

## About Bushy Lake

In 2008, the American River Parkway Plan designated Bushy Lake as a Nature Study Area.

The Bushy Lake area was burned by a wildfire in 2014, making it a desirable location for ecological restoration using native plant species that are fire resilient and drought tolerant.

The Bushy Lake Nature Study Area is well suited for studying ecosystem restoration, and for teaching students and members of the community about the flora and fauna of the lower American River.



For more information on the Bushy Lake Project, go to [www.bushylake.com](http://www.bushylake.com).

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# Bushy Lake RESTORATION PROJECT TRAIL GUIDE





### 1) Water Source:

Historically, Bushy Lake was part of an oxbow channel. Now isolated by levees, permanent water levels are maintained by groundwater pumped from Cal Expo.

### 2) Blue Elderberry Bushes (*Sambucus nigra* ssp *caerula*)



are the sole habitat for the endangered Valley Elderberry Long

Horn Beetle. These beautiful and reclusive beetles depend on these shrubs for their entire life-cycle. They only emerge from the stems for a brief time.

### 3) Tree Snags as Bird Habitat



The dead trees, or snags, which you see along the trail are home to several species of birds. Snags create valuable habitat

for Northern Flickers (pictured) and Woodpeckers, as well as cavities for nesting Wood Ducks, Tree Swallows and Blue Birds.

4) Invasive species, such as Star Thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), Poison Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) and White Top (*Lepidium latifolium*), have been dominating unmaintained areas of the restoration project. Invasive species increase the risk of wildfire in a process known as conversion.

### 5) Mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*) is a



native plant that naturally occurs within the restoration site. This is an important medicine

plant, used by indigenous people for purification and smudging, and to bring in the sweetness of Spirit. Mugwort is used to heal and treat many ailments.

### 6) Santa Barbara Sedge (*Carex barbarae*)



was used in the restoration project because it is resilient to disturbance such as fire, flooding and drought.

Birds can eat the seeds and use leaf fibers for nesting material. Santa Barbara sedge is prized by Native Californians for the long underground rhizomes that are prized for basket weaving.

7) Gooding's Black Willows (*Salix goodingii*) are native, culturally significant trees which provide wildlife habitat at Bushy Lake. Indigenous tribes made a tea from the willow's leaves or inner bark to relieve minor pain. Willows are also used for Native California basketry.

### 8) North American River Otters have



been spotted at Bushy Lake. They rely on a constant water source which is why Bushy Lake is

a crucial habitat for them. The largest threats to river otters are habitat destruction and pollutants in the river.

### 9) Western Pond Turtle has suffered a



99% decline in some areas and is listed as a species of special concern

in California. Species decline is largely due to habitat loss from urbanization. Bushy Lake serves as a refuge which offers basking and nesting sites for Western Pond Turtles.