



Earth Discovery Institute

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

EDI's mission is to inspire stewardship of San Diego's native biodiversity through environmental education and conservation. **EDI's vision** is an engaged community, actively supporting the conservation of San Diego's unique biodiversity.



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2023 AT A GLANCE



Volunteers
contributed
1,413
hours to habitat
restoration &
conservation



EDI provided
environmental
education to
2,958
students



EDI staff,
volunteers, and
students planted
1,965
native plants

Dear Friends and Supporters,

2023 has been an extraordinary year of growth and impact for EDI. We nearly doubled our budget, allowing us to launch new initiatives and programs that support both biodiversity conservation and environmental education. Under the leadership of our Conservation Director, Ida Kaller-Vincent, EDI has restored and created habitats vital to the recovery of endangered species like the Coastal Cactus Wren, Western Monarch Butterfly, and Townsend's Big-Eared Bat. While our conservation efforts center on these species, they also benefit the diverse array of plants and animals that share their habitats.

Under the leadership of our Education Director, Simon Breen, EDI increased our outreach to youth and adults through education and recreation programs by over one-third. We also introduced a new after-school program that encourages students to explore nature in their own backyards. The transformational impact of these experiences is evident in the faces of participants and in the heartfelt comments shared in this report.

It is not hyperbole to say that EDI is taking on one of the greatest and most consequential challenges facing us all: the job of protecting our planet. Looking ahead, we aim to continue expanding our reach— to restore new habitats and engage additional under-served communities in nature and conservation. If you want to help EDI achieve these goals and sustain our momentum, I invite you to join us. Become a member, join our board, volunteer, or donate whatever you can. We need you!

To those who already support EDI's mission, THANK YOU. We could not do this without you, and we are truly grateful for your partnership.

Sarah Maisonneuve,
Executive Director

How to support EDI's mission:



BECOME A MEMBER



VOLUNTEER



BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Supporting the Western Monarch Butterfly



EDI's Native Milkweed Farm

106 volunteers contributed **263** hours at our Native Milkweed Farm in **Lakeside, CA**. We also planted an additional **60** native pollinator plants to support the many visitors that frequent our farm!



Monarch Butterfly Habitat Gardens

In 2023, EDI partnered with Monarch Joint Venture to create **Monarch Butterfly Habitat Gardens** on private lands throughout San Diego County. We received **over 160 applications** from community members eager to create butterfly habitat around their homes, and **selected 28 recipients from low-income and park-poor areas** of San Diego. This project is ongoing with installation, maintenance, site visits, technical support, and education opportunities for the public continuing through March 2025.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

EDI's Annual Native Plant Sale & Outreach Events



Native Plant Sale

At EDI's Native Plant Sale in the fall, we sold **351** native plants to San Diego residents, supporting native gardens in home yards!



