

**NRS**N A T U R A L  
R E S E R V E  
S Y S T E M

University of California

Administering  
Campus  
UC San DiegoEstablished  
1965

# Site Specs

San Diego County; upland portion is approximately 0.5 km (0.3 mi) west of main campus and 1 km (0.6 mi) north of Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO); marine portion is adjacent to SIO.

Size  
342 ha (844 acres)

Elevation Range  
Below mean sea level: 227 m (750 ft)  
Above mean sea level: 113 m (370 ft)

Average Precipitation  
22 cm (9 in) per year

Average Temperatures  
Air: September maximum: 25°C (78°F)  
January minimum: 8°C (47°F)  
Water: August maximum: 21°C (69°F)  
February minimum: 14°C (57°F)

Facilities  
SIO and the San Diego campus provide laboratory and library support, diving facilities, aquaria, and pier.

Databases  
Collections of marine plants/animals; vascular plant/vertebrate species lists; biological, archaeological, geological reports; site-related research bibliography, including reserve-based publications since 1995; hydrographic/meteorological records available through SIO.

Personnel  
Academic coordinator on campus; no personnel on site.

NRS Publications  
Reserve brochure published 1991.

Contact Information  
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# Scripps Coastal Reserve

The Scripps Coastal Reserve provides excellent opportunities to examine the dramatic land-sea interface in Southern California. Commanding a view for 50 kilometers (30 miles), the precipitous upland portion of the reserve, located adjacent to the UC San Diego Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO), is topped by a grassy knoll and bounded by steep coastal canyons. The reserve's rugged coastal bluffs plummet 100 meters (328 feet) to the ocean surface. From there, the marine portion of the reserve plunges to a depth of 227 meters (745 feet) below sea level into the tributaries of the Scripps and La Jolla submarine canyons. The Scripps Pier juts 320 meters (1,050 feet) into the Pacific Ocean, providing access to rich, deep, underwater habitats. Plant and animal communities at the reserve have adapted to the various stresses of life at the marine margin, such as shifting tides, sand migration, inundation, and desiccation. This site's highly diverse, terrestrial and marine reserve habitats include coastal sage scrub, succulent scrub, disturbed grassland, coastal strand, rocky reef, sandy beach, submerged sandy plain, pier pilings, and submarine canyon and associated ledges.

## Selected Research

The effect of different reproductive strategies on the genetic variation of eastern Pacific eelgrass taxa.

The leptostraca\* of coastal California: A survey based on morphological and molecular evidence. [\*a marine order of the class malacostraca, which is a subclass of the subphylum crustacea]

Leopard shark observation/collection.

Development of a marine metazoan physiological bioassay for heavy metal contamination.

Observation and mapping of codium fragile populations.

## Special Programs

**Habitat restoration:** Native prickly-pear and barrel cacti salvaged from nearby developed areas are transplanted onto the reserve to restore succulent-scrub upland habitats.

**Public outreach:** Visitors can take self-guided ecological tours along a half-mile biodiversity trail with accompanying brochure; each year the SIO Aquarium and local K-12 schools bring hundreds of students to visit the reserve tidepools.

**Field courses:** Site visits by university courses in ecology, oceanography, biology, and geology.