



Tide Rising

Fall 2023 Volume V, Issue 1



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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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CELEBRATING LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORTERS

SFBWS Corner

- How do the articles and ideas connect this issue? "On the Trail"
- Bioblitzes, citizen science, South Bay partner orgs, and more.

Partnerships and Supporters Reports

- *How Are Refuges Doing* Series shares sand dune vegetation cover and composition update
- Learn about San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, its team, and why it is important to Complex, SFBWS members and readers.

Reports from the Field

- 2023 Hybrid Marsh-In Summer Camp: from former camper perspective & Habitat Hero.
- Learn about the many volunteers and staff who made the coastal cleanup efforts productive throughout the complex, San Pablo Bay NWR, and at Alviso Environmental Education area.

Youth Perspectives

- Hear from two young women making a difference as volunteers supporting the Refuges.

Enjoy the San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society FALL Newsletter! Share your ideas for future articles! What interests you? [Tell Us!](#) Thanks for reading, and enjoy the rest of the San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society's Quarterly Newsletter!

San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society

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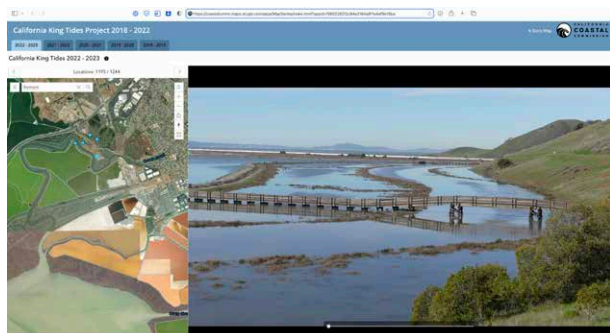
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Masthead: Earth Day Graphic (Olivia Poulos)



California King Tides in Fremont
(blue dots show location of all five)

[Link to map](#)

(Larry Rosenblum)

Help Support Us With Your Time or Donations

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California King Tides Project

<https://www.coastal.ca.gov/kingtides/>

Partnerships and Supporters Work for the Future

by Cecilia (Ceal) D. Craig, Ph.D., F. SWE, SFBWS President

Happy fall! It's been warmer and we've had a bit of rain already in the Bay area. Each year seems to be bringing us new indicators of climate change. This overarching global challenge is a focus for many organizations, including the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex, its partners, supporters, including the SFBWS. Two articles in this issue provide updates on those efforts from partners: "How the Refuges are Doing" (Winnie Chan, USFWS) and "Meet the New Team leading the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture" (Chris Barr, USFWS). Also, Larry Rosenblum, a frequent Tide Rising contributor, shares recent photos of King tides, giving a look at what higher sea levels might look like.

Another project, *Shoreline Project*, is well underway, aimed at preparing for a seemingly inevitable rise of sea levels by raising levee levels, adding an ecotone grade on the bay side for most ponds. An engineered levee is being built along most of the top of existing berms along the eastern or southern borders of Ponds A12, A13, A16, and A18. The planned ecotone will be a transition zone from upland to tidal marsh, providing habitat for many species. "These features mimic the natural landform that once existed around the perimeter of San Francisco Bay and provide the functions of a distinct habitat that is now largely absent along southern San Francisco Bay" (Valley Water, 2019, p. 8). A16 will not have an ecotone habitat "since that pond is managed as open water for pond species, where vegetated upland transition zones are less beneficial" (p. 3)

SFBWS's donors, partners, and grants fund staff who deliver programs to educate the public about these changes occurring in the Don Edwards SFB NWR, as well as continuing ongoing work for the Santa Clara Valley Urban Pollution Prevention Program (*Watershed Watchers*). We appreciate each individual donor, all grant partners, and the consistent and long-term financial support that enables us to deliver these programs.

So what can each of us do? One activity that reinvigorates me are Bioblitzes organized by [Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful](#). The groups have included ages ~5 to 70+; families, individuals, docents. We take photographs, upload them to iNaturalist, try to identify species in the photograph using the apps wide database, geotag the photo, and move to the next one! I'm a birder so identifying them is easier for me; identifying grasses, trees, bushes, spiders, skulls, and more is much harder and all new to me. It feels good to be part of this ongoing citizen science project and learn things. Try one! We offer those bioblitzes a couple of times a year as well on the Complex trails. Stay tuned! And check out KCCB's upcoming bioblitzes.

