



Earth Discovery Institute



ANNUAL REPORT '24

Our mission is to inspire stewardship of San Diego's native biodiversity through environmental education and conservation.

Our vision is an engaged community, actively supporting conservation of San Diego's unique biodiversity.

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Volunteers contributed **1,253** hours to habitat restoration and biodiversity conservation



EDI provided environmental education to **3,604** students



EDI staff, volunteers, and students planted **3,571** native plants

Letter from
**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**



Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on 2024, I am filled with gratitude for all that we have accomplished together. Thanks to your partnership, Earth Discovery Institute reached more students, families, and volunteers than ever before, deepening our collective commitment to protecting San Diego's incredible biodiversity.

This year, **3,600 students** stepped outside with EDI to discover the living world around them. For many, it was their first time experiencing the simple wonder and joy of being in nature. Our Family Day programs invited families to share those discoveries together, engaging **1,400 participants** in meaningful experiences that included overnight camping, hiking, kayaking, and whale watching among many others. These outings both build community among participating families, and a sense of shared responsibility for the ongoing stewardship of San Diego's diverse habitats.

It was also a record-setting year for our work to restore native habitats and protect imperiled species across San Diego County. EDI volunteers and staff planted thousands of native plants on conserved lands, including at El Monte Ecological Preserve where we celebrated the arrival of our first pair of nesting **Coastal Cactus Wrens**. The arrival of these beautiful, charismatic birds on the new patch of habitat we created for them represents a major milestone in the larger effort to rescue this species from extinction. We installed a **Bat Hotel** to support threatened bat populations, created **28 Monarch Butterfly Habitat Gardens**, and joined the City's **Trails Master Plan** partnership to ensure that conservation and public access grow hand in hand.

Each of these achievements was made possible through your generosity.

As we look toward 2025, I invite you to help us continue this vital work. **Your support will fund outdoor learning for students and families, as well as conservation projects that protect the wildlife and habitats we all love and depend on.**

With heartfelt gratitude,

Sarah Maisonneuve

Executive Director

Environmental EDUCATION

Did you know all the schools EDI serves are Title 1 schools? These schools receive federal funding to support students from low-income households.



Fun-Filled Field Trips

In 2024, EDI provided **2,168** students from **13** schools with **49** immersive field trips to Crestridge Ecological Reserve and the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge. This represented an **11%** increase in student participation compared to the previous year. Students also planted **870** native plants!



School-Based Lessons

EDI also engaged **1,436** students in over **98** days of educational, in-school activities, an increase of **42%** compared to 2023! Some of the fun activities included Super Science, Helping Habitats, Protecting Pollinators, and Climate Care.

Environmental EDUCATION

EDI secured grant funding to take students and their families on **nature trips to explore the diverse landscapes** San Diego has to offer!



Route to Parks

Our Into the Outdoors program enabled us to bring students from Magnolia Elementary and their loved ones to San Diego's breathtaking natural spaces! We had a total of **337** participants explore Crestridge Ecological Reserve, the San Diego Bay, Torrey Pines, and Carlsbad State Beach, providing **15** transformative excursions. These outings help foster community, curiosity, and a lasting connection to California's public lands. We are thrilled to share we've been awarded a second Route to Parks grant to continue this program in 2025!



Environmental EDUCATION

EDI strives to **create environmental stewardship throughout families** by providing opportunities to experience nature like never before!



Family Day Adventures

Family matters. Connecting children with nature will always be a cornerstone of EDI's mission to inspire environmental stewardship. When families experience the outdoors together, bonds are strengthened - not just with nature, but with each other! In 2024, we hosted **26** family day events, providing **1,117** participants (an increase of **28%** compared to 2023) with the opportunity to explore, recreate, and connect with nature and one another.



Biodiversity CONSERVATION

In 2024, the Monarch Butterfly count was only **9,119**, a decrease of **96%** from 233,394 in 2023.



Farming for the Future

We are thrilled by the progress our Native Milkweed Farm has made over the years. In 2024, **56** volunteers contributed **162** hours to the farm, and planted **70** additional native pollinator plants to support our farm visitors!

