

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

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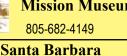
GET CONNECTED WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE **EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE:**





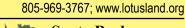
Santa Barbara **Mission Museum**

Channel Islands





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This Month's Theme: "Biodiversity"



By Sally Isaacson and Joan Evans, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

Question: What is Biodiversity?

Answer: Biodiversity refers to all of the different kinds of life forms, or living organisms, in a particular area. Natural, wild environments usually have higher biodiversity than areas that have been disturbed or polluted.

Question: Why is it important for people to protect individual species and preserve biodiversity?

Answer: Humans, like other species, depend on the diversity of life on earth for survival. Plants are the basis for all ecosystems as they make food through the process of photosynthesis. Food webs of natural ecosystems are very complex. If we are careless, we can easily disturb the delicate balance in which species exist.

We humans, by our actions, can cause large-scale extinction of species. Pollution of air, water, and soil as well as the introduction of foreign and invasive species of animals and plants are just some of the problems that humans have caused for the environment. Luckily, as we are intelligent, we

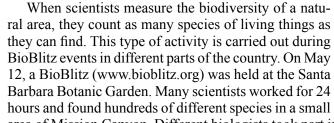
> can also find solutions to protect our local, regional, and global biodiversity. Each one of us can help, and one way to do this is to volunteer for a local conservation organization. Many organizations of the Santa Barbara Educators' Roundtable help to protect biodiversity. Look at the list on the side of this page for ideas of where you could volunteer.

Certain areas of the world are considered to be Biodiversity Hotspots because they have

unusually high biodiversity. An organization called Conservation International (www.conservation.org) has identified 34 hotspot regions worldwide where 75 percent of the world's most threatened animals survive on about 2.3 percent of the Earth's surface. We live in one

of these hotspots. Scientists call this area the California Floristic Province and it is extraordinarily rich in species of plants, animals, and other types of living organisms.

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area of Mission Canyon. Different biologists took part in the BioBlitz, including botanists, entomologists, herpetologists, ornithologists, lichenologists, mammalogists, and mycologists. They are still working to

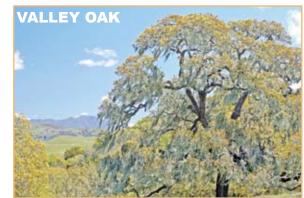
identify some more species but at this point the spectacular species count is as follows: Diatoms: 44, Fungi: 9, Lichens: 95, Plants: 257, Invertebrates: 325, Vertebrates: 82, Total Species: 812.

In our area, biologists are working hard to protect many native species as well as their habitats. The Santa Barbara



Botanic Garden is a member of the Center for Plant Conservation, and the Garden's botanists work to conserve rare and endangered species of native plants. When you visit the Garden, be sure to look for the new plant conservation display. Local groups are working to protect and restore habitats and populations of native animals including Island Foxes, Southern Steelhead Trout, and Bald Eagles.







CHORUS FROG







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Santa Barbara

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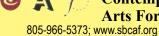
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COUNTY

















Unscramble the words to find the names for different types of scientists who are interested in biodiversity. Find the answers below.

Word Scramble



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TSNIBAOT ALSAGMOMITM AOSOEICIRGTBLT OLGOMOETISTN SOIRLTOHEGETP OOTIYHPLGSC **IOZGOLSTO** TOTGOIHNROILS **OLIGOTMCSY ILOIRTOGCBOMIS TSALDRIAHNOGIOC GETLAIOOPNSTLO** LSTECOOIGNLIH CGOHYTTSOILIH

studies interactions between organisms and their environment studies plants studies mammals studies bacteria studies insects studies reptiles and amphibians studies algae studies animals studies birds studies fungi studies microscopic organisms studies spiders studies fossils, past forms of life studies lichens studies fish







ORNITHOLOGIST, PALEONTOLOGIST, PHYCOLOGIST, ZOOLOGIST EXAMINED GIST, ICHTHYOLOGIST, LICHENOLOGIST, MAMMALOGIST, MICROBIOLOGIST, MYCOLOGIST, ARACHNIDOLOGIST, BACTERIOLOGIST, BOTANIST, ECOLOGIST, ENTOMOLOGIST, HERPETOLO-