Last, recently driving back from Los Angeles, I did a quick drive through *Kern National Wildlife Refuge's* auto route. Fall migration had begun: Gadwalls, buffleheads, northern shovelers, great egret and glossy ibis in flocks, female northern harriers, thousands of coots, female American widgeons, and a single yellowlegs (likely greater). Enjoy your walks on the Refuges as thousands of waterfowl and other birds arrive on the Refuge ponds and grounds. **Share your photos with us for the next issue!**



Docent at recent bioblitz on Coyote Creek Trail in Milpitas (Ceal Craig)



Great egrets and glossy ibis, Kern National Wildlife Refuge (Ceal Craig)



Buffleheads (Ceal Craig)

Reference: Valley Water (2019). *State flood control subventions program: South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Project - state cost- share report*. Retrieved from https://www.valleywater.org/sites/default/files/541658_Shoreline_SB_881_Cost_Share_Report_12.2019.pdf

Celebrating Long-Term Partnerships and Supporters

Introducing the *How Are Refuges Doing* Series

by Winnie Chan, San Francisco Bay NWR Complex

Since the [2019 Natural Resource Management Plan](#), the San Francisco Bay NWR Complex has been using indicators of health and goals for tracking priority resources of concern (ROC) across our refuges. Here is a look at vegetation cover and composition indicators for the coastal dune ecosystem ROC at the Salinas River National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge tracks native vegetation and open sand as indicators of a healthy coastal dune ecosystem.

Management strategies currently implemented to improve coastal dune health at Salinas River National Wildlife Refuge include:

- Invasive plant management
- Support acquisition of coastal dune habitat
- Collaborating with partners in a coastal dune forum



Foredune (closer to water) and backdune at Salinas River National Wildlife Refuge. (USFWS)

Sand Dune Vegetation Cover and Composition									
Survey Name: Coastal dune vegetation survey at Salinas River NWR									
Indicator	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Current Measure	Current Rating	Current Measure Year	Goal/Objective	Meet Complex Workplan Goal/Objective
Percent cover of dune-associated native plant species in the foredune	foredune <80%	foredune 80-90%	foredune 91-95%	foredune >95%	95	Good	2022	CDE_G01. Over the next 15 years (FY 2018–2032), the proportion of dune vegetation cover comprising dune-associated native plant species is >95% in the foredunes at Salinas River NWR.	Met. Consistent management of invasive vegetation a crucial factor in achieving the goal. Strong 2022-23 winter storms accelerated sand movement inland and expansion of foredune habitat.
Percent cover of dune-associated native plant species in the backdune	backdune <75%	backdune 75%-85%	backdune 86%-95%	backdune >95%	95	Good	2022	CDE_G01. Over the next 15 years (FY 2018–2032), the proportion of dune vegetation cover comprising dune-associated native plant species is >85% in the backdunes (dune scrub) at Salinas River NWR.	Met. Consistent management of invasive vegetation a crucial factor in achieving the goal.
Percent cover of open sand in foredune	foredune <80%	foredune 80-89%	foredune ≥90%	foredune ≥90%	90	Good/ Very Good	2022	CDE_G02. Over the next 15 years (2018–2032), % sand cover is ≥90 in the foredunes at Salinas River NWR.	Met. Consistent management of invasive vegetation a crucial factor in achieving the goal. Strong 2022-23 winter storms accelerated sand movement inland and expansion of foredune habitat.
Percent cover of open sand in backdune	backdune >40%	backdune 20-39%	backdune ≤20%	backdune ≤20%	20	Good/ Very Good	2022	CDE_G02. Over the next 15 years (2018–2032), % sand cover is ≤20% bare ground in the backdunes (dune scrub) at Salinas River NWR.	Met. Consistent management of invasive vegetation a crucial factor in achieving the goal.

“Consistent management of invasive vegetation a crucial factor in achieving [our goals]”

Coastal Dune Vegetation Survey at Salinas River NWR

Meet the New Team Leading the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture

