



Tide Rising

Summer 2023 Volume IV, Issue 4



Publisher & Editor: [San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society](#) (SFBWS).

SFBWS is a not-for-profit Friends Group for the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Complex, working along with many Refuge volunteers to keep our public lands sustainable for you and wildlife.

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EXPLORATION & DISCOVERY

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News!

- EA Volunteer Day. Staff Updates. **Activities coming up!**

SFBWS Volunteer Opportunities

San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society

Editor: Ceal Craig, PhD

Contributors:

SFBWS: Ceal Craig, Olivia Poulos, Aja Yee

USFWS: Susan Euing, Diane Kodama, Ivette Loredo, Lucia Marquez, Paul Mueller

Volunteers: & Supporters: Jim Ervin

Photographers: Gene Bobik, Susan Euing, Ambarish Goswami, Diane Kodama, Lucia Marquez, Olivia Poulos, USFWS, Aja Yee

Masthead: Earth Day Graphic (Olivia Poulos)



Entrance to Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, looking to the east from top of hill in Fremont

(Ambarish Goswami)

Exploration & Discovery activities on pages 8-10

@ambarish.naturephotos
[More photos of the Refuges](#)

Corporate Neighbor Explores & Discovers the Warm Springs Unit

by Ivette Loreda, Wildlife Refuge Specialist, USFWS

On June 22nd, the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) hosted a volunteer event with Bloom Energy, a local energy company and neighbor to the Warm Springs Unit of the Refuge, where the event was held. The event was hosted in partnership with Smart Waste Inc. who helped the group learn about proper waste management and how to recycle the trash they collected. Refuge botanist Aidona Kakouros interpreted the unique resources of the vernal pool grassland unit, including the three federally listed endangered species it supports. Paul Mueller, Refuge Volunteer Coordinator, and Galen Folk, San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society Biology Associate, assisted with the event. The 30 volunteers were split into two teams to conduct trash clean-up and invasive plant removal. One team was able to remove over 250 pounds of trash, of which nearly 70 pounds were able to be recycled! The other team cleared invasive plant species like purple starthistle (*Centaurea calcitrapa*), and perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*) from the unit, helping to improve habitat for native wildlife and plants.

Bloom Energy is a relatively new neighbor to the Warm Springs Unit in Fremont as well as to the Alviso area and is interested in continued partnership opportunities with the Refuge. We look forward to working with them in the future!



ABOVE: Discovering the vernal pools (USFWS)

BELOW: Bloom Energy employees & USFWS Staff (USFWS)



Remembering a Life of Service

by Ivette Loreda, Wildlife Refuge Specialist, USFWS

*“Greatest use of life
is to spend it
for something that will
outlast it....”*

Cay Goude,
retired from USFWS in 2015,
died in 2021
(USFWS)



A memorial bench dedication was held on May 28th at the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay NWR to honor Cay Goude, who retired from the FWS in 2015 after 31 years of service and passed away in 2021. Cay served much of her FWS career as the Assistant Field Supervisor of the Endangered Species Division at the Sacramento Field Office, where her unwavering commitment to wildlife protection earned her respect and admiration from her colleagues. She was also known as the social “glue” for the office, hosting and coordinating events with coworkers and fostering a sense of team.

The memorial bench is located on the refuge’s Warm Springs Unit, a vernal pool grassland that Cay was instrumental in protecting and which she called “near and dear to her heart.” The event was attended by Cay’s family (including her son Leif who followed in her footsteps and currently works at the Bay-Delta FWO), as well as many of her former coworkers and partners. Several colleagues shared stories about her and the common themes that emerged were Cay’s fierce passion for wildlife conservation and her profound impact, not only in her professional career but also in her loving relationships with family and friends. The ceremony was followed by a tour of the vernal pools in bloom.

When Cay retired from the FWS, her parting words included a quote by William James: “The greatest use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.” I feel that I have tried to do this in both my career and with my incredible family.

Undoubtedly, Cay Goude left behind an extraordinary legacy—a testament to her remarkable contributions and resolute spirit.



Family of Cay Goude
(USFWS)

Dedication of Cay Goude bench
at the Warm Springs Unit
(USFWS)



Green Everywhere in the South Bay!

by Jim Ervin, retired scientist

Jim Ervin shared his latest report on the south Bay fish trawl.

Biggest trend? “the biggest trend is much greenness after three very dry years”



Green in the marsh and water
(Jim Ervin)

MARSH PLANT RULE OF THUMB #1:

“Freshwater makes the marsh grow taller.” This is because freshwater Marsh plants organize themselves according to salt tolerance. Freshwater rushes, sedges, and grasses generally grow taller than their more salt-tolerant cousins.