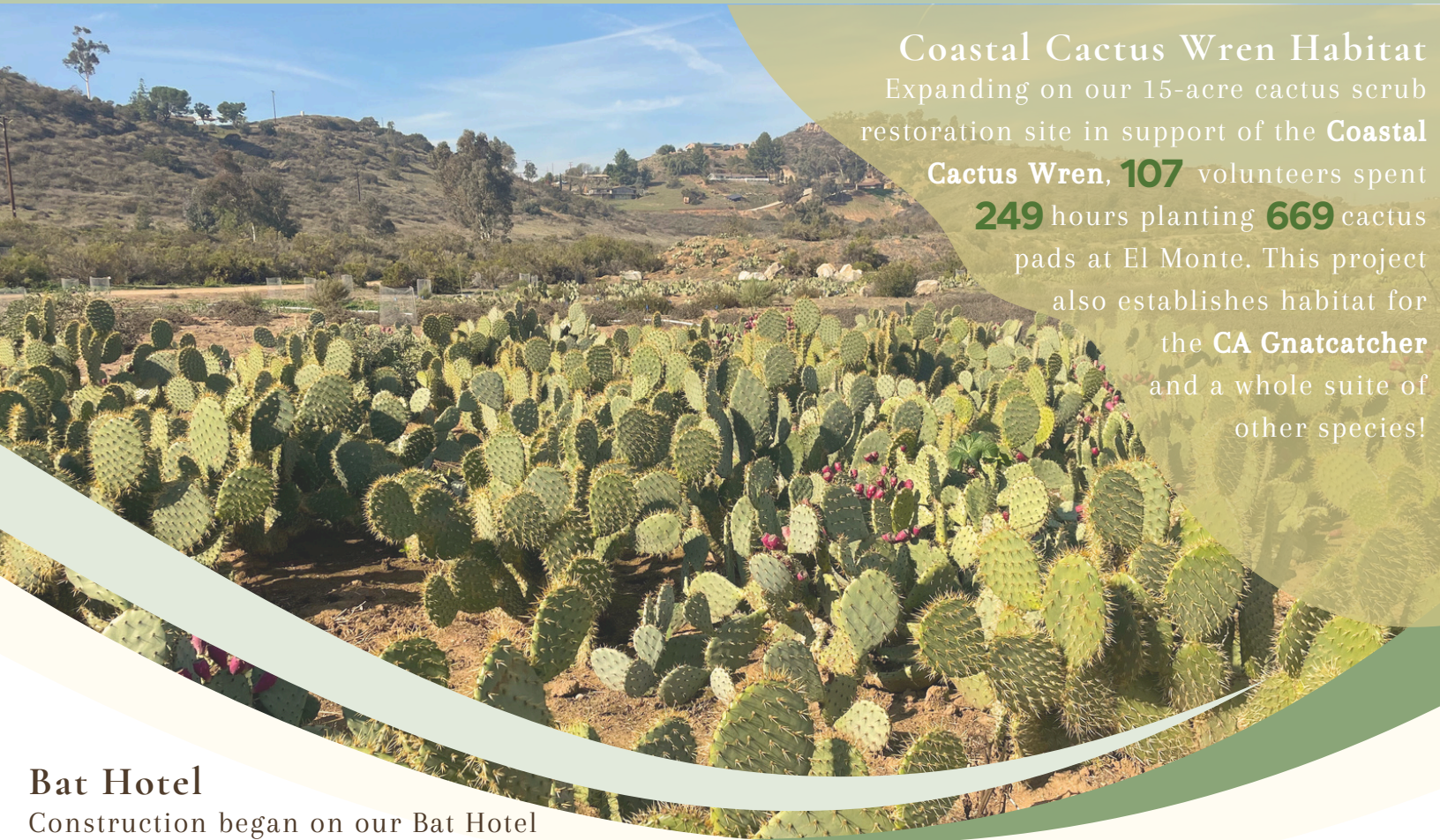
Outreach Events

EDI's Conservation Dream Team led **6** hikes and **7** workshops for the public, covering topics from flowers and birds to oaks and bats. We also attended **6** community events, sharing information about our programs and volunteer opportunities.



BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Reviving Ecosystems at El Monte Ecological Preserve



Coastal Cactus Wren Habitat

Expanding on our 15-acre cactus scrub restoration site in support of the **Coastal**

Cactus Wren, **107** volunteers spent

249 hours planting **669** cactus

pads at El Monte. This project

also establishes habitat for

the **CA Gnatcatcher**

and a whole suite of

other species!

Bat Hotel

Construction began on our Bat Hotel at El Monte, a structure which will serve as a long-term roosting site for locally declining bat species in the area, including the **Townsend's Big-Eared Bat & Pallid Bat**.



California Oaks

With the support of **39** volunteers,

EDI planted **188** Coast Live Oaks at El

Monte to expand on the San Diego

County's Multiple Species

Conservation Program, supporting

native species like the Tricolored

Blackbird and the Coastal Cactus

Wren!

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The Next Generation of Environmental Stewards

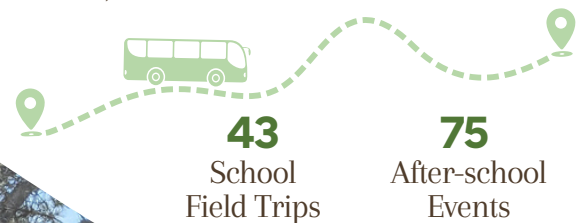


By delivering science-based learning experiences, EDI is cultivating San Diego's next generation of environmental stewards! The **11** East County schools we serve include diverse populations, **ensuring that students from all backgrounds have access to nature.** Students engage in habitat restoration projects, hike on conserved lands, learn about the diversity of plants and animals living in San Diego, and focus on solutions to real-world problems like water pollution and climate change.