Making Monarch Havens

EDI successfully installed **28** Monarch Butterfly Habitat Gardens in residential yards across San Diego, creating vital way stations for the imperiled Monarch Butterfly and contributing **1,738** square feet of native Monarch habitat to communities that lack green space. Through our 2024 Giving Tuesday campaign, we secured funding to install 7 more Monarch Butterfly Habitat Gardens in 2025!

PHOTO CREDIT: CHARLES SANDERS, ONE OF OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS!



Biodiversity CONSERVATION

EDI is fostering a **collective commitment** to biodiversity conservation and environmental awareness.



Connecting Communities

Led by EDI's Conservation Dream Team, we hosted **7** hikes and events, covering topics from flowers and birds, to biodiversity and bats. Our team also attended **10** community events to spread the word about EDI, our programs, and volunteer opportunities!

Nurturing Natives

300

At EDI's annual Native Plant Sale in the fall, we sold nearly 300 native plants to San Diego residents eager to transform their home yards into native oases!

Transforming Trails

At the end of 2024, EDI launched a new collaboration with the city and nonprofit partners of the San Diego Trails Master Plan. This plan will guide the equitable, sustainable development of trails while ensuring synergy with open space conservation under the city's Multiple Species Conservation Program.

Biodiversity CONSERVATION

At El Monte, EDI not only created habitat for the Coastal Cactus Wren, we also created **a sanctuary for locally threatened bat species!**



Bats' Bed + Breakfast

EDI's Bat Hotel at El Monte Ecological Preserve was officially installed in January of 2024! This structure serves as a long-term roosting site for locally declining bat species in the area, and with a pond that holds water year-round and open areas for foraging, this is an ideal site for the **13** documented bat species to flourish!

Restore + Revive

Continuing expansion of our 15-acre cactus scrub restoration project to support the Coastal Cactus Wren, **166** volunteers contributed **519** hours toward site maintenance, planting **1,418** native plants and expanding into the buffer zones! We also recorded our first sighting of a Coastal Cactus Wren in the restored habitat, a significant milestone in our conservation efforts.



Pallid Bat



Scholarships + INTERNSHIPS

EDI is thrilled to **support local students** through scholarships and internships, thanks to the EDI community and funding from CA State Parks.



Luke Cepurac



Hannah Palmer

Scholarship Awardees

Your continuous generosity throughout 2024 unlocked another year of scholarship awards to two deserving students from San Diego County. EDI is pleased to present the scholarship awardees for our 2025-2026 scholarship awards, Luke Cepurac and Hannah Palmer!



Fall Internships

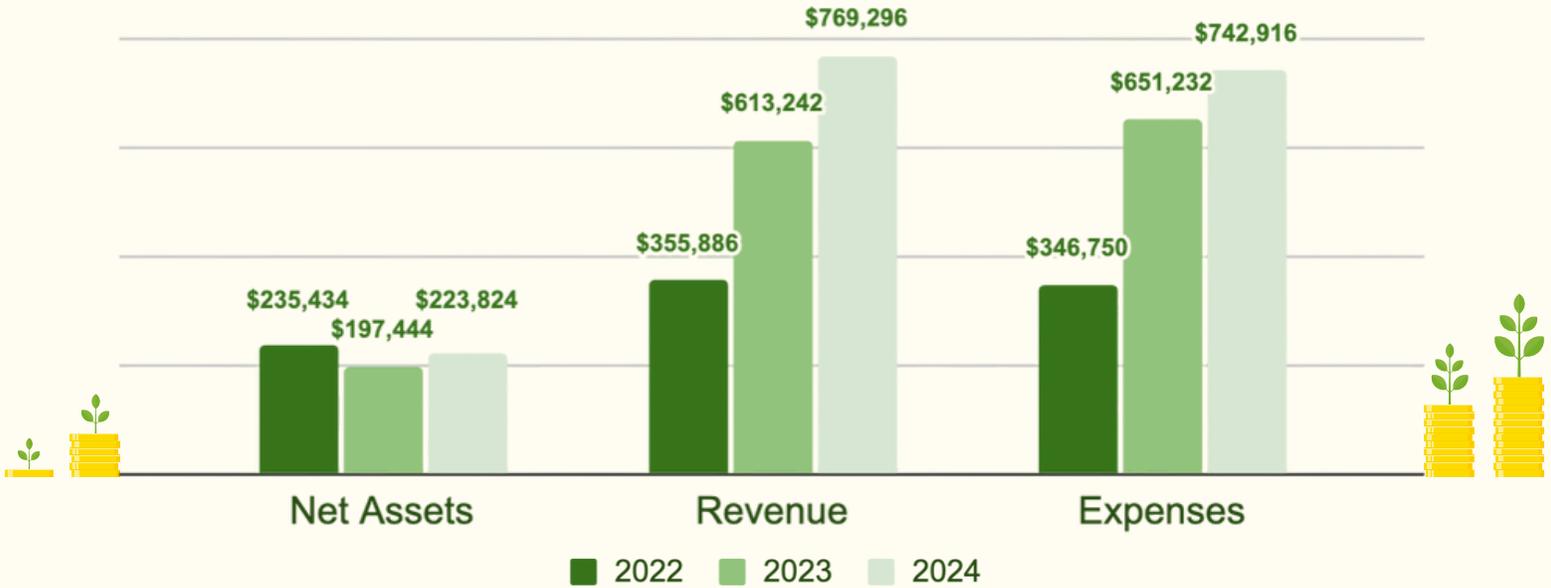
In 2024, EDI supported three interns who shadowed our staff and supported our programs. We are thrilled to share two of the interns are now field instructors with EDI, and the third secured a position at the San Diego County's Public Health Services Department!

