animal is consumed by predatory species, such as coyotes or owls. In an effort to protect wildlife within the preserve, please consider more humane forms of pest control.



Volunteer Today!

Help protect the preserve by joining us in the field to remove non-native plants and trash, and learn about the sensitive resources in your community.



BIOLOGICAL THREATS

Invasive Plants

Native plants in the preserve are sensitive to invasive species. Invasive species are not native to the San Diego area and if left unchecked will choke out native species, drastically decreasing the biodiversity and health of the ecosystem we are trying to preserve. A large part of our role is to control and remove the invasive plant species that continue to invade the native habitat. SDHC requests your assistance in making sure that ornamental plants or exotic species are not discarded into the native habitat, and that any houseplants are kept within your property to avoid introducing new invasive species. To the right are some of the common invasive plant species within the preserve and their impacts.

Invasive Pests

In addition to the invasion of nonnative plant species, invasive animal species can cause harm to our native flora and fauna as well. Some of the pests found within the region include; brown-headed cowbird, which uses nest parasitism to outcompete and reduce native bird species; shot hole borer beetle; which can decimate mature forests by farming fungi within trees; and the Argentine ant; which you can help us to control!



Brown-headed cowbird (male and female)
Photo by Patricia Pierce

A small but detrimental pest, the invasive Argentine ant (*Linepithema humile*) is known to eat the young of various species including birds, rabbits and snakes. They alter entire insect communities and spread bacteria and viruses through their waste. Argentine ants range from light to dark brown, they measure about 2.2 to 2.8 mm long, and their antennae have 12 segments. We are monitoring the infestation in the preserve and will be installing control measures. Neighboring residents can help by controlling ants inside your buildings with a commercially available boric acid solution (see <http://www.kmantpro.com>). Please feel free to contact us with any questions regarding pest management.



Below are the common invasive plants found within the preserve that we are working to remove. Control of each species requires a unique treatment method, such as hand removal or treatment with a specific herbicide. For additional information please visit Cal-IPC.

MUSTARD



PHOTO BY ZOYA AKULOVA

Annual herb that grows and spreads quickly. Uses allelopathic chemicals that prevent germination of native plants. Widespread populations can increase the frequency of fires in chaparral and coastal sage scrub.

BRISTLY OX-TONGUE



PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER L. CHRISTIEA

A winter and summer annual that is commonly found in clay and alkaline soils. Has a sprawling habit and leaves with thick, hooked hairs. Often in disturbed sites where it outcompetes other vegetation.

FENNEL



PHOTO BY NEAL KRAMER

Perennial herb that can exclude or prevent native plant establishment and can alter the composition and structure of many plant communities. Outcompetes native species for light, nutrients, and water

RUSSIAN THISTLE



PHOTO BY RUTH JULIETA CHÁVEZ MARTÍNEZ

Bushy summer annual found throughout most of California. Can grow up to 4 feet tall and create fire hazards when it dries out. As the plant matures, it becomes stiff with sharp prickly spines, making it unpleasant to handle by hand.

TOCALOTE



PHOTO BY BARRY BRECKLING

Bushy annual that prefers disturbed and open areas, including grasslands, open woodlands, agricultural fields and roadsides. Spreads quickly by producing great quantities of seed if given the proper conditions.

PRICKLY LETTUCE



PHOTO BY BARRY BRECKLING

This annual herb is relatively harmless in most settings, but can dominate disturbed areas after good rain events. It can form dense stands over 6 feet tall and spreads its seeds via wind.