After-School Program

EDI brings students to nature, but **we also bring nature to students** through our robust after-school programming! In 2023, EDI provided **1,012** El Cajon children with after-school programming at 4 different sites (3 elementary schools + the El Cajon library). Students learn to see the world through the eyes of a scientist, explore nearby nature, and conduct hands-on experiments.



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Passport to Nature for Youth & Their Communities



In 2023, EDI provided families from East County San Diego with opportunities to **whale watch**, indoor **rock climb**, **kayak**, **paddleboard**, **camp** at Sweetwater Regional Park, **enjoy beach days** at Torrey Pines, **hike** at Cabrillo National Monument, **experience** nature at Crestridge Ecological Reserve, **explore** the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge, **scavenger hunt** through the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve, **and more!**

Many of the youth and families we serve have never even seen the ocean or visited a natural area of any type until they visit one with us. By offering these experiences to **entire multigenerational families**, we broaden our impact and bring the joys of outdoor recreation to the heart of the communities we serve.

3,738

Children &
Adults
Served

17

Family Day
Events

11

San Diego
Destinations



"I *am* nature!"

-Student, Crest Elementary

"This is my first hike ever!"

-Student, Chase Elementary

"This is so much fun, I want to bring my family here!"

-Student, Johnson Elementary

"I never knew planting could be so fun! I wanna be like you when I grow up and take care of nature."

-Student, Meridian Elementary

"We can connect with the earth? Is that why it always feels so good to go outside?"

-Student, Casa de Oro Elementary

SCHOLARSHIPS & INTERNSHIPS

EDI's Scholarship Award and Internship Programs



EDI Scholarship Recipients

We are pleased to introduce the two deserving students from East County San Diego who were awarded EDI scholarships for the 2024-2025 school year!

3

Years of
Scholarships

\$6,000

Awarded

6

Deserving
Students

Eden grew up actively participating in actions that would better our planet. She was a budding environmentalist by middle school and plans to attend a 4-year university and major in Environmental Science or Biology!



Ezra had an interest in the natural world from a very young age. He has been accepted to UCSD as a Chemistry Major, and hopes this leads him to discovering how to slow down Earth's decay!



EDI Internship Program

Mackenzie is a San Diego native with a strong passion for community outreach and environmental sustainability. She's become an invaluable, regular fixture here at EDI. Mackenzie first entered our orbit as one of our inaugural scholarship recipients, and then served more than 100 hours as an intern with us. We're thrilled to now welcome her as an official member of our staff!



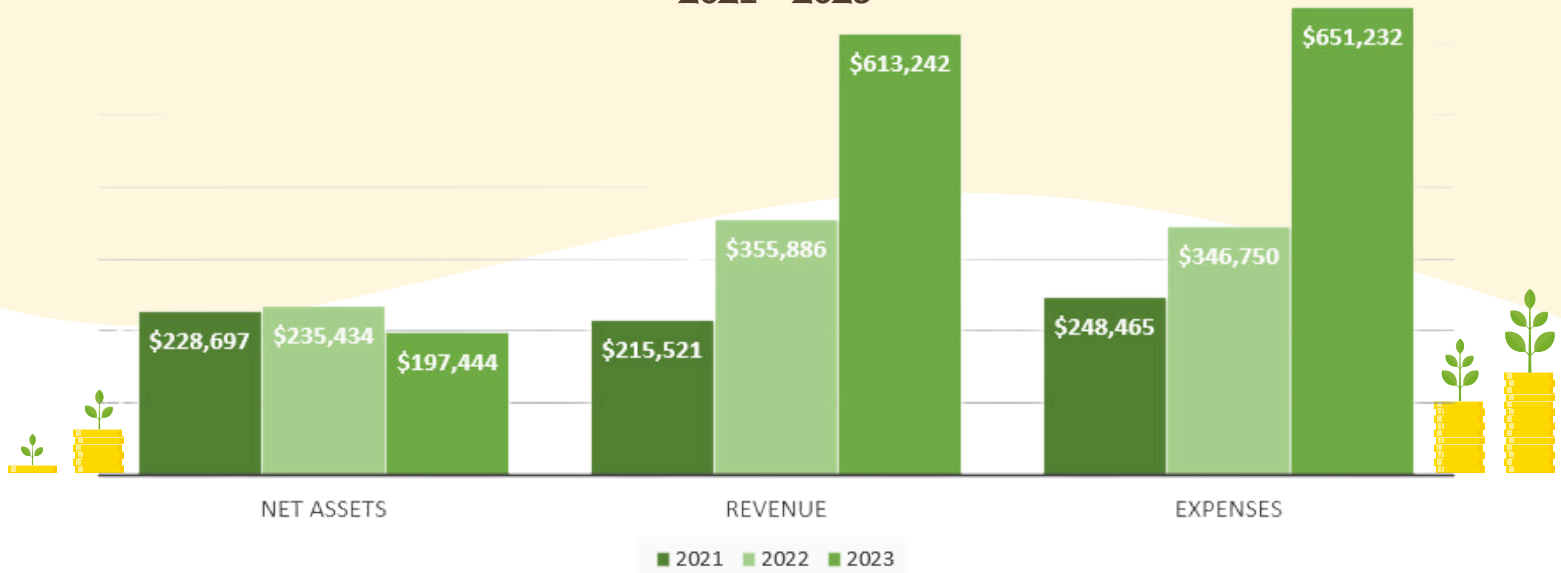
Katherine is a resident of El Cajon and a Navy veteran. Once she completed her service in the military, she wanted to get more involved in conservation and give back to her community. She proved to be an incredibly dedicated intern, and after supporting our various programs as an intern, we didn't hesitate to bring her on board as a field instructor!



