



SAN DIEGO HABITAT CONSERVANCY (SDHC)

MANAGES THE WOODS VALLEY RANCH 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 surround your home.

Contact:

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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:

- Quarterly Monitoring & Reporting
- Vegetation Mapping
- Special Species Surveys
- Invasive Plant Control
- Trash Removal
- Fence Inspection
- General Coordination
- Public Outreach



White-breasted Nuthatch
 Photo by Denis Allard

SENSITIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Habitat and Plant Communities

The preserve contains Diegan coastal sage scrub, a habitat unique to southern California which plays host to a vast number of plants and animals in the region. The health and integrity of this habitat is critical to ensuring the sustainability of threatened and endangered species and to improving the beauty and serenity of the neighborhood. The live oak forest & woodland at the preserve are dominated by coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) and Engelmann oaks (*Quercus engelmannii*).

The Engelmann oak is a rare, majestic oak that is only found along a narrow stretch of land running from the foothills of Pasadena south into Baja, California.



Engelmann Oak
 Photo by Juergen Schrenk

Sensitive Wildlife Species

A number of sensitive wildlife species occupy or forage over the Preserve, including Cooper's hawk, least Bell's vireo (federally endangered), oak titmouse, yellow warbler, yellow-breasted chat, and orange-throated whiptail.



WOODS VALLEY RANCH PRESERVE

CITY OF VALLEY CENTER

Your home is near the Woods Valley Ranch Preserve! Development of the Native Oaks Golf Club (formerly Woods Valley Golf Course) and Woods Valley Ranch residences resulted in the loss of sensitive habitat and species, natural resources that are important to our local ecosystem and regulated by the City of Oceanside, California Department of Fish & Wildlife, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. As a result, these impacts were mitigated for by the preservation and enhancement of natural resources within the 115.87 acre Woods Valley Ranch Preserve.

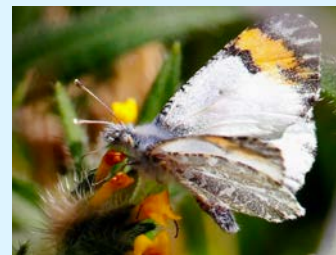


CONNECTION TO SAN DIEGO ECOSYSTEMS

The Woods Valley Ranch Preserve is part of a larger system of preserved natural habitat in San Diego County under the Draft North County Multiple Species Conservation Plan. The preserve is also part of the Moosa Creek Open Space, connecting with habitat to the north, east, and west that is intended to protect approximately 314,000 acres of sensitive habitat and provide a regional habitat and wildlife corridor for a variety of threatened and endangered species, as well as protection of the large, steep slopes and floodplains in the region.



California Toad
 Photo by Gary Nafis



Sara Orangetip
 Photo by butterflies4us

2024 PRESERVE UPDATE

Over the past three years, SDHC has conducted annual nature tours with neighboring residents to provide insight into conservation activities and the species that inhabit our local ecosystems. Volunteers also assisted with removal of harmful invasive plant species.



This year, SDHC conducted surveys to take an inventory of the Engelmann oak (*Quercus engelmannii*) trees throughout the preserve. These rare trees have a limited distribution in southern California, so we conduct focused surveys on their populations every five years to monitor for disturbances and ensure their healthy existence.



RATTLESNAKE INFORMATION AND SAFETY

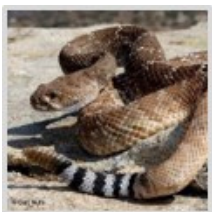
The preserve is home to many species that are part of our local ecosystem. It is possible that some of the animals living in the preserve will make their way into the developed area surrounding your residence. The southern Pacific rattlesnake, red diamond rattlesnake, and speckled rattlesnake are the 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. Be sure to stay on the designated walking trail found along the eastern preserve parcel.



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.

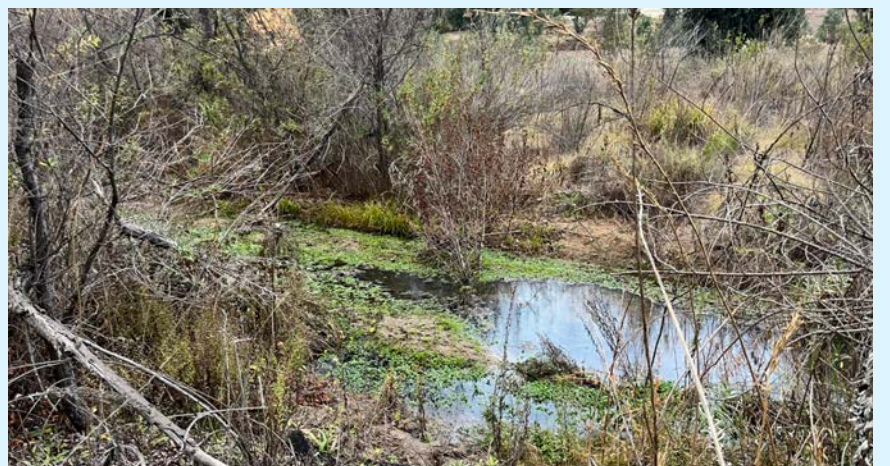
Use Humane Pest Control

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.

BLACK 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.

SALT CEDAR (TAMARISK)



PHOTO BY NEAL KRAMER

Tree or shrub that is commonly found along streams and freshwater shores. Associated with a dramatic change in geomorphology, ground water availability, soil chemistry, fire frequency, plant community composition, and native wildlife diversity;

MEXICAN FAN PALM



PHOTO BY TOUTCHA LEBGUE-KELENG

Common landscape ornamental that has become invasive in riparian areas. This palm is known to create monospecific stands in riparian areas, and dead fronds of the tree can create a fire hazard.

PAMPAS GRASS



PHOTO BY NEAL KRAMER

Large perennial grass that produces up to 100,000 seeds with each plume that are widely dispersed by wind and develop without fertilization and quickly colonizes bare ground.

POISON HEMLOCK



PHOTO BY ZOYA AKULOVA

Biennial forb toxic to humans and animals when ingested; handling plants can cause dermatitis in some people. Outcompetes native plants by over-shading.

MILK THISTLE



PHOTO BY LUIGI RIGNANESE

Annual or biennial with prickly leaves. It is widely spread throughout California along fence lines and other disturbed areas. Produces tall, dense stands that outcompete native species.