by Chris Barr, Deputy Complex Manager, San Francisco Bay NWRC, USFWS

The Migrator Bird Joint Venture Program was established in 1986 to address the need for conservation of waterfowl and wetlands under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. They have since become an exemplary national model of regional partnerships. The San Francisco Bay Joint Venture was established in 1996 and is the most urban and smallest of the JV's, yet works to protect and enhance the largest estuary on the Pacific Coast. In 2022 the JV updated its implementation strategy titled [Restoring the Estuary to Benefit Wildlife and People](#), a framework for the restoration of wetlands and wildlife in the San Francisco Bay Area. The San Francisco Bay Area is experiencing the impact of rising sea levels, drought, and flooding; all which can have detrimental effects on local habitats, wildlife, and human communities in the region. Additionally, ensuring equity throughout the restoration planning and implementation processes, remains a challenge. The JV's goal is to make sure the most vulnerable communities are involved in our partnership and benefit from the outcomes of this work. The updated plan is broken into a number of priority goals and strategies to help build resiliency by connecting tidal wetlands management and restoration to adjacent upland ecosystems; keep pace with sea level rise, by moving faster to restore more wetlands than ever before; diversify and expand the partnership by building relationships with community based organizations, and promote land conservation strategies that help wetlands habitats, wildlife, and communities persist into the future. Over the next two years the JV is focused on implementing projects that promote ecological resilience; helping to increase the beneficial reuse of sediments at restoration sites; helping to foster increased coordination and further policies to streamline ecological restoration and stewardship to help cut the green tape; and working with others to secure additional funding opportunities for the San Francisco Bay Estuary.

Leadership Bios

Kelli (she/her) brings more than 15 years of conservation experience working in the nonprofit sector to build both stakeholders' collaborative capacity and durable solutions to achieve landscape scale impact. Inspired by California's nickname, "the Golden State," and the Golden Gate Bridge, Kelli's personal vision for the future is a world where all - nature and people - truly shine. She believes protecting, restoring, and enhancing wetlands and other habitats are a cornerstone to supporting birds, other wildlife, and people to shine across the Bay Area (her home since 2009), and beyond.

Prior to joining the SFBJV, Kelli led the World Wildlife Fund's regenerative agriculture program to transform food systems to become nature positive. Prior to WWF, Kelli worked at Sustainable Conservation for about 13 years where she led innovations to create voluntary performance-based incentives for stewardship results. Specifically, she has worked in California's San Joaquin Valley and Central Coast regions to advance riparian habitat restoration, groundwater recharge, and soil health practices.

Kelli lives in San Francisco with her partner, Ian. When she is not working, she likes spending time in nature, enjoying the Bay Area's culinary culture with friends, and visiting her niece and nephew in southern California. Connect with Kelli [HERE!](#)

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Kelli McCune, JV Coordinator
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"...to make sure the most vulnerable communities are involved in our partnership and benefit from the outcomes of [our] work."

from the SFBJV Implementation Strategy Executive Summary

Meet the New Team leading the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture (cont.)



Nikki Roach, Ph.D., Policy and
Communications Coordinator
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Born and raised in Oakland, CA (Ramaytush Ohlone Lands), Nikki (she/her) has spent the last decade working in conservation across academia, NGOs, and international institutions. Nikki's work has been at the intersection of biodiversity conservation and climate change. During her M.S. at Clemson University, Nikki led the first-ever state-wide surveys for Eastern Black Rails in South Carolina. While living in Colombia for her Ph.D., she worked with coffee farmers to enhance sustainability practices and with local practitioners to understand the vulnerability of amphibians to land use and climate change. Nikki is excited to return home and dedicate her efforts toward strategic action for the SFBJV partnership. Nikki is a gregarious and adaptable person and loves to meet new people from all walks of life. She is a certified yoga instructor, heliophile, dancer, and music and animal lover.

She is a member of the Generative Council for [Center for Nature and Leadership](#), three [IUCN Species Survival Commission](#) Specialist Groups (climate change, amphibian, small mammal), and associate scientist for NGO Re:wild. Nikki was a Fulbright Scholar (Colombia 2017-2018) and the Director of Communications for the Latin America and Caribbean Section of the Society for Conservation Biology (2018-2020). She is fiercely dedicated to improving equity across the conservation sector. Connect with Nikki [HERE](#)!



Jemma Williams,
Conservation Coordinator
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Over the past 11 years, Jemma (she/they) has managed, monitored, and helped to implement small to large-scale ecological restoration projects spanning from rangelands to tidal marshes. Jemma has worked in the public, private, and non-profit sectors supporting community-based stewardship, restoration planning and implementation, amphibian and fisheries biology, and biological monitoring. She is trained in basic wetland delineation and is a CRAM-certified practitioner.

She landed in the Bay Area seven years ago and has worked in ecological restoration, conservation, volunteer coordination, and environmental education at the Sonoma Ecology Center and the Napa Resource Conservation District. In her most recent role as a Biologist/Project Manager in environmental consulting, Jemma managed a variety of complex projects, performed regulatory permit application preparation and management, and mitigation site sourcing and planning.

Jemma enjoys reading, digging in her garden, pottery, traveling, hiking, photographing nature/wildlife, and working with herbs and fermented foods. She believes that sustainable systems can be achieved through collaboration, creativity, and implementing nature-based solutions. Connect with Jemma [HERE](#)!

