
Ocean Connectors

Eco Tours

Wildlife Kayaking

OVERVIEW

On the Wildlife Kayaking Eco Tour with Ocean Connectors and Chula Vista Kayak, guests are led on a leisurely kayaking tour of South San Diego Bay by local experts. Guests meet at Bayside Park in Chula Vista and embark in two person-kayaks from the Chula Vista Boat Launch. The



tour runs approximately 2 hours and takes guests along the south end of the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge and into the tidal channels of the Chula Vista Wildlife Reserve, where we will spot a wide variety of wildlife species. Guests can expect to see many species of migratory and resident birds, as well as stingrays, mullet, and occasionally green sea turtles, which inhabit the San Diego Bay. Kayaks, waterproof binoculars, field guides, sunscreen, visors, and life vests are provided.

Curricula

1. Impact of habitat loss on migratory species and why migratory species face unique challenges when affected by coastal development.
2. Wetlands as a key piece of habitat for Southern California biodiversity and local efforts to help preserve, restore, and mitigate wetland losses in San Diego County.
3. Policies and conservation efforts involving the endangered least tern and its nesting grounds within the Chula Vista Wildlife Reserve.
4. Past and future planning and development considerations for South San Diego Bay, including the implosion of the South Bay Power Plant and the Chula Vista Bayfront Master Plan.

5. An overview of the ecology of the green sea turtle and its role in the San Diego Bay ecosystem.

Tour Guides

This tour is led by local experts, including Ocean Connectors Executive Director Frances Kinney, Patrick Levin, Ocean Connectors Eco Tour Coordinator, and Owner and CEO of Chula Vista Kayak, Harry Orgovan. Tour guides work to ensure safety, provide all equipment, engage with tour guests, answer questions, and provide accurate and complete narration throughout the tour.

Frances Kinney

Frances holds a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Studies with a Minor in Spanish from the University of California Santa Barbara and a Master's Degree in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation from Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Frances is fluent in Spanish and is an NAI Certified Interpretive Guide. She is also certified in adult and child CPR, First Aid, Wilderness First Aid, and open water SCUBA. Frances founded Ocean Connectors in 2007 and went on to graduate from the Sanford Institute of Philanthropy's Fundraising Certificate program at National University. She is also a certified California Substitute School Teacher and has over a decade of experience with coastal ecology and habitat planning and restoration around San Diego Bay.

Patrick Levin

Patrick's role as Ocean Connectors Eco Tour Coordinator is to assist with wildlife identification, lead policy, biodiversity, and habitat discussions, as well as to handle all safety, equipment, and any other needs that might be experienced by tour guests. Patrick holds a Bachelor's Degree in Communications with a Minor in Political Science from the University of California San Diego where he studied environmental political theory and advanced topics in cultural tourism. Patrick is a certified Lifeguard, Surf Instructor, licensed EMT in the County of San Diego, and is a certified California Substitute School Teacher. Patrick has over 4 years of experience working in in marine and outdoor recreation.

Harry Orgovan

As Owner and CEO of Chula Vista Kayak, Harry has been leading kayaking tours of the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge for over 10 years and has lived in Chula Vista for his entire life. Harry provides a unique perspective that combines his expertise in local wildlife and culture to present a full picture of the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge and surrounding areas. Harry also shares his local knowledge as a volunteer docent at Living Coast Discovery Center and the Chula Vista Heritage Museum.