

OCEANO DUNES STORM WATER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Protecting Riparian Areas

Riparian areas are found along rivers, streams, lakes or other bodies of fresh water. These areas consist of plants that require year-round water which supports aquatic life and other wildlife such as birds. Protecting water quality protects riparian habitat.

Alligator lizards like the cool, damp areas under oak trees. They hide under bark and rocks or in rotten logs. If they're threatened, they shed their tail in defense, but they can grow a new one. Insects, snails, and worms make up the alligator lizards diet. If you see one, don't try to pick it up; *they bite!*



Alligator Lizard



Beaver

The beaver is a large semi-aquatic rodent. They are primarily nocturnal and known for building dams, canals, and lodges (homes). When a beaver feels frightened or alarmed it will rapidly dive while forcefully slapping the water with its tail. Nearby beavers will dive and may not re-emerge for some time. Beavers are slow on land, but are good swimmers, and can stay under water for as long as 15 minutes.



Double Crested Cormorant

These long bodied, heavy-boned, dark colored birds are mostly seen diving to catch small fish or standing on tree limbs, posts or rocks with wings spread open to dry. They are the most common cormorants in North America. It is typical for these birds to form breeding colonies among the trees in or near water.

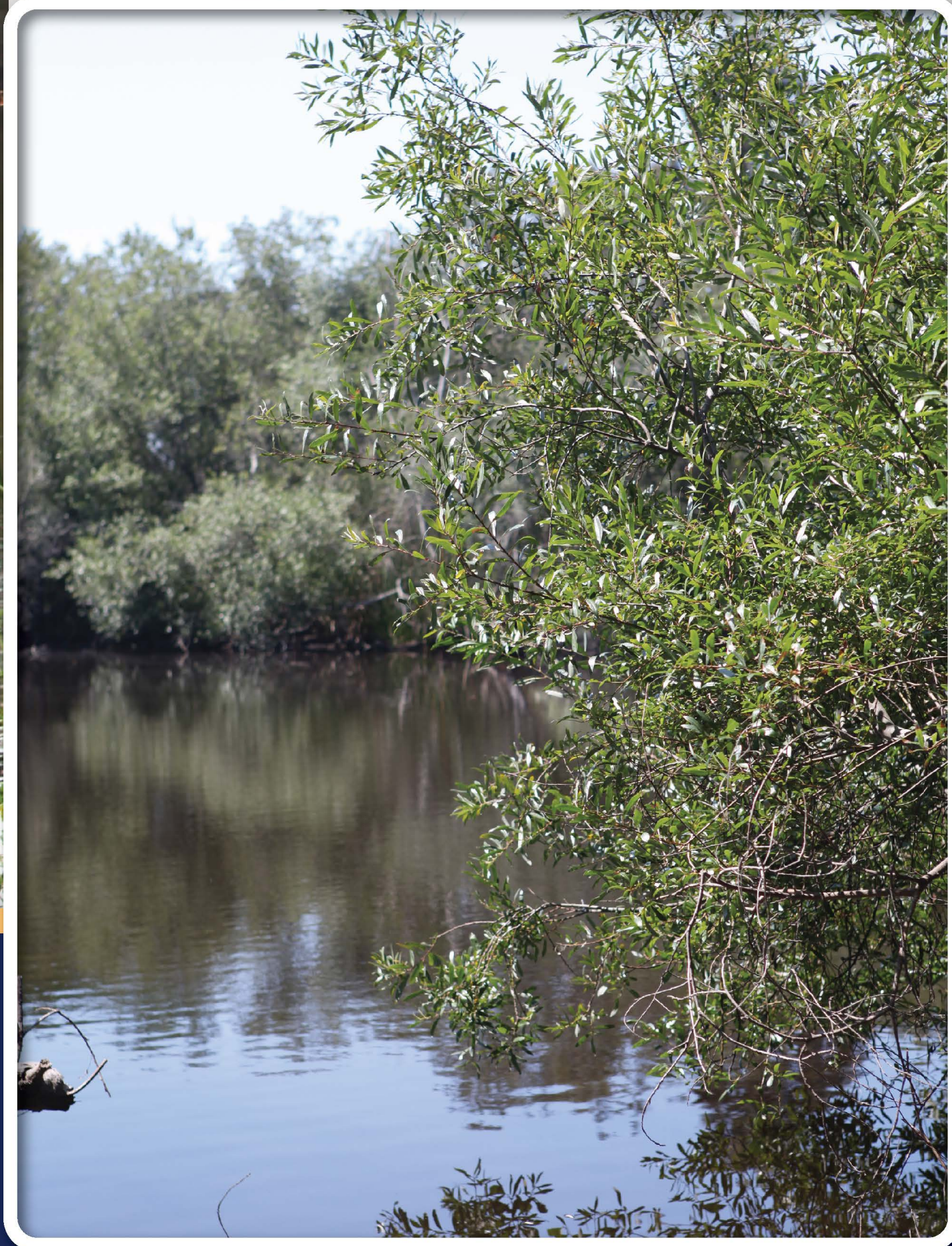
Great Blue Heron

The largest and one of the most common of the herons is the great blue heron. This highly adaptable bird can be seen stalking fish and other prey in shallow waters. These expert fishers stab fish with their strong bill and a quick neck and head movement. Though great blue herons hunt alone they typically nest in colonies.



Arroyo Willow

Arroyo willows are water loving trees that are commonly found in riparian areas. They provide shade which maintains a healthy habitat by cooling the water. Their roots provide hiding places for aquatic wildlife. Native Americans had many uses for this plant. The inner bark was made into rope, the shoots used for baskets, and limbs were used for stakes that provided structure for thatched houses.



Oceano Dunes
State Vehicular Recreation Area