To learn more about the JV and the some of the projects helping to restore wetlands of the San Francisco Bay Estuary visit their website at <https://sfbayjv.org/conservation/projects/>



SFBJV Implementation Strategy Executive Summary

ABOUT

The San Francisco Bay Joint Venture (SFBJV) is one of 22 habitat Joint Ventures that make up part of the US Fish and Wildlife Service Migratory Bird Joint Venture Program. The SFBJV is a broad, non-regulatory, voluntary public/private partnership working on implementation actions that provide habitat for wildlife, with a strong focus on birds.

We accomplish this through the protection and restoration of wetlands under changing climates.



Rick Lewis



CHALLENGES

The San Francisco Bay Area is experiencing the impact of rising sea levels, drought, and flooding; all which can have detrimental effects on local habitats, wildlife, and human communities in the region. Additionally, ensuring equity throughout the restoration planning and implementation processes, remains a challenge. Our goal is to make sure the most vulnerable communities are involved in our partnership and benefit from the outcomes of this work.

Coastal Cleanup Efforts Across the Complex

by Paul Mueller, Volunteer Coordinator, USFWS

The California Coastal Cleanup in Fremont at the Dumbarton Fishing Pier came back after a long four-year hiatus on Saturday, September 23. The organizers of the event – The Don Edwards SF Bay Refuge and the SF Bay Wildlife Society – hoped for good turnout and recruited a high number of behind-the-scenes people consisting of twelve refuge volunteers (including Habitat Heroes), eleven staff from the refuge and the SFBWS, and seven from the U.S. Coast Guard. Event attendees came out in droves to pick up the trash. One estimate was that 160 showed up. The behind-the-scenes volunteers worked at the registration, assignment, equipment, safety, and food tables. They drove and rode in two trucks that were picking up bags of trash left by the volunteers. The Coast Guard and a few other support volunteers were the zone leaders who took up to 30 people along areas away from registration tables. The event ran officially from 9 am to noon officially, but many showed up earlier and stayed later.

Over a decade ago, coastal cleanup drew as many as 700 people, with 250 being normal attendance. It was part of the plan to have great support to accommodate a large turnout or have the behind-the-scenes staff join the other trash cleaners if attendance was smaller. We achieved our goal with the substantial number of volunteers showing.

Participants were assigned to one of five zones – the small beach on the bay, the parking lot at the foot of the fishing pier, the South Shoreline Trail that goes south along a levee from the fishing pier, and two zones

along Marshlands Road. There was some discussion to create more guided zone areas as the number of volunteers grew. Families with very young children often preferred the beach zone. Hikers wanting to go as far as three miles round trip did Marshlands Road. The South Shoreline Trail was a short walk option for families and for some of the larger groups.

At the beach area the large number of volunteers really scoured the area finding larger pieces of trash and getting the smaller micro pieces of trash. Unregistered participants probably joined to help as well. The turnout really supported the removal of the smaller pieces of broken-down debris that often accidentally traps, impales, or even get consumed by the birds and other wildlife. Most of the time the removal of small pieces of trash in a field of larger items is discouraging because it is difficult to see much progress. However, a larger group of volunteers can make a visible difference.

The cleanup was notable for allowing a well supervised cleanup along the Marshlands Road, which had not received cleanups from volunteers in a while. The California Department of Transportation owns Marshlands Road and recently installed concrete barriers between the Dumbarton Bridge Road traffic and Marshlands Road. Volunteers had been prohibited from picking up along Marshlands Road before the concrete barriers were installed because drivers from the Dumbarton Bridge often accidentally punched through the flimsy fences, ending up on Marshlands Road or in the salt ponds next to the road.

Volunteers waiting to register
(Madison Cline)



The team hard at work
(Madison Cline)



Ultimately about half of a large 40-foot dumpster was filled up with trash from the participants. Special thanks go to the SFBWS for financial support, equipment, and food for volunteers. SFBWS staff, Olivia Poulos and Maddy Cline took key positions.

I want to thank Hannah Schmidt for exceptional organizational work and leadership that helped transform the event in so many ways that would require a separate article.

(Continues on next page)

Coastal Cleanup Efforts Across the Complex (CONTINUED)

Grateful thanks go to Rachel Tertes, Ann Spainhower, and Juan Flores who assisted others at the event when they needed special help. I also want to single out thanks to Tia Glagolev and the Habitat Heroes who ran an educational table about trash and

who participated in the cleanup out along the beach.

