

# Laguna Creek



Western Tiger Swallowtail  
(*Papilio rutulus*)

## What you can do

### Learn and get involved.

You can help protect the watershed's natural areas. The Laguna Creek Watershed Council offers many ways to learn and get involved. The council provides guided stream walks and classroom presentations, hosts public meetings, helps community groups conduct meaningful *Adopt-a-Stream* projects, and works with schools, cities and parks districts to sponsor volunteer tree planting and creek clean-up events. Visit [www.lagunacreek.org](http://www.lagunacreek.org) for more information.

### Keep it healthy.

Everyday actions by watershed residents and businesses can affect the health of the creek and the wildlife it supports. Soaps, car fluids, food waste, trash and other pollutants that wash off property anywhere in the watershed can wind up in the creeks via stormwater runoff and storm drains. Excess water from sprinklers can carry pesticides and fertilizers to the creeks. Visit the Creek Care Guide at [www.lagunacreek.org](http://www.lagunacreek.org) to learn about actions you can take around your home or business to keep harmful pollutants out of the creeks.

### Pass it on.

Do your part to protect this resource for generations to come. As you observe the plants and animals living along the stream, please do not disturb them. Watch, listen, learn, and pass it on.



Red-Winged Blackbird  
(*Agelaius phoeniceus*)



## Laguna Creek Watershed Council

The council's mission is to protect and restore the many benefits that Laguna Creek and neighboring waterways provide, including fish and wildlife habitat, flood-risk reduction, recreational opportunities, and open space. To pursue this mission, the council works cooperatively with all stakeholders in the watershed.

You can help by volunteering and/or making a tax-deductible donation to the Laguna Creek Watershed Council (a 501c(3) non-profit public benefit corporation). For more information, or to donate on-line, visit [www.lagunacreek.org](http://www.lagunacreek.org). You can also send donations to:

Laguna Creek Watershed Council  
4426 Excelsior Road  
Mather, CA 95655

The work we do today shapes the character of natural spaces for our children's tomorrow.

