

# Silver Strand

## State Beach



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The mission of California State Parks is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

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**Silver Strand State Beach**

**5000 Highway 75**

**Coronado, CA 92118**

**(619) 435-5184**

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*Named for the delicate tracery of tiny, silvery seashells that line its white sands, the strand offers stunning views of both gentle San Diego Bay and the more turbulent ocean surf.*



## Silver Strand State Beach,

though only about 15 minutes south of downtown San Diego, has a rather wild, solitary beauty. The generally flat beach of this coastal strand area, a sand spit

that connects Coronado with Imperial Beach, stretches for miles. Views from the level of the beach or alongside San Diego Bay include Coronado Island, Point Loma, the Coronado Bridge and the Naval shipyards.

The weather at Silver Strand is characterized by warm, dry summers and cool winters. Summer fog is part of the Mediterranean climate here. Extremes of heat or cold are rare, with average maximum temperatures ranging from near 65 degrees in January to nearly 78 degrees in August.

### PARK HISTORY

#### Native People

It is believed that humans first came to the San Diego coast as far back as 20,000 years, and to inland areas about 12,000 years ago. The native people were known by many names, some bestowed by the Europeans, who called them Diegueños or Mission Indians. The names preferred by the people themselves included Kumeyaay (the inland group), Ipai (the northern group), and Tipai (the southern group).



*A typical day at Silver Strand State Beach*

These groups were hunter-gatherers who also processed acorns from several species of oaks for nourishment. They obtained some foods and obsidian by trading with native groups to the east, and the Tipai people quickly learned to incorporate Spanish crops, livestock and tools into their way of life.

The arrival of Europeans and Americans ended the native people's way of life. Access to traditional lands and sources of food was soon restricted or totally lost to them. Over ensuing years some Indians were "relocated" to several inland reservations established around 1875, but thousands more died from European-introduced diseases to which they had no immunity. Today's Kumeyaay Nation—extending from San Diego and Imperial Counties to 60 miles south of the California-Mexico border—shares their ancestral heritage through community outreach and education.

#### The Strand

The Spanish and Mexicans in San Diego had little interest in the narrow strip of sand between what they called "San Diego Island"

(Coronado Island) and the mainland, and in 1846 Pedro C. Carrillo received it as part of a land grant. In 1885 its resort potential was first noted. E.S. Babcock and H.L. Story bought the land, established the Coronado Beach Company, and built a road and a rail line over the peninsula. Three years later, Babcock and Story sold the land to John D. and Adolph B. Spreckels.

In 1931 the Spreckels holding companies presented 42 acres of the peninsula between the U.S. Naval Amphibian Base and the U.S. Naval Communication Station to the State Park Commission, establishing Silver Strand Beach State Park (now Silver Strand State Beach).

### NATURAL HISTORY

The type of vegetation here is called coastal strand, though much of it has disappeared due to development. Coastal strand consists of bare, wind- and spray-whipped sand and an inland section with only sparse growth. East of this area, along the highway, scattered vegetation includes golden bush, lemonadeberry and sage.

Coastal strand habitat is home to Brandt's cormorants, gulls, terns, sanderlings and loons. The ocean beach and the bay mudflats are rich feeding areas for shorebirds and other water-oriented birds.

*Silver Strand's east-facing beaches offer stunning views of San Diego Bay.*





*Beachfront RV camping is very popular.*

The southern end of the bay is a perfect bird-watching area; hundreds of thousands of birds feed, nest or just rest up here for the next leg of their migrations.

Offshore, California sea lions and an occasional school of porpoises may be seen. On the strand, mammals include striped skunks, brush rabbits and California ground squirrels. Worms, bivalves and sand crabs are among beach species.

## RECREATION

**RV Camping**—Campsites can be reserved year round by calling (800) 444-7275 or visiting [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov). All RV campsites have water and electric hookups. A sanitation station is nearby.

**Fishing**—Perch, corbina and yellow-fin croakers are prolific here, and during the summer, spawning grunion may be caught on the sand. Anglers age 16 and over must carry a valid California sport fishing license.

**Surfing**—The two miles of beach break with white sandy beaches are best at medium to high tide on a mixed swell. Surfers should stay north or south of the swimming area.

**Swimming/Sailing**—The calmer and slightly warmer water in the bay is ideal for swimming and sailing.

**Kiteboarding**—The wind speed here is higher than at other San Diego area beaches. Intermediate to advanced kiteboarders find the best riding from October to January. Kiteboarding is permitted only at parking lot #1—the southernmost open parking lot—downwind of people on the beach or in the water, and north of the Silver Strand Natural Preserve.

**Picnicking**—Ramadas and tables are available at the beach and bay side picnic areas, with fire rings on the beach during summer. Pedestrian tunnels under the freeway allow access to the bay side picnic area and views of San Diego Bay.