Finally, the City of Fremont gets kudos for putting the event under their umbrella and advertising the refuge as a site for the city cleanup. The City of Fremont also gave the refuge a large dumpster for the event.

The team working to keep our shores clean
(Madison Cline)



No stone left unturned when it comes to eliminating trash!
(Madison Cline)



Volunteers of all ages join in
(Madison Cline)



The team in intense discussion
(Madison Cline)

Volunteers happy to make a difference
(Madison Cline)



San Pablo Coastal Cleanup Efforts

by Melisa Amato, Refuge Manager

The Friends of San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge hosted a California Coastal Cleanup on September 23, 2023. The event drew volunteers (big and small) to the Cullinan Ranch Unit of the Refuge.

This unit is right off Highway 37 near Vallejo and is usually in need of a little TLC from our volunteers. Events such as this help the refuge create a safe and welcome space for the many visitors who use the trail, fishing pier, and canoe/kayak launch near the parking lot.

Check out Cullinan Ranch at 1158 Sears Point Rd, Vallejo, CA 94592. Contact Melisa Amato, Refuge Manager with any questions at (510) 377-9229 or melisa.amato@fws.gov.

Satisfied (and tired) volunteers after a long day of work
(Melisa Amato)



Volunteer find "treasure" in the cleanup!
(Melisa Amato)

The team taking a well-deserved rest
(Melisa Amato)



2023 Hybrid Marsh-In Summer Camp

by Makenna Ma, Summer Camp & Programs Associate, SFBWS

It's that time of year — the weather gets hot, the sky becomes a brilliant blue... and once again, the lively cacophony of children's voices fills the pavilion for our annual Marsh-In Summer Camp. This year, I am no longer taking part as a Habitat Hero teen volunteer like I have been the past six Summers, nor as a gleeful camper like I was the three years before that. This year, I had the invaluable privilege of standing before our campers as the Summer Camp Associate. Looking back on our terrific week of Camp, I can proudly say that Hybrid Marsh-In Summer Camp this season was a remarkable feat — navigating new circumstances and transitions, yet undoubtedly continuing our camp's legacy of meaningful, accessible environmental education, and a positive feedback loop with local communities.

In a spectacular doubling of camp numbers since the pandemic began, our 61 campers hailed from four different counties, which we believe was a direct result of the previous years' virtual camps expanding our geographic outreach. The Summer Camp Team, consisting of San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society (SFBWS) and U.S. Fish & Wildlife (USFWS) staff and volunteers, were excited to adjust our hybrid model of camp, advancing to one virtual and three in-person days — versus only one in-person day last year. Another change was the Camp's historic location. In compliance with the South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Levee Project's construction in Alviso, in-person camp was moved to the Refuge Headquarters in Fremont, where it had never been done before. Though apprehensive at first, the Summer Camp Team was more than

determined to make the transition from Alviso to Fremont, as well as the jump from one to three in-person days, as convenient as possible. We arranged a shuttle service to transport roughly 40 campers from San Jose to Fremont each day and designed the single virtual day of camp with our tech-savvy students in mind. It was also our first time serving over 60 campers since 2019, and we sought to make each child's experience as personalized and meaningful as it was for the smaller camps we had during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Each camper received a backpack with their name on it, equipped with binoculars, colored pencils, and all materials needed for self-guided crafts. The Summer Camp Team was devoted to continuing our commitment to educational equity for students, and that included providing materials so no camper was left behind. Whether there were 60 campers or 16 campers, we believed every child deserves an opportunity to do our self-guided crafts even if they require construction paper and attend camp even if it is far from home.

An exciting new aspect of this year's Marsh-In Camp was the online curriculum we compiled for our virtual day. Knowing that many students had experienced both Zoom and in-person learning, we aimed to make the virtual portion worthwhile — meaning it could not just be done in person, and ensured campers were prepared and excited for in-person days. In our endeavor to prime students' knowledge of common species at the Refuge, I took inspiration from an ancient touchscreen monitor that used to be a huge hit at the Environmental Education Center.

Campers posing in their camp shirts
(Makenna Ma & Olivia Poulos)



USFWS Ranger Hannah asking for volunteers
for skit (Makenna Ma & Olivia Poulos)



Campers smiling for their second day of camp
(Makenna Ma & Olivia Poulos)



As kids, my sister and I loved to sit in front of the screen, clicking into the info pages of common bird and animal species at the Refuge to learn fun facts and listen to bird calls. So, we created a similarly fashioned Google slideshow where campers could explore a multitude of species from different categories, play

short YouTube visuals or sounds, and finally play an interactive quiz to test their knowledge. This interactive slideshow, along with watershed explorer games, were effective engagement tools for our campers on Zoom.

