

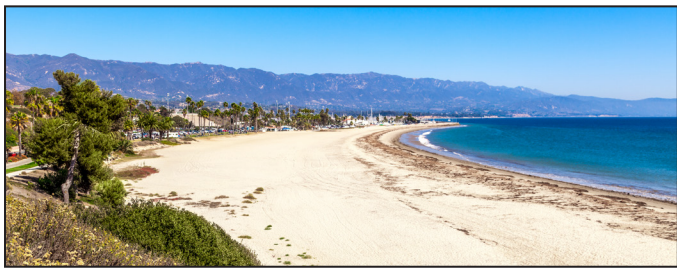
ENJOYING SANTA BARBARA'S



BEACHES

IMPORTANT NATURAL HABITATS

Santa Barbara's coastline is a treasure, providing year-round recreational and wildlife learning opportunities for locals and visitors. Explore Santa Barbara's beaches at different times of year to enjoy all it has to offer.



KELP ON THE BEACH

Wrack is the term for seaweed, kelp, driftwood, and other organic materials produced by the coastal ecosystem that wash ashore due to changing tides, storms, and kelp harvesting. In Southern California, giant kelp is an important component of wrack.



IMPORTANCE OF KELP

Kelp grows in the shallow rocky reefs off the Santa Barbara coast. Like a rain forest, kelp forests provide food and habitat for a rich diversity of marine life, many of which are ecologically and economically important. Giant kelp is also of great commercial value, with thousands of tons

harvested annually in California and elsewhere in the world for food, soaps, pharmaceuticals, and other products.

Wrack provides an important ecological link between the land and the sea. Plants cannot grow in the unstable, wave-washed sand of the beach, so beach animals rely largely upon sources of food, like wrack, that drift onto shore. Wrack feeds many creatures that live on and in the sand, and these creatures in turn provide a food source for other animals, including several types of shore birds.



BEACH GROOMING

Portions of Leadbetter Beach, West Beach, and East Beach are groomed throughout the year for recreation and safety.

Grooming removes litter and debris and is restricted to the dry sand above the wrack line. Bluff-backed beaches west of Leadbetter are not groomed.

SEASONAL VARIATION

The actual area of dry beach available for grooming changes throughout the year. Large swells, wave run-up, and high tides occasionally deposit kelp far up the beach, restricting beach maintenance.

HARBOR DREDGING

You may notice large pipes and equipment on East Beach and West Beach. Each year the Harbor is dredged to remove built up sand and deposit it down shore on East Beach, keeping the Harbor open and the beaches replenished.

LITTER AND DEBRIS

Litter and debris on our beaches comes from many sources: it is often washed down from City streets via storm drains and creeks, washed ashore from the ocean, blown onto the beach from nearby land, or left behind by beach visitors.

City staff, contractors, and volunteers regularly remove litter and debris from creek mouths, lagoons, and the beach. Over 100,000 pounds of litter and debris is collected and properly disposed of each year.

VISITING OUR BEACHES

- Beaches are open from sunrise to one half hour past sunset.
- Lifeguard towers are strategically placed to keep beachgoers safe from a variety of hazards during the summer months.
- Camping is not allowed.
- Dogs are not allowed on East, West, or Leadbetter beaches.
- Help keep our beaches healthy by not leaving litter behind.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

BEACH WRACK

Learn more about the importance of beach wrack in Santa Barbara at explorebeaches.msi.ucsb.edu.

CREEK AND OCEAN WATER QUALITY

Learn more about the City of Santa Barbara's efforts to improve local creek and ocean water quality at sbcreeks.com.

Ocean water quality at local beaches is tested on a weekly basis. For the latest results, visit sbprojectcleanwater.org.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For frequently asked questions about beaches in the City of Santa Barbara, visit santabarbaraca.gov/BeachFAQ.



Parks & Recreation