

PLUGGED IN

FUN FOR KIDS

A COOPERATIVE PROJECT OF THE SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS AND THE MUSEUM EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE TO PROMOTE LEARNING AMONG YOUNG READERS IN NATURAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY AND ART.

GET connected connected

GET CONNECTED WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE MUSEUM EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE:

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary
805-966-7107; www.cinms.nos.noaa.gov
Outdoors Santa Barbara Visitor Center open daily from 11am to 6 pm.

Santa Barbara Mission Museum
805-682-4149

Tour includes historical art, artifacts, gardens, church and cemetery. Children free, Adults \$4.

Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation
805-965-0093; www.sbtph.org

Encourages the preservation and interpretation of historic buildings and sites in Santa Barbara County

Santa Barbara Botanic Garden
805-682-4726; www.sbbg.org

California native plants, miles of trails, classes, tours and more.

Channel Islands National Park
805-658-5730; www.nps.gov/chis

Tidepool Programs Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m. Ventura Visitor Center

Ganna Walska Lotusland
805-969-3767; www.lotusland.org

Promoting Plant Conservation, Education, and Preservation

Goleta Valley Historical Society
805-964-4407; www.goletahistory.org

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY TOURS AT 2PM AND 3PM.

Santa Barbara Historical Society
805-966-1601

To promote an appreciation and understanding of Santa Barbara regional history and the importance of history in general.

Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
www.sbnature.org; 805-682-4711;

Enjoy a WET and WILD summer of FUN at our Sea Center on Stearns Wharf!

Santa Barbara Zoological Gardens
805-962-5339
www.santabarbarazoo.org

Register now for fall edZOOcation classes and Theater Gone Wild performances.

Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum
805-966-5373; www.sbcaf.org

In Paseo Nuevo, 2nd level, Arts Terrace. Hours: Tues.-Sat. 11-5, Sun. 12-5. Admission is free.

South Coast Railroad Museum
805-964-3540; www.goletadepot.org

Open Wed. through Sun. 1 to 4 pm. 300 N. Los Carneros Road, Goleta. Come Ride the Train!

This Month's Theme: Endangered Species

Life on the Edge

By Carol Peterson
Channel Islands National Park

If we had lived here many years ago we would have seen elephant seals along some of our local beaches at certain times of the year. At low tide we would have seen some intertidal rocks covered with abalone. Today elephant seals visiting our area limit themselves to the Channel Islands. And abalone are gone from the coastal intertidal zone. You might even find young local residents who do not know what an abalone shell is. What is happening?

As the human population has exploded along the California coast, plants and animals have lost their habitats and suffered from fishing and hunting. Today the protected islands of Channel Islands National Park are more important than ever. They provide homes for plants and animals trying to survive on the edge of an area inhabited by over 16 million people.

Without protected habitats, these species, some already endangered, might face extinction. Some animals like elephant seals have successfully relocated to protected park habitats. The seals give birth to their young on remote island beaches. Today there may once again be as many elephant seals in California as there were before they were hunted almost to extinction.

If you can't get to the Channel Islands to see elephant seals, you can see a new and expanding seal population on several beaches near San Simeon. Well-trained docents will teach you a great deal about these large animals when you visit.

Other island plant and animal species are unique—145 are found nowhere else on Earth. The Channel Islands provide their only homes. One of these is the island fox, a relative of the mainland gray fox. It dem-



Elephant seals will begin making their way to the Channel Islands this fall. By January, there may be over 50,000 on San Miguel Island. Photo courtesy of National Park Service.

onstrates island dwarfism—it is smaller than an average housecat and weighs only four to five pounds.

The island fox has been pushed to the brink of extinction by human actions. Golden eagles are attracted to the islands by wild pigs. Humans introduced the pigs to the islands.

Bald eagles, which in earlier years would have chased golden eagles from their territory, were killed off by human use of the chemical DDT. Today, if a pig isn't nearby, the tiny foxes make easy meals for golden eagles. On San Miguel Island there were 450 foxes in 1994—by 1999 there were only 15 left!

Human help is needed if the island fox is to be saved. Foxes on two islands now live in pens for protection. Scientists are trapping golden eagles and moving them to new homes. They are also making plans to remove the wild pigs. Scientists hope to be able to release the foxes and have a healthy fox population in five to ten years.

