



PALOS VERDES PENINSULA & THE BEACH CITIES

The mountains seen through the binoculars are part of the Palos Verdes Peninsula that rises 1,457 feet (444 meters) above the South Bay region of Los Angeles and spans 15,871 acres (6,422 hectares). The Agua Amarga Reserve within the peninsula is home to the endangered California gnatcatcher bird and willow trees over 20 feet (6 meters) tall.

Between Manhattan Beach and the Peninsula are the cities of Hermosa Beach and Redondo Beach, as well as a small part of Torrance. The three Beach Cities of Manhattan, Hermosa, and Redondo have a long historical association. Redondo, incorporated in 1897, was once a contender for Port of Los Angeles. A rail line was built from Los Angeles to Redondo's wharves, and to the grand Redondo Hotel and resort. Hermosa Beach, incorporated in 1907, and Manhattan Beach, incorporated in 1912, were developed along that rail line, and along the trolley line built (where the bike path is today) in 1903.



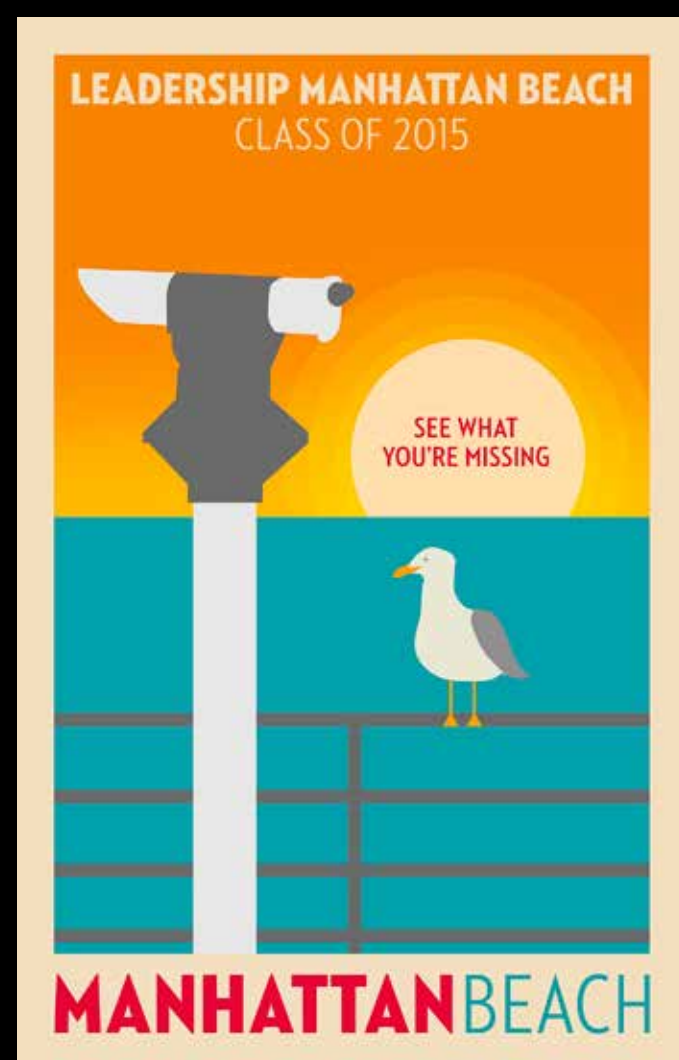
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SANTA MONICA BAY



The Santa Monica Bay watershed is a 414-mile (666 km) area bounded by the Santa Monica Mountains on the north, Griffith Park on the east and the Palos Verdes Peninsula on the south. The diverse ecosystems within the Santa Monica Bay watershed provide habitats for more than five thousand species of plants, fish, birds, mammals, and other wildlife.

The Santa Monica Mountains seen in the distance are approximately 46 miles (74 km) long and 8 miles (13 km) wide and form part of the Transverse Ranges that stretch from the Mojave Desert to the Channel Islands. Elevations range from sea level to 3,111 feet (948 meters) above sea level. The mountains are home to more than 1,000 plant species, 400 bird species and 35 reptile and amphibian species.

