

# Global Forest Link Project

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AP Environmental Science



Five Pictures:





















## Story:

For our Global Forest Watch project, we decided to go out to the Elfin forest. Located in Escondido, the Elfin forest consists of over 6,700 acres of protected land. On our journey to this forest, we got to see the variety of trees and wildlife that inhabit this beautiful forest.

The five photos of trees depict Pygmy Coast live oaks and the Western Sycamore. Not only is the beauty of the forest shown in these photos, but also the amount of growth that is occurring. Many of our photos feature older, larger trees signifying the stable growth of the Elfin forest environment. In amongst these trees were also newer younger trees, showing that new growth is still occurring, meaning the forest is healthy and able to support it.

We also were able to see smaller plants and shrubs all over the forest, including maritime chaparral, coastal sage, oak woodland, and many other smaller plants species. This growth all indicates that the forest is healthy and continuing to flourish in our Southern California desert climate.

According to Global Forest Watch, the Elfin forest has experienced tree gain over the past several years. This is consistent with what we saw in terms of flora growth on our trip. The forest was flourishing with different species, both new and old. Given the fact that the Elfin forest is a protected habitat, it makes sense that tree life has been growing, as barring any unseen natural disaster, it is illegal to remove the trees. However, in some parts of the forest there has been tree cover loss, most likely due to the drought that California has seen in recent years. This can be seen, in some part, in the slight temperature decrease over recent years, as can be seen in that December of 2015 averaged 20 degrees celsius, while both the Decembers from 2016 and 2017 averaged 18 degrees celsius. The average precipitation for this year was just under 12 inches while last years the average was 10 inches. In 2015 the average precipitation was 11.9 inches while 2014 was 5.4 inches. The rainfall has been progressively increasing the past four years.

From our journey and other sources, we can conclude that the Elfin forest is in a generally healthy state. Visiting the Elfin forest was a wonderful experience and the scenery was breathtaking. Overall, we are happy to know that a beautiful forest like this one is thriving so close to home.

Sources:

<https://elfinforest.olivenhain.com/>

<https://Globalforestwatch.com>

<https://www.worldweatheronline.com/lang/en-us/elfin-forest-weather-averages/california/us.aspx>