One of the few places to see island foxes is the Santa Barbara Zoo. Be sure to go to the zoo to see these special foxes and learn more about them.

FOX FESTIVAL

By Jennifer Taylor
Santa Barbara Zoological Gardens

The Santa Barbara Zoo is hosting the first annual Fox Festival on Sunday, September 30, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Join the zoo, Channel Islands National Park, and other organizations as we combine equal parts education and fun. Make an origami fox, have your face painted, attend a play, visit an educational booth, and much, much more. Much of the event has been organized by Save Our Species, a kid-organized group raising awareness and support for the plight of the island fox.

You can help too. Simply color and cut out the fox button below and wear it to the Fox Festival. You will receive \$1.00 off the regular admission ticket and help support the fox at the same time. And, while supplies last, stop by the button-making table, and we will transform your paper button into a real one.



Button artwork by Allie Morris

LIVE WIRE! Students Work to Save Island Fox

By Susan Morris, Volunteer
Channel Islands National Park



Eight fifth grade students from Mound Elementary School in Ventura have worked over the past two years to

help save the endangered island fox. The team of nine and ten year olds is known as Save Our Species, or SOS. They have educated classmates and the public about the problems facing these foxes through school assemblies and displays at the Santa Barbara Zoo and Huntington Library. They have also encouraged financial contributions to aid the island fox recovery effort through fox "adoptions" or sponsorships.

SOS members, led by Allie Morris, include Dillon Francis, Hannah Francis, Karoun Kasraie, Larissa Rockney-Finger, Gabrielle Sharaga, McKay Shaw, and Brianna Slade. They are affiliated with Roots and Shoots, the Jane Goodall Institute's in-

ternational student conservation organization. SOS has raised nearly \$1,600 in sponsorship funds. The sponsorship packages, written and illustrated by the students, contain Chumash names and personality descriptions for the twenty-one remaining foxes on San Miguel Island. Sponsors choose a fox to support from these descriptions, and the money they contribute goes toward the purchase of food as well as veterinary care and medical supplies.

These students have also assisted with fox feeding duties on Santa Rosa and San Miguel Islands, helping biologists prepare and serve fox meals for those animals in the captive breeding facilities. SOS members were particularly thrilled this June when they traveled to Santa Rosa Island and saw one of the new fox pups for the first time. They hope that their efforts will allow them and others to see many more fox pups born in the years to come.

SOS looks forward to further public outreach at the Santa Barbara Zoo's Fox Festival. Don't miss the students' booths when you attend the Fox Festival.

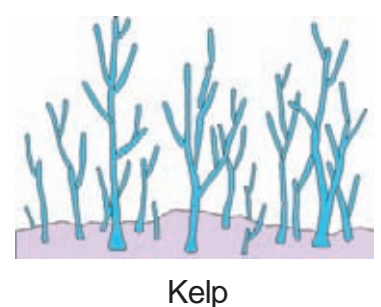
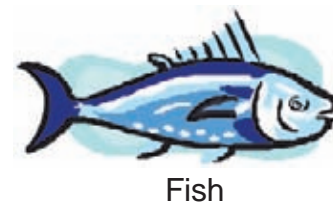
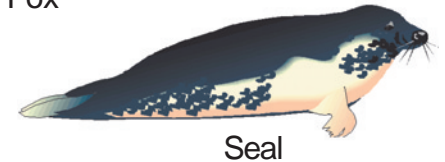


Members of the SOS group display island fox information for Dr. Jane Goodall during her recent visit to the zoo. Photo courtesy of the Santa Barbara Zoo.



Make the Connection!

Scientists sometimes create food-web diagrams to show how plants and animals are all connected in a community. Help create a food web for some of the plants and animals that depend on the Channel Islands for their survival. Draw an arrow from each plant or animal that provides energy to another animal. Answers are below.



Answers:



ART FROM SCRAP
805-884-0459
www.communityenvironmentalcouncil.org/afs
Art From Scrap is an environmental education and art program of the Community Environmental Council.

Karpeles Manuscript Library and Museum
805-962-5322
The world's largest private holding of important original documents and manuscripts.

Santa Barbara Maritime Museum
805-962-8404
www.sbmm.org
Museum and Store Hours: Thurs.-Tues. 10am-5pm. Closed: Wednesdays.

Our Next Issue: Sept. 30 Theme: Invention