MARSH PLANT RULE OF THUMB #2:

Rushes have ridges; Sedges have edges; Grasses have round stems and hollow nodes.” California bulrush supports its own ecological community. Bugs, fish, and birds live in it and depend on it.



California bulrush thriving
(Jim Ervin)



California bulrush grows everywhere
(Jim Ervin)

Some fish are thriving with the amount of freshwater in the bay. Baby Longfin Smelt in June is almost unheard of! Starry Flounder Explosion. The Year-to-date count is 530, already beating the previous record year of 2012 was 465, and the runner-up year in 2017 found 407. There were many fewer Starries in all other years. Ervin stated that “LSB data shows a strong correlation between rainwater flushing and baby Starry explosions. This is the biggest explosion ever!” Other fish, like California halibut, Northern anchovy,

and English sole don’t like all this freshwater as much, fewer baby leopard sharks as well. Ervin “heard from Kathy Hieb at CDFW that they are seeing a similar fish picture in North Bay: lots of baby Starry Flounder and very few Anchovies.”

Interested in more details and more photos? The full report is posted on the UC Davis website: <http://ogfishlab.com/> (click on “Blog”)

Partners in Conservation and Wildlife

by Susan Euing, Wildlife Biologist, VA Alameda Point and Antioch Dunes NWR

The USFWS monitors and protects endangered species of all kinds, but we don't do this important work alone. We have many partners: some are local; some are county, state or federal agencies; some are private companies; some are private citizens.

At VA Alameda Point, the formal Naval Air Station in Alameda, USFWS monitors and manages the California Least tern colony. We prepare and enhance their nesting site outside of the breeding season and during nesting season, we monitor the population and reproductive health via surveys of nests, eggs, chicks, fledglings and adults. With the help of volunteers, we also monitor the behavior of the least terns and their predators. The majority of their predators are avians like falcons, hawks, owls and corvids. We can document the species of predator, their numbers and describe their behaviors and how many least terns have been taken by them, but we need help in protecting the terns from the predators. This is where one of our federal partners, Wildlife Services, a division within US Department of Agriculture, steps in. Wildlife Services are professionals in predator behavior and deterrence and resolving wildlife conflicts. They help us protect our endangered species at our refuges in the San Francisco Bay Complex from avian and mammalian predators.

Predators by nature are highly intelligent creatures. They specialize in locating and hunting for their prey and they know how to avoid getting caught. Many avian predators can recognize vehicles we use, especially Wildlife Services trucks, and sometimes

individual people, and they know how to avoid these.

Already this summer, we've had Peregrine falcons, Red-tailed hawks, Northern harriers, American kestrels and corvids (crows and ravens) threatening and hunting the VA Alameda Point Least tern colony. As a USFWS biologist, I don't have the knowledge, tools or skills to properly deter predators but fortunately Wildlife Services professionals do. Some techniques that they employ include chasing, hazing (using noise makers to scare avian predators away from the colony), and trapping/removing them from the property. By keeping the predators away, Wildlife Services increase the chances for survival for many of our endangered species. However, Wildlife Services helps wildlife in other ways, too.

Elsewhere on the property in early July, on a gravel beach above a seawall, we discovered a new Black Oystercatcher family: 2 adults and a single chick. I checked on the chick's growth progress every few days and noted that both parents were always present. However, today, I only saw the two adults. One of them was looking over the seawall's edge and occasionally jumping off towards the water, returning to the beach moments later. Listening carefully, I heard the adult vocalizing, followed by a faint chick's call. Slowly, I got out of my vehicle and looked over the seawall to the water below. I saw the small chick on the mussel-covered rocks below, and I could see the tide was slowly coming in as it splashed the chick's wings

Black Oystercatcher adult on gravel beach above seawall.
(Susan Euing)



Black Oystercatcher chick trapped on the rocks below seawall
(Susan Euing)



I called Aric of Wildlife Services and he immediately came over to assess the chick's predicament and we formed a plan. Meanwhile, the two parents, plus three more black oystercatcher adults that miraculously appeared, repeatedly flew back and forth over the chick, constantly vocalizing. After retrieving a pair of

nets from my office and duct tape from my vehicle, Aric secured the handle from one of the nets to a long pole that he had in his truck. This longer handled net would reach the chick easily, IF the chick had stayed in one place.

Continues on next page

Partners in Conservation and Wildlife (CONTINUED)

However, once the chick got eyes on the net, it panicked and jumped into the bay water and slipped below the rocks. From my viewing angle, I thought that was it for the chick. Luckily, Aric had a better view, and had experience in such predicaments and knew what to do. The chick popped up on the far side of the rocks and Aric was able to scoop it up safely. The chick was soaked, but safe.

