

Migration is Beautiful

Christopher Millow & Rachel Angeles
Eleventh Grade Biology/Environmental Science & Humanities
High Tech High Media Arts



San Diego is located in a “biodiversity hotspot” home to thousands of endemic (found here and nowhere else) plant and animal species. San Diego’s Mediterranean climate also supports thousands of migratory and introduced species, creating a complex biodiversity mosaic. As a border region, the human population of San Diego has been shaped by centuries of colonization and immigration. Through the lenses of science and humanities, students explored the interdisciplinary essential question: How do intentional & accidental migrants shape San Diego’s cultural & ecological histories?

Shared text was created by engaging in field experiences and service projects within our local community at Cabrillo National Monument, the San Diego River Park Foundation, and the Living Coast Discovery Center. In Humanities, students interviewed family members to understand how they arrived in San Diego, and wrote essays and made artistic depictions of these experiences. In Biology/Environmental Science, students critiqued and revised original scientific illustrations of migratory and introduced species, wrote origin stories for their species, and created an interactive field guide. All student work was exhibited on site at The New Americans Museum.

Teacher Reflection

Our project launched at the San Diego-Tijuana border, the busiest land crossing in the world. It was important for us to launch this project by physically engaging in movement with students (via the trolley) to see an artificial barrier to movement (the border wall). Some students were making this journey for the first time, while others had been making it their whole life. It was a truly profound experience for us to share with one another.

—Chris Millow

Student Reflection

I liked that I was able to learn about things that I didn’t even know lived in San Diego. Also, I really liked the space we exhibited in. I think it was great that our project coincided with the entire theme of the museum, and I would be glad to exhibit in the same space again.

—Jackson

