



Human Impacts on Local Wildlife

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Students collected and dissected vehicle killed wildlife and participated in marine wildlife necropsies to better understand issues surrounding wildlife-human interactions. After receiving a call, small groups (5-12 students) gathered safety equipment and relevant data sheets and drove to meet our collaborators, such as NOAA Biologist Kerri Danil. On site of vehicle-killed wildlife, we documented (e.g. data collection sheets, photos) and collected organisms using the S.D. County Dead Animal Removal protocol. For exhibition, student research groups accompanied their necropsy with original six word stories and photography to engage their audience in conversation surrounding roadkill and marine mammal strandings. Our essential questions included: 1) In San Diego, what are the reasons for vehicle killed wildlife and marine mammal strandings? 2) How do we live consciously and bring awareness to topics that are often ignored or misunderstood? 3) How do the anatomy and physiology of marine/terrestrial mammals compare and contrast to our human body?

Teacher Reflection

Being on call with our collaborators brought a sense of student excitement and anticipation to each day of this project. This excitement combined with the reality of our onsite investigations and necropsies, provided ample opportunities for in-class discussions, weekly student reflections, and empathy for victims of roadkill and deadly strandings.

Student Reflections

Before this project, I would just think if I saw an animal on the street like a skunk or opossum just try to get it away, but after this project it has made me think that they are no different than any other animal because they have a life too. —Christian

I'm going to remember the experience of cutting open and observing the dead body of a coyote because it made me come to terms with the millions of lives that are being lost due to the way our civilization operates. —Nadia

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