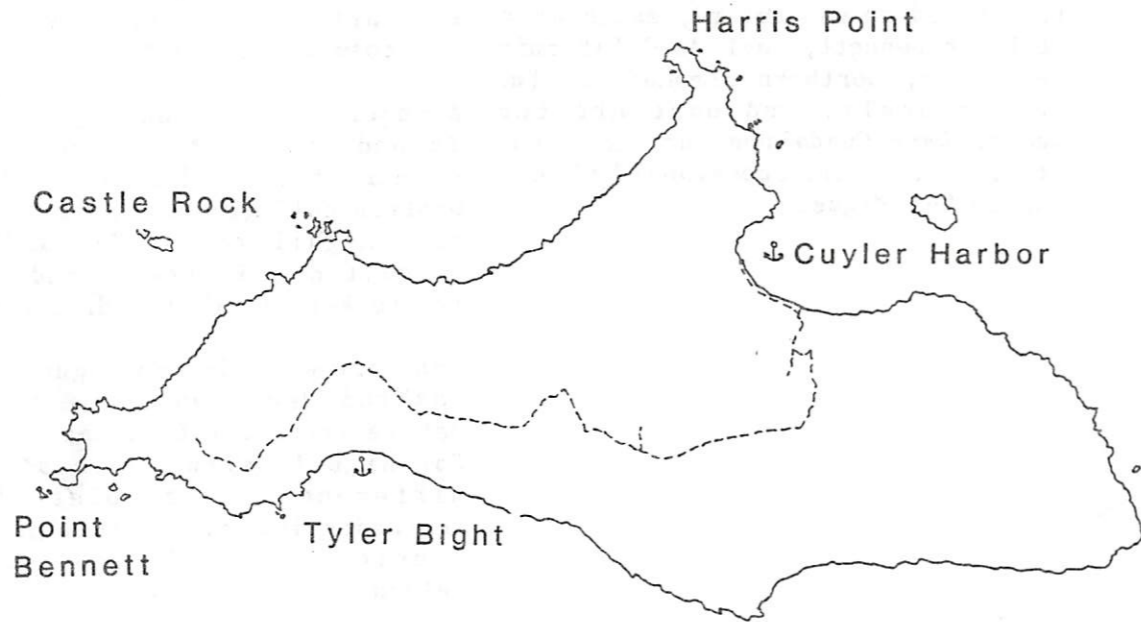


Channel Islands

SAN MIGUEL ISLAND



Contact Island Packers, Inc., the park concession, for public boat transportation to San Miguel Island at (805) 642-1393. For information about required landing permits and San Miguel Island's Ecological Reserve, contact Channel Islands National Park visitor center at (805) 658-5730. Please have a safe and enjoyable journey.

SAN MIGUEL ISLAND



Welcome to San Miguel Island, a rare place twenty-six miles south of Point Conception and westernmost northern channel island. San Miguel, along with nearby Prince Island and Castle Rock, totals 9,325 acres, about fourteen square miles.

LANDSCAPE, GEOLOGY AND CLIMATE

Twenty-four miles of shoreline include white sandy beaches, steep bluffs, rocky ledges, and sheltered coves. The island's composition is a volcanic rock base with marine sediments. Strong northwesterly winds almost never cease, constantly shaping and sifting the island's fine grained sand dunes. Mediterranean climate provides average annual rainfall of 12", mild temperatures of 2°-30° Celsius, (35°-86° Fahrenheit), and periodic dense cool ground fog. San Miguel Island contains unusual natural features such as caliche, a fossil forest of calcified root castings, and pleistocene dwarf mammoth bones.

NATURAL HISTORY

The fragile wind sculpted plant communities of San Miguel Island contain 275 different species. Plant communities include grasslands, sandy beaches, coastal dunes, bluffs, and sage scrub. The island flora was greatly altered by sheep ranching in the early 1900's. Grazing and trampling by introduced animals exposed sand and soil to extensive wind and water erosion. However, many island plants have recovered. Beautiful spring wildflower displays include vibrant yellow giant coreopsis, lovely violet bush lupine and bright orange California poppy.

San Miguel Island contains over 600 fragile, undisturbed archaeological sites including at least one dating 10,700 years before present.

Discover outstanding wildlife displays on San Miguel Island, where you can see four different pinniped species. The seals and sea lions that breed on the island, especially at Point Bennett, include California sea lions, northern elephant seals, harbor seals, and northern fur seals. Rare Guadalupe fur seals and Steller sea lions occasionally haul-out on San Miguel.

The rich ocean surrounding San Miguel Island supports many marine animals such as gray, blue, fin humpback and killer whales, great white sharks, dolphins and porpoises. Giant kelp forests, one of the world's fastest growing plants, provide essential food and shelter for a variety of sea life. Kelp also supplies us with many food and cosmetic products.

A major seabird rookery on Prince Island is home for storm petrels, cormorants, black oyster catchers, western gulls, Xantus murrelets, and pigeon guillemots. No landing is permitted on Prince Island because the rookery is easily disturbed.

The rare endemic San Miguel island fox and deer mouse are the only native terrestrial mammals found on San Miguel Island. A total of 19 different bird species with 2 residents include red-tailed hawk, American kestrels and peregrine falcons.