**Aquatic Center**—On the bay side of the beach, Crown Cove Aquatic Center is a collaborative effort between California State Parks' Division of Boating and Waterways and Southwestern Community College. See the Center's aquatic and safety-related class list at [www.swccd.edu/index.aspx?page=105](http://www.swccd.edu/index.aspx?page=105)



*Marbled godwit*

## ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

Shaded picnic areas, the restrooms, outdoor rinsing showers, and the paved pedestrian path along the bay are all accessible.

Beach wheelchairs may be available for loan. Call (619) 435-0126 or check at the entrance for details.

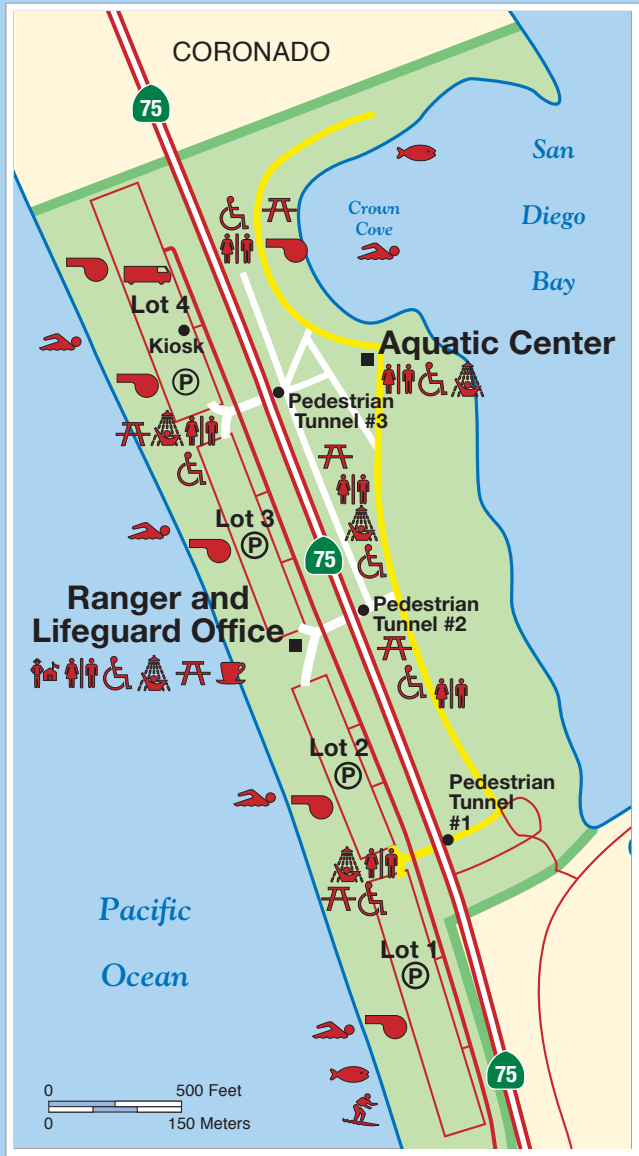
Accessibility is continually improving. For current accessibility details, call the park or visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

## PLEASE REMEMBER

- The front gate opens year round at 8 a.m.
- The gate is always locked for the night. Observe re-entry times on posted signs.
- Camping is available for self-contained vehicles only.
- Call ahead regarding operating hours, fees and conditions, which can change.
- There is a seasonal alcohol ban. Contact the park for details.
- Glass bottles are never permitted.
- Dogs are allowed only in the parking lots, on a leash no longer than six feet.
- Except for service animals, pets are not allowed on the beach, in the tunnels or on the bay side of the park.
- Fires are allowed only in designated beach fire rings.
- Stingrays sometimes rest atop the sand in the surf zone. To help avoid being stung, shuffle your feet as you wade into the water.

## NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Old Town San Diego State Historic Park  
Taylor and Calhoun Streets  
San Diego 92110 (619) 220-5422
- Border Field State Park  
1500 Monument Road, San Diego 92173  
(619) 575-3613
- Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve, 300 Caspian Way  
Imperial Beach 91932 (619) 575-3613



Two miles of beach break are ideal for surfing.

# Silver Strand State Beach

## Legend

- |  |                    |  |                |
|--|--------------------|--|----------------|
|  | Freeway            |  | Parking        |
|  | Major Road         |  | Picnic Area    |
|  | Paved Road         |  | Ranger Station |
|  | Accessible Path    |  | Restrooms      |
|  | Accessible Feature |  | RV Camping     |
|  | Fishing            |  | Showers        |
|  | Food Services      |  | Surfing        |
|  | Lifeguard Station  |  | Swimming       |
|  | Lighthouse         |  |                |



# SILVER STRAND STATE BEACH