We warmed it up for a few moments, then released it in the direction of the waiting parents who were about 50 feet away. The chick, with legs as thick as dowels, ran straight to its parents, bypassed them and kept going. The parents followed in pursuit and shortly thereafter, the reunion was successful.

We don't do this important conservation work alone. We have amazing partners.

Aric (Wildlife Services)
with the rescued Black Oystercatcher chick
(Euing)



Close-up of the soaked
but safe Black
Oystercatcher chick
(Susan Euing)



Latino Conservation Week: 10th Year Celebrations

by Lucia Marquez, Community Outreach Intern, Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Latino Conservation Week, an initiative by the Hispanic Access Foundation aims to encourage, inspire, and advocate for equitable access to the outdoors for the Latino community. By engaging in various activities to safeguard America's natural and cultural treasures, the week seeks to offer Latino families opportunities for outdoor recreation while also emphasizing their deep connection and commitment to preserving the environment as responsible stewards.

In honor of the 10th Latino Conservation Week, Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge hosted a delightful celebration, offering a range of engaging activities to the public. These included a guided bilingual sunset walk, arts and crafts, and a captivating musical performance by the local band, Mariachi Guadalajara, which marked the event's conclusion. The event's distinctiveness captivated numerous visitors, one of whom remarked, "We need more events like these," while another expressed, "Having

never been to the refuge before, this was a fantastic opportunity. I couldn't stop raving about your event to my colleague." Sharing cultural food and music during outdoor events allows the Latino community to celebrate and showcase their heritage.

Events like these serve as a testament to their significance; they not only unite the community but also instill a strong sense of pride, belonging, and representation in outdoor and environmental spaces.

Mariachi
Guadalajara
performing behind
a sunset at the
Refuge

(Lucia Marquez)



NEWS

Electronic Arts (EA) Volunteers Work Day

by **Aja Yee**, *Peninsula Programs Coordinator*



A small group of Electronic Arts volunteers from Redwood City went to Bair Island on June 22 to perform habitat restoration activities. SFBWS organized and led the event, with support from USFWS and SFBBO staff. 17 volunteers and staff removed over 100 pounds of invasive thistles and daisies! At the completion of pulling weeds all morning, the group walked to the nearby observation platform to get a better view of the salt marshes and sloughs of Bair Island.

EA has supported SFBWS in the development and implementation of interpretation programs and restoration activities at Refuge Peninsula sites for the months of May, June, and July. The interpretive walks at Bair Island have become very popular, with growing waitlists every month.

SFBWS Staff Changes

Makenna
at EEC viewpoint
over New Chicago Marsh
(Olivia Poulos)



Makenna Ma,
Summer Camp & Programs Associate

Makenna Ma joined our team as the 2023 Summer Camp & Programs Associate this Summer! She was a Marsh-In Camper for three years and then a Habitat Hero since she was in seventh grade! She has always wanted to be a teacher and is passionate about Marsh-In Summer Camp's environmental education experience – a given, considering her wonderful memories of summers spent hiking along the boardwalk, birdwatching, observing the rich biodiversity of species around the refuge, and making homemade ice cream with her fellow campers and Habitat Heroes!

MISSION: The San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society seeks to nurture in the public a sense of understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuges, their natural and cultural history, and to conserve, preserve, and restore bay lands as essential wildlife habitat.

VISION: Working with partners, we envision wildlife and natural resources thriving in a healthier SF Bay region/area and a reinvigorated society supporting stewardship.

COMMITTEES

Looking for volunteers!

- Fund Development & Marketing
- Tide Rising Newsletter
- Nature Store in Fremont Visitor Contact Station on weekends later this year

Reach out to [Mary Deschene](#) if you are interested!

FY23 SFBWS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Olivia Poulos, Watershed Watchers Interpretive Specialist
Maddie Cline, Watershed Watchers & Restoration Associate
Makenna Ma, Summer Camp & Programs Associate
Aja Yee, Peninsula Programs Coordinator

Activities On the Refuges...

Twilight Marsh Walk at DESFBNWR

Experience the salt marsh at twilight on an easy stroll along refuge trails (about .6 miles). At the setting of the sun we will observe the beginning of nature's night shift. Come discover the sights, sounds, and smells of the refuge as night descends. Not suitable for young children. Tickets are very limited. If you are not able to attend please cancel through this website and someone on the waitlist will be notified. You can also call 510-377-5659 for help and more information. This program is led by Mary and Gene Bobik.

