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2009 Awards of Excellence: Big Sur

Extensive Residential

*Seamless blending into California's rugged Big Sur Coastline, these green roofs were designed to restore fragile habit for several endangered species.*

Project: Big Sur  
 Award Recipient: Fred Ballerini (project biologist, green roof design and installation)  
 Architect: Carver + Schickeltanz  
 General Contractor: Hunt Construction



Located within 200 yards of the Pacific Ocean, this California guesthouse and garage ("Big Sur") were designed to seamlessly blend with the surrounding landscape and rugged Big Sur coastline. The guesthouse and garage are built into the land and feature water-efficient fixtures, low-toxicity building materials, recycled timbers, underground utilities and stone walls using stone sourced from the property. Local building restrictions made the idea for a green roof an easy decision. It also satisfied habitat restoration mitigation measures for the loss of habitat as a result of construction. In addition, the parcel supports a green roof on the main house built in the 1990s.

The 1,900-square-foot guesthouse and garage is located in a California coastal scrub habitat that has the ability to support the endangered Smith's blue butterfly ("Euphilotes enoptes smithi"). The site is exposed to salt spray, high winds, and contains fine sandy soils. Plant species for the green roof were selected based on the surrounding habitat prior to construction. Native plant materials and seed were salvaged from the building envelope prior to grading. Several endangered "watch list" butterfly nectar and host species are incorporated on the rooftop. The roof supports a diverse habitat of plants, birds, reptiles and insects. The complexity of the location and design aesthetic culminated with a green roof plant palette unlike any other along the California coastline. This green roof demonstrates the ability to support fragile habitat and limit ecological impacts while integrating site-sensitive architecture.



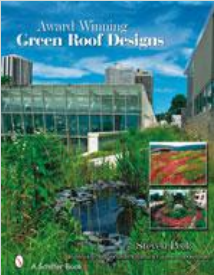
Our judges commented on the aesthetics of the site and the challenging location, but unquestionably the most exciting aspect of the project was the effort made to reduce the building impact - the reuse of native plant communities and the care taken to recreate local flora and fauna habitats resulting in a project well-integrated into the original landscape. The Big Sur project is a superior example of a green roof that can minimize the impact of building by attempting to heal the ecological disruption that its construction caused.

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To view pictures and profiles of the other 2009 winners, please return to our main awards page.  
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Living Architecture Monitor 2010  
 Media Guide - click here to download (.pdf, ~150 kb)



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