Continues on next page

2023 Hybrid Marsh-In Summer Camp (CONTINUED)

They built adequate foundations to build on during the in-person Endangered Species Day and Watershed Day. They also encouraged campers to excitedly contribute what they already knew from the virtual session while partaking in in-person games, hikes, and other activities.

At the end of the week, Marsh-In Campers welcomed an extraordinary pair of special guests for Ohlone Day— the Ohlone Sisters! Members of the Costanoan Rumsen Carmel tribe, Carla Marie & Desiree Munoz, were outstanding cultural bearers and teachers, immersing campers in song and teaching them Ohlone people's history and values. Campers got to learn words in the Rumsen language, understand how Ohlone people work in harmony with nature, and hear the beautiful sounds of Ohlone songs and instruments. We extend our warmest gratitude to the Ohlone Sisters for sharing their culture with us and captivating campers and camp staff alike.

Perhaps the most notable aspect of camp is our yearly-growing team of Habitat Heroes, a group of exemplary youth from grades 7-12, and usually former campers, who serve their community through leadership, teaching, and role modeling for Marsh-In Campers. Camp would not be possible at this scale without them. Thirteen Habitat Heroes, all past campers, joined us this year to help us engage students and ensure their safety and fun. On the virtual day of camp, they led breakout rooms of 10-12 campers, guiding them through the online games and interactive learning programs. Before camp, they participated in a weeklong training and helped the Summer Camp Team calibrate each day's activities to best-fit camper age groups and our schedule. They were also pivotal to in-person camp, as it was many younger campers' first time socially interacting with many peers or learning in an outdoor setting. This meant that summer camp was not without its share of challenges, and Habitat Heroes did a commendable job of reinforcing behavior guidelines and directing campers' energy toward

active learning and participation.

Run by my actual hero— get it?— and Environmental Education Specialist Tia Glagolev, the Habitat Heroes program has a special place in my heart. I remember asking for my first-ever letter of recommendation in sixth grade to send in my application to Tia and being ecstatic when I got in. I looked forward to camp every year because I got to pass on to my campers what I had learned as a camper myself—a love for wildlife conservation and environmental stewardship. My younger sister Micheline Ma graduated from the Habitat Heroes program this year—not without a tearful ceremony, see photo—and is planning on studying Environmental Science in college. Marsh-In Summer Camp and other programs that SFBWS & USFWS hosts are why my sister is choosing to pursue a career in conservation, and I became the Summer Camp Associate this year.

The urge to give back to the community and natural environments we owe so much to, contributes to the “positive feedback loop” with the Refuge's surrounding communities— returning campers, returning Habitat Heroes, and the work of amazing Staff that fosters a sense of belonging and duty in younger generations. Countless people besides us, including returning campers and Habitat Heroes, and other Habitat-Hero-turned-SFBWS staff before me, are all a testament to the impact cycle of the Refuge's environmental education programs. Micheline and I give eternal thanks to the dedicated educators and specialists who contributed to our love for protecting the beautiful habitats we live in, and we hope to give back to the next generation that will sustain the cycle.

As a former Habitat Hero who used to see only a fraction of what goes on behind the scenes of camp, I found the amount of sweat and tears (no blood, thankfully!) SFBWS and USFWS volunteers and Staff put into the summer camp program profoundly moving.



Campers saying goodbye at the end of our virtual camp day
(Makenna Ma)

Our youngest group of campers huddled around a watershed pollution simulation
(Makenna Ma)



2023 Hybrid Marsh-In Summer Camp (CONTINUED)

I had grown up admiring many adults who worked at the Refuge — namely Tia, my mentor since I was a sixth grader, and the amazing Olivia Poulos, our Interpretive Specialist who has coordinated all logistics of the past two camps, including this year's — but my experience working with them surpassed all my expectations. As we tackled community outreach, organization of six camper groups' rotating schedules, virtual and in-person camp curriculum, free transportation, and much, much more, I felt inspired every day by my colleagues' hard work and dedication to our campers,

Marsh-In Camp's legacy, and the communities we serve. Despite our feeling a bit rusty or not knowing what to expect, especially at a new site where we had never had camp before, our shared passion for environmental education, wildlife conservation, and community engagement shone through with each activity box we blew the dust off of and reminisced about. No matter the circumstance, we were steadfast and eventually succeeded in making camp exciting, educational, safe, accessible, and meaningful for all campers.