Our internship program is funded by the Outdoor Equity Grants Program, created through AB 209 and administered by California State Parks, Office of Grants and Local Services.

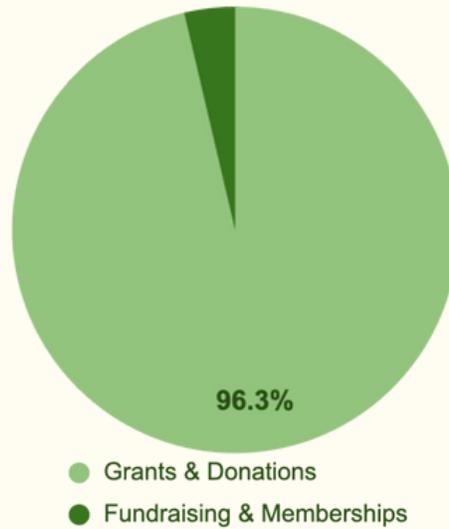
Financial REPORT



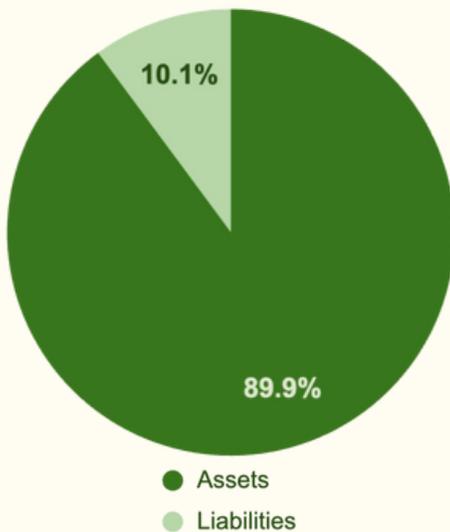
2022 - 2024



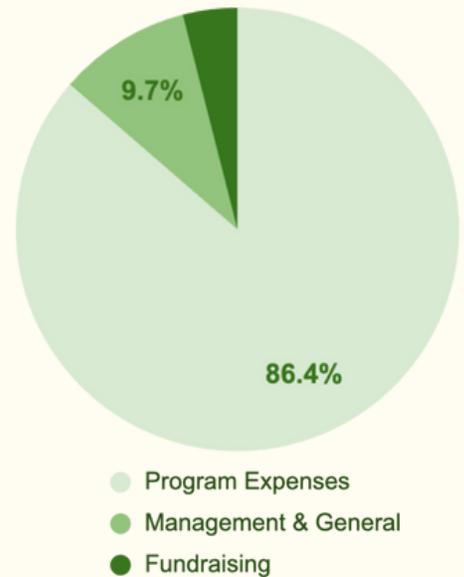
2024 Revenue



2024 Net Assets



2024 Expenses



PARTNERS

2024

We couldn't do all that we do without **YOU!**



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