[August 19, 6:30pm-8:15pm](#)

[September 23, 6pm-7:45pm](#)

[October 14, 5:30p- 7:15pm](#)



Twilight in the marsh (*Gene Bobik*)

Family Bird Walk

Let family walks become a shared time of nature learning. We'll begin by helping kids create their personal bird watching field guides, and then head out onto the trails to find those birds. A limited number of binoculars are available to borrow. Recommended for children ages 5-10. Extreme weather conditions could cancel. This program is led by Ken Roux. Tickets are free but are in very limited numbers. Reservations through Eventbrite are required. Please include your telephone number so that your reservation can be confirmed.



[August 12, 10am-12pm](#)

[September 9, 2023 12 - 2pm](#)

Refuge Week: October 8 - 14, 2023

Look for events coming up!

Sunset Walk in August: See [Flyer on page 10](#) for more detailed info!

Drawbridge Talk at EEC: See [Flyer on page 9](#) for more detailed info

Ellicott Slough Survey

These creatures might look like an experimental cross between a fish and a frog, but they are completely amphibian! The federally threatened California red-legged frog responded to last winter's abundant rainfall with a population explosion in Prospect Pond, at Ellicott Slough NWR. During recent aquatic surveys, refuge biologists counted a record-breaking number of tadpoles, in various stages of metamorphosis. Including these late-stage tadpoles, which will soon absorb their tails and use their newly developed legs to hop out onto dry land, for the first time!



California red-legged frog
tadpole
(*Diane Kodama*)



by Diane Kodama, Refuge Mgr, Ellicott Slough & Salinas River NWRs

Summer
presentation
Series

Drawbridge: History & Virtual Tour

Join us for an in-person presentation on the Bay Area's very own ghost town! Bring your lunch and listen & learn.

**Sunday, July 30th from
12pm-1:30pm**

In-person at the Refuge!

Environmental Education Center of the Don Edwards SF Bay NWR
1751 Grand Blvd, Alviso, CA 95002

- FREE presentation and parking!
- History of our local "ghost town"
- In-person presentation in our shaded, open-air Pavillion
- Presented by Ceal Craig, Ph.D., a 20-year volunteer for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



Scan the QR
Code to
Register on
eventbrite!



Drawbridge_Summer2023.
eventbrite.com



NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGE SYSTEM



Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff
Pollution Prevention Program

BAIR ISLAND

Sunset Walk

THURSDAY AUGUST 24TH
7-8PM

BAIR ISLAND PARKING LOT
BAIR ISLAND RD, REDWOOD CITY, CA 94063

FAMILY-FRIENDLY | FREE | 0.8 MILE GUIDED WALK

SCAN THE QR CODE OR FOLLOW THE
LINK TO REGISTER ON EVENTBRITE



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NATIONAL
WILDLIFE
REFUGE SYSTEM

Cargill

SAN FRANCISCO BAY WILDLIFE SOCIETY: DONOR RECOGNITION

We gratefully acknowledge the following donors who have made gifts to the San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society from April 1 through June 30, 2023.

Senior/Student (\$20)

Patricia Callaway
Norma R Zimmer

Individual (\$35)

Locke Jorgensen
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Donations

William & Pamela Rapp
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**Our Refuges
appreciate your
support.**

Help Us Protect Your San Francisco Bay Wetlands!

Mail your donation to: San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society,
P.O. Box 234, Newark, CA 94560.

You may also become a supporter at <https://sfbayws.org/>

For a gift membership, call 510-792-0222 ext. 72004.

[LINK here](#)

San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, a Friends group for the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

My support will help the *San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex* and its south Bay and Outer Bay Refuges

(Don Edwards, Salinas River, Ellicott Slough, and the Farallon Islands)

Enclosed is my contribution of:

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For more than 30 years, the San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society has:

- Introduced the refuge to tens of thousands of students of all ages
- Helped fund the Bair Island restoration and Management Plan, restoration work at Antioch Dunes NWR, and uplands restoration at the Environmental Education Center (EEC)
- Provided weekend EEC staff through long-term partnership with the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program
- Provided funding for a new boardwalk at the New Chicago Marsh Trail at the EEC.
- Funded a new greenhouse
- Provided funds for a native plant nursery
- And much more...

Help continue this tradition by becoming a Supporter of the Society.

Benefits include:

- Tax Deduction to the extent allowed by law
- Free book - *Exploring Our Baylands*
- 15% Discount on purchases in SFBWS Nature Stores
- The joy of helping protect this important environment.
- Free subscription to *Tide Rising* newsletter

<https://sfbayws.org/>



Thank you for your support!

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