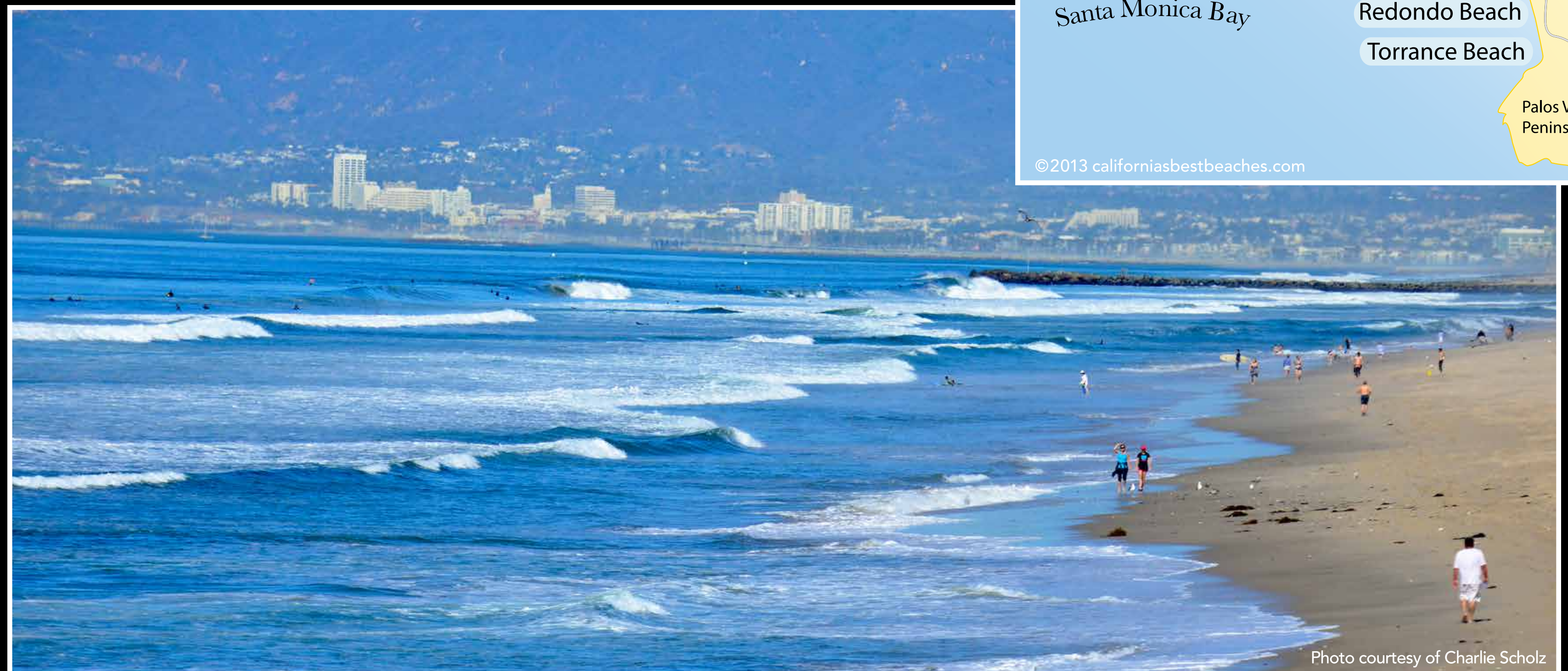


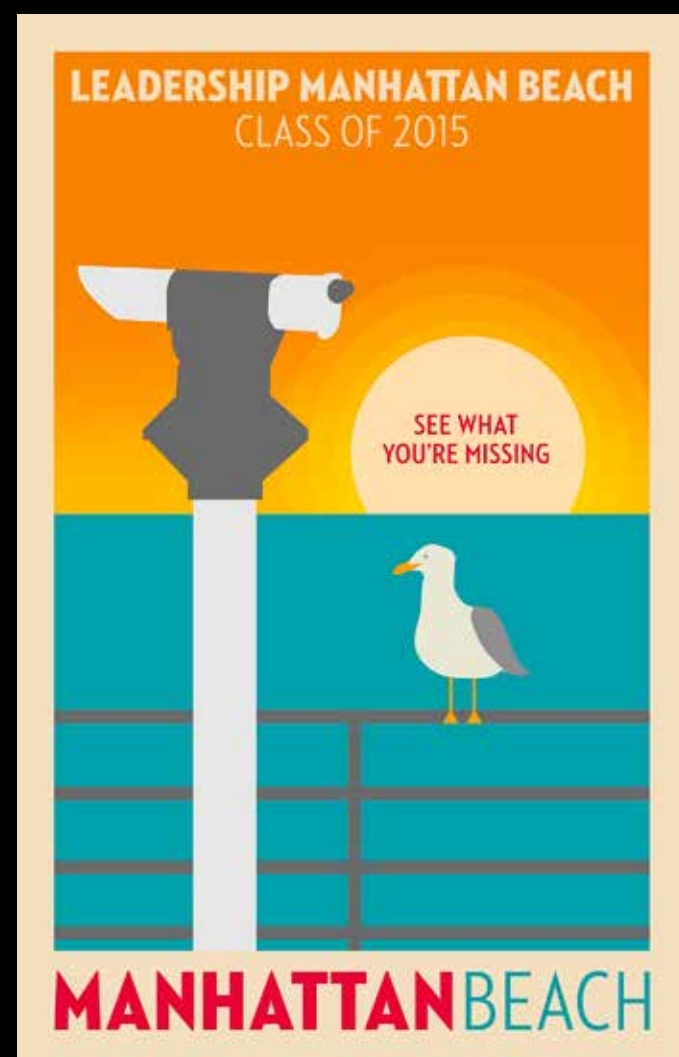
Photo courtesy of Charlie Scholz



HISTORY OF THE MANHATTAN BEACH PIER

Modern day Manhattan Beach began with the railroad's arrival in Los Angeles and the completion of a line to Redondo Beach. The Potencia Townsite Company, planning a resort town, bought the waterfront and completed the first pier in 1897. That pier was replaced in 1920 after being destroyed by the winter storms of 1913-14.

In 1988, the pier was closed due to a storm with waves that crashed above the deck. The pier was restored in 1992 by replacing the deck, roundhouse, and lifeguard station. The pier is the oldest concrete pier on the West Coast and a State Historical Landmark.



CATALINA ISLAND



The island in the distance is Santa Catalina Island. This island is part of the Channel Islands archipelago consisting of four Northern Channel Islands and four Southern Channel Islands. Catalina Island is the only one of the eight islands with a significant permanent civilian settlement and is 22 miles (35 km) southwest of Los Angeles. The deepest water between Catalina and the mainland is approximately 3,000 feet (914 meters).

For several years beginning in 1935, Manhattan Beach held a 44 mile (71 kilometer) race from Catalina to the Manhattan Beach Pier. Racers were towed behind speedboats while standing on a small board. The Catalina Classic Paddleboard Race began in 1955 and is the oldest endurance paddleboard race in the world. It is a 32 mile (51.5 kilometer) marathon from the Isthmus on Catalina to the Manhattan Beach Pier.

