

## BUTTERFLIES AT LCWP

At least 33 species of butterflies have been recorded at LCWP, about 20 of which probably breed on the site.



Although butterflies may be seen from early spring through fall, they are most common from May through October. The adults of many

species are present for only a few weeks of this period. Several non-breeding species visit or migrate through the area during the period from May through August.

Other butterflies are year-round residents. They usually spend the winter in the chrysalis (cocoon) stage, but may also over-winter as eggs, adults or, less commonly, caterpillars. (For more details on butterflies at LCWP, see the butterflies brochure)

### OUR MISSION

Santa Fe Botanical Garden celebrates, cultivates and conserves the rich botanical heritage and biodiversity of our region through education and service to our community.

## VISITING LCWP

We welcome your visit to LCWP. Guided tours and special events are regularly scheduled from late spring through fall. Please call the Garden office at 471-9103 to sign up for scheduled tours or to set up a special date. Pets are not allowed at the site.

### DIRECTIONS

**From Santa Fe via I-25:** Take I-25 south toward Albuquerque. Continue on I-25 past the Race Track. Take the La Cienega exit, turn right and immediately right again (there will be a sign indicating Race Track). This will place you on the frontage road going north back toward Santa Fe. Follow the frontage road for about 1.3 miles. Look for the entrance on the left marked by a sign. Turn into the parking area and follow the path located to the left of the parking lot into the Leonora Curtin Wetland Preserve.



*Santa Fe  
Botanical  
Garden*

**LEONORA  
CURTIN  
WETLAND  
PRESERVE**



**LEARN MORE . . . SUPPORT LCWP . . . BECOME A SFBG MEMBER . . . VOLUNTEER**

Please visit our web site at [www.santafebotanicalgarden.org](http://www.santafebotanicalgarden.org) for information on membership, current restoration activities, volunteer opportunities, educational programs, and special events at LCWP. You may also contact us at:

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tel: 505.471.9103

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# ABOUT LCWP



Leonora Curtin Wetland Preserve, a 35-acre preserve adjacent to El Rancho de las Golondrinas in La Cienega (just south of Santa Fe), is one of the sites managed and maintained by the Santa Fe Botanical Garden. This rare natural cienega, or “marsh” in

Spanish, hosts a bountiful diversity of plants and wildlife.

Since the arrival of Europeans, cienegas have suffered severe degradation. Most cienegas in northern New Mexico have been lost to irrigation diversion, pumping, pollution and overgrazing. The disappearance of these fragile habitats makes the preservation of this site even more crucial.

## Water for a Wetland

Water flowing underground from the Sangre de Cristo Mountains towards the Rio Grande is slowed in this area by deep vertical underground dams of volcanic rock, specifically basalt. Springs form as water rises to the surface behind the dams. One of these basaltic dams is visible from the parking area. Turn toward Santa Fe and look for an outcrop on the left. Follow the spring fed stream near the main path to the cattail fringed pond. Water flows over the dam downstream to power the flour mill at Las Golondrinas.

## CULTURAL HISTORY

In the early 1700s, this cienega was a *paraje*, or stopping place, along El Camino Real from Santa Fe to Mexico City. In 1710, El Rancho de las Golondrinas was acquired as a royal purchase by Miguel Vega y Coca. In 1932, the land became the property of the Curtin-Paloheimo family, who restored the buildings transforming it into a living history museum and farm (Spanish Colonial period.)

Activities at LCWP complement programs offered at Las Golondrinas, adding the dimension of the area’s natural history. The site is named in honor of Leonora Curtin (grandmother of the current owners), who had a lifelong interest in ethnobotany and herbs.

## ONGOING ACTIVITIES

### Education

Education is a primary goal of the LCWP, which serves as an outdoor laboratory for local schools, SFBG members, community organizations and the general public.



Interpretive tours are given on a regular basis, and groups of all ages often volunteer at the site to fulfill community service projects. A handicap-accessible trail has

been constructed and the development of secondary trails is in progress. An information kiosk highlights seasonal changes and history of the site.

### Restoration and Preservation

Since acquiring this site in 1993, various studies have been initiated to enhance its ecological diversity and encourage wildlife habitat. Land restoration practices include various types of erosion control and re-vegetation projects. Controlling invasive, nonnative species such as Russian olive and Russian knapweed is an ongoing component in restoring and preserving the site’s natural ecology.

Several monitoring wells measure water quality and levels. New residential development could impact LCWP with increased erosion and sedimentation, lowering of the water table, and changes in surface water quality.

## WILDLIFE

### Birds

The pond attracts a wide variety of water birds, including grebes, ducks, herons and egrets, coots and rails, shorebirds, the belted kingfisher and an occasional gull. Songbirds, such as red-winged blackbirds and marsh wrens, nest in the cattail marsh bordering the pond. Others, like black phoebes and violet-green swallows, nest in trees along the banks of the pond.

Large cottonwoods and other trees along the cienega valley provide nest sites for red-tailed hawks, kestrels and herons. The riparian woodlands and the juniper savannas on drier upland slopes provide additional contrasting bird habitats.

### Mammals

Desert cottontails, black-tailed jackrabbits and rock squirrels are sometimes seen during daytime; their main predator, the coyote, has also been spotted. At night gray foxes, bobcats, striped skunks, raccoons and an occasional mule deer prowl the meadows, woodlands and pond borders.

The juniper savannas are home to Ord’s kangaroo rat, the valley pocket gopher and several species of mice. Wood rats live in burrows protected by heaps of sticks and cactus joints beneath many of the large junipers. Streamside meadows are crisscrossed with runways of meadow voles. The pond is home to the muskrat, and provides a summer foraging-area for bats.

### Reptiles and Amphibians

Two large, nonpoisonous snakes - the coachwhip and the bull snake - are occasionally seen, and the poisonous western rattlesnake has been recorded. In damp areas along the stream and pond border, the harmless black-necked garter snake is common.

Plateau whiptail lizards, eastern fence lizards, and the short-horned lizard are also common on the open dry slopes. The only amphibian is the bullfrog, a species considered undesirable because it preys on other amphibians and reptiles.