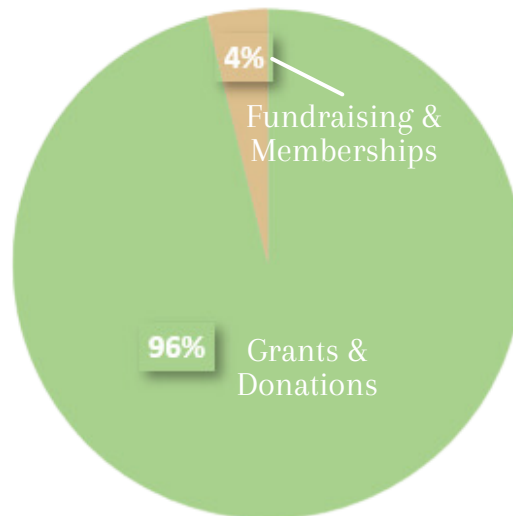


FINANCIAL REPORT

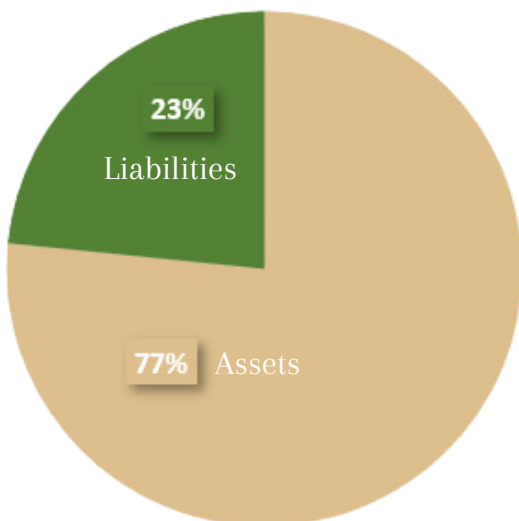
2021 - 2023



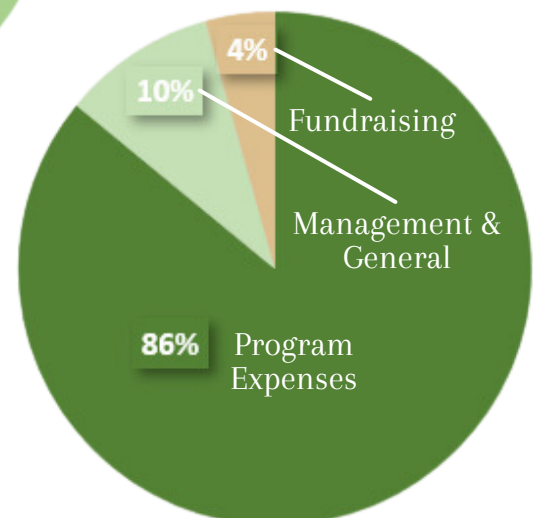
2023 Revenue



2023 Net Assets



2023 Expenses



We couldn't do this important work without you!





earthdiscovery.org

120 North Park Dr.
El Cajon, CA 92021



@EDIExplorers

info@earthdiscovery.org