Ohlone Sisters leading a traditional song with the help of campers
(Makenna Ma)

An overview of camp rules
(Makenna Ma)



First-grade camper raising her fists in exhilaration on the group's first hike to the levee
(Makenna Ma)



Micheline Ma with Environmental Education Specialist Tia Glagolev
(Makenna Ma)



Campers, Habitat Heroes, and Staff posing at the end of the camp week
(Olivia Poulos)

Lovers of Nature

by Riya and Isha (a.k.a Da Potato Sisters)

Hello! Our names are Riya and Isha (otherwise known as Da Potato Sisters) and we love nature! We have always had a strong connection with nature, as we love to go on hikes and snorkel whenever we can, which got us inspired to make a podcast!

One of our main hobbies are volunteering at parks and doing trash pickups. Watching documentaries and listening to other podcasts has inspired us to start educating people about the wonders of our planet, such as “30 Animals That Made Us Smarter” and “Epic Adventures With Bertie Gregory”. Our podcast is called “[Exploring the World with Da Potato Sisters](#)” and in the podcast, we talk about animals and their unique habitats, from rocky ocean pools all the way to the muddy marshlands that are helping humans fight climate change.

Our podcast is aimed to raise awareness and hopefully connect kids like us with scientists who are actually experiencing changes, showing them that climate change is happening currently and is not an

issue that we can delay solving. It pains us to think that the animals that we love, like the fishes that look like Dory/Nemo, or the animal characters that you see/read in your favorite books are all being impacted. If we do not learn about these issues, people will not be able to solve them. When kids start learning, they will start caring. The hope is that the animals we love will be around in real life for generations to come and won’t turn into just some mythological creatures people will hear of from our elders. It is shocking to see that, in the few million years humans have been on Earth, the health of our planet has been on a steep downhill rate. Scientists say that this generation is the last generation that can do anything to stop or slow the impact of climate change.

The Da Potato Sisters hope that we can help more people our age to learn about animals, plants, and how we can save them. If everyone does their part to help the environment, we will speed up our progress on going on to have a sustainable future.



Da Potato Sisters
(Deepti Marella)



Da Potato Sisters at Earth Day
(Deepti Marella)

NEWS

Alviso Coastal Cleanup 2023

by Madison Cline, Interpretive, Restoration and Education Associate, SFBWS



The battle between litter and determined volunteers of the California Coastal Cleanup was a sight to behold! On Sunday, Sept. 24th, volunteers gathered at the Alviso Environmental Education Center (EEC) of the Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge to commemorate CA Coastal Cleanup Day. As cleanup site coordinators for Valley Water, the San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society, in partnership with US Fish and Wildlife staff, hosted these tenacious volunteers at the EEC. In the span of the 3 hour event, over 145 lbs of trash was collected! With spruced-up trails and refreshed water banks, local wildlife and visitors alike enjoyed the lovely results of the cleanup. The EEC continues to offer more habitat restoration opportunities for volunteers. Check out the Alviso site of the refuge at 1751 Grand Blvd. Alviso, CA 95002 and follow the EventBrite page: <https://donedwardssfbaynwr.eventbrite.com>

Nature Store Pop-up Openings for the Holidays

Do your gift shopping while supporting the National Wildlife Refuges! We have many T-shirts and hoodies, books, and stocking stuffers for the kids. Please stop by.



Water is Life
Sweatshirt



We Otter Protect
the Oceans Tee

Current plans are to open Sat, 10am-2pm on:

- Nov. 24 (Black Friday, but ours is Green)
- Nov. 25
- Dec. 2
- Dec. 16
- Maybe Dec. 23

Email: mary.deschene@sfbayws.org

Phone: (505) 417-2561

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
- Nature Store in Fremont Visitor Contact Station on weekends later this year (*see next page*)

Reach out to [Mary Deschene](mailto:Mary.Deschene@sfbayws.org) if you are interested!

FY24 SFBWS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cecilia (Ceal) Craig, PhD, F. SWE, President

Neil Butani, Vice-President

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Maddie Cline, Watershed Watchers & Restoration Associate

Aja Yee, Peninsula Programs & Restoration Education

Volunteer Positions Available With SFBWS



*Join a fun group of Refuge Volunteers
who share your passion!*

**San Francisco Bay
Wildlife Society**

come join us!
We Need
YOUR HELP

Nature Store Volunteer, Fremont, CA, 94555

- Manage Nature Store sales
- Trained to engage with Refuge visitors and respond to questions
- Weekend shifts
- Network & learn about the Refuge

