

## **Habitats**

Blue Sky is special because the closeness of the different habitats allows a greater number of species to exist in the area, as many animals will use several habitats to fulfill their needs.

Blue Sky's Main Habitats include:

### ***Chaparral (The Elfin Forest)***

While appearing dull and lifeless, chaparral is actually a fascinating group of plants and animals, especially adapted to live in this hot, dry environment. Thick, leathery leaves rotate with the sun to minimize water loss. Chaparral animals tend to be small or have thick fur to protect them from rough, tangled undergrowth.

### ***Coastal Sage Scrub (The Scented Forest)***

The collage of chaparral often gives way to a more uniform covering of low-growing, and aromatic shrubs, including sagebrush, white sage, buckwheat, and laurel sumac. Today, only 10%-15% of Southern California's original coastal sage scrub communities remain.

### ***Riparian (A Canyon Oasis)***

The presence of a creek allows for the dense, lush growth of the riparian habitat. Sycamores, willows, and cottonwood trees require water near the soil's surface. The dense underlayer of fallen limbs, snarls of wild rose, and poison oak make the area inaccessible to all but small or agile creatures. The many layers of plant growth provide abundant food and cover for many kinds of wildlife.

### ***Oak Woodland (Our Wild Woods)***

A short distance away from the water, majestic oaks spread their branches between the riparian corridor and the chaparral. Beneath the oaks grow grasses and small shrubs. Many small mammals find food and shelter here, while birds use the branches and cavities for nesting.