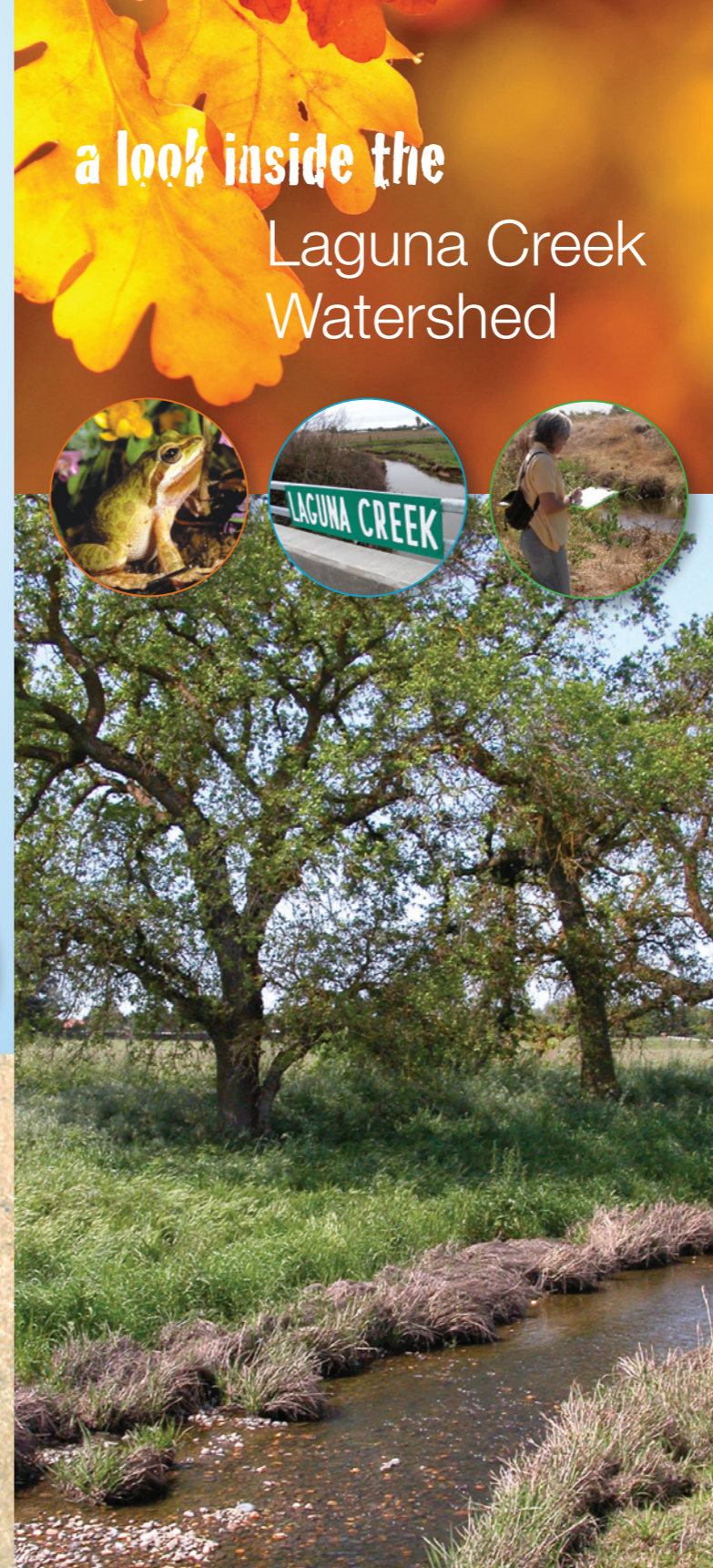


## While visiting this area, please remember...

- Stay on the trail and do not disturb the plants and animals.
- Keep your pets on a leash. Clean up after them to keep harmful bacteria out of the creek.
- Do not litter. If you find trash, please help by taking it to the nearest trash can.
- Report water pollution by calling 916-808-4H2O.
- Report vandalism, dead trees and trail problems to your local parks district. See [www.lagunacreek.org](http://www.lagunacreek.org) for phone numbers.



## a look inside the Laguna Creek Watershed



## Preserving Laguna Creek

### Watershed history

#### The Creek

Laguna Creek flows 25 miles across broad floodplains and terraces shaped over time by the ancestral American and Sacramento Rivers. Historically the creek was dry much of the year except after rain storms and in scattered deep pools. Today, major sections of Laguna Creek and its tributary streams flow year-round due to agricultural and urban runoff during dry seasons and rainfall during wet seasons.

#### The Landscape and People

Laguna Creek meanders through what was originally vernal pool grassland prairie with scattered areas of Valley Oak savannah. Plains Miwok people fished from the creek, and hunted and gathered other food from the surrounding land. By the late 19th century, outside settlers began to farm the area, soon displacing most of the native people. Crops, pasture and non-native grasses and weeds replaced the original creekside vegetation and grasslands.



In more recent times, urban development has dramatically changed the landscape, affecting the creeks and their habitat. Creeks were moved in some places to make room for roads and houses and native creekside trees and plants were removed. Pavement and roofs now prevent rain water from soaking naturally into the ground, sending more runoff quickly into storm drains and down to the creeks, taking pollution with it and eroding natural creek beds and banks.

Today, the Laguna Creek Watershed Council and a growing number of community volunteers are taking action to conserve undeveloped portions of the watershed and restore or enhance damaged sections of the creek and its habitat for future generations to enjoy.



Great Blue Heron  
(*Ardea herodias*)

and tomorrow

yesterday, today

# Explore Your Watershed

## Laguna Creek Watershed

**1. Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge**, located in the lower reaches of the watershed, includes restored wetlands and other habitat types. It's a great place to view migratory birds, heron and other wildlife. Go to [www.fws.gov/stonelakes](http://www.fws.gov/stonelakes) for tour and event information.

**2. The Bufferlands**, 2,500 acres of open space, separates Sacramento's Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant from its nearest neighbors. It is home to a variety of native California landscapes, including ancient groves of Valley Oak. Go to [www.bufferlands.com](http://www.bufferlands.com) for tour and event information.

**3. The North Laguna Wildlife Area**, which was established in the late 1980s, provides habitat for many wild animals and flood protection to the neighborhoods along the creek.

**4. The Fallbrook Reach** has wide natural buffers that provide wildlife habitat in the heart of Elk Grove. A popular spot for biking, walking and bird watching, the trail follows the creek for 3 miles from Jack Hill Park downstream to Camden Lakes.

**5. The Vineyard Reach** features open space along the creek, as well as a bike and equestrian trail accessible from Vineyard Road. Currently one-mile long, the trail will continue another 1.5 miles to Calvine Road once the trail is extended.

**6. The Upper Watershed** is now largely undeveloped. In its upper-most reaches, Laguna Creek is dry except after the winter rains, but still provides important habitat. You can help determine what it will look like as it develops by participating in the Laguna Creek Watershed Council (see [www.lagunacreek.org](http://www.lagunacreek.org)).



**Great Horned Owl**  
(*Bubo virginianus*)



### How do trees help creeks?

- Tree leaves and branches reduce stormwater runoff volume by holding and absorbing raindrops.
- Tree roots soak up water, filter out pollutants, and stabilize streambanks.
- Shade from trees cools pavement and water. This keeps stream temperatures comfortable for fish and other aquatic life.

You can help by volunteering to plant or water trees throughout our watershed. Visit [www.lagunacreek.org](http://www.lagunacreek.org) for more information.



**Widow Skimmer Dragonfly**  
(*Libellula luctuosa*)



**Giant Garter Snake**  
(*Thamnophis gigas*)



**Great Egret**  
(*Ardea alba*)



**Western Pond Turtle** (*Clemmys marmorata*)