**Please contact mary.deschene@sfbayws.org
for more information.**

**check out our
volunteer
description here**



Fremont Visitors' Center Nature Store Volunteer

- Key activities: greet visitors, answer questions, ring up sales
- Skills: Friendly and outgoing. Interested in outdoor recreation and wildlife preservation
- This position is suitable for high school students on up to retirees. Regular commitment preferred
- Get to know the Refuge people and issues, spread the word
- Help people find what they need, and learn about wildlife in the process
- Duties: opening and closing shifts, especially weekends

Nature Store Coordinator

- Same as above, but more focused on managing the volunteers, making sure shifts are filled, and maintaining the store and merchandise
- Responsibilities: more suitable for a mature adult. Retirees encouraged to apply
- Long-term commitment required

See ongoing SFBWS Volunteer Positions at
Volunteermatch.org

Contact: mary.deschene@sfbayws.org

Call or leave a message: 505-417-2561

Upcoming Events

Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Explore the Refuge and all it has to offer at one of our upcoming events across the Bay Area!

November BioBlitz

Sunday, November 19th from 10:00am-12:00pm

Alviso Unit, 1751 Grand Blvd, Alviso, CA 95002

Register: https://NovemberBioBlitz_DonEdwards.eventbrite.com



Twilight Marsh Walk

Saturday, December 2nd at 4pm

Fremont Unit, 1 Marshlands Rd, Fremont, CA 94555

Email: paul_mueller@fws.gov with any questions. Register:

https://TwilightMarshWalk_December.eventbrite.com



Lunch & Listen: Winter at the Refuge

Sunday, December 17th from 12:00pm-2:00pm

Alviso Unit, 1751 Grand Blvd, Alviso, CA 95002

Register: <https://WinterAtTheRefuge.eventbrite.com>



Twilight Marsh Walk

Saturday, January 20th at 4:15pm

Fremont Unit, 1 Marshlands Rd, Fremont, CA 94555

Email: paul_mueller@fws.gov with any questions. Register:

https://TwilightMarshWalk_January.eventbrite.com



Support Us With End-Of-Year Giving

Giving Tuesday

GIVING
TUESDAY

Your radical generosity pays off.

After you shop the Black Friday deals, join the movement and consider donating to local organizations that are making a difference in your community.

San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society is fundraising for:

- **Field Trip Bus Funds**
- **Environmental Education Programs**
- **Habitat Restoration & Research**
- **Annual Marsh-In Summer Camp**

The San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society has provided environmental education and interpretation activities to local communities and fostered a culture of stewardship for the San Francisco Bay NWR Complex for 35 years. Now more than ever, we need your help to continue our work.



In the spirit of giving this holiday season, transform your community by making a local impact.

San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society wants to wish you all a happy holidays. No matter what holiday you may celebrate, as we all gather this season we share the common values of gratitude, compassion, and giving.

SFBWS is grateful that we have continued to connect with our communities during these last few difficult years. For your holiday giving this year, we encourage everyone to "Think globally, and act locally." The San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society has been working with the community for over 35 years to preserve and protect national wildlife refuges in the Bay Area, and we hope you will help us continue this work.

Donate at <https://www.sfbayws.org/donate>

Join us at <https://www.sfbayws.org/join>

Thank you for your support!

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 July 1 through September 30, 2023.

Senior/Student (\$20)

Natalia Castañeda
Pat Gordon
Katheine Jarrett
Joyce Lewis
Eileen Menteer
Connie Simone

Individual (\$35)

Diane L Ciucci
Ann Dee Clemenza
Larence Rosenblum
Julianne Yeaman

Family (\$50)

Rachel Birkey
John B Bowers
Jamieson Family

Family (\$50) (continued)

Steven Skala
Stella Yang

Supporter (\$75)

Lisa Garza
John Lukas
Darlene Ceremello & Jessea
Greenman

Participant (\$100)

Lyle P Bickley
Loring G Dales
Dave Halsing
Gerry McChesney
Shirley Mae Skaredoff
Gerald Watanabe

Sponsor (\$250)

Kenneth & Dee Hines
Marge Kolar
Laurel Przybylski

Sustainer (\$500)

Donations

American Online Giving Foundation
Frederic H & Kirstin Nichols
Sally Lynette Smyth

**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.

<https://sfbayws.org/gift-membership>

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:

<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Student/Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200 Corporation
<input type="checkbox"/> \$35 Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Sponsor
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Sustainer
<input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Supporter	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Leader
<input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Participant	
<input type="checkbox"/> Check Enclosed	<input type="checkbox"/> Credit card payment, use PayPal at www.sfbayws.org/donate

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Thank you for your support!

For more than 35 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/>

