

Tide Rising

Fall 2024 Volume VI, Issue 1



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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Partnerships and Supporters

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- SFBWS, USFWS, Tamien Nation co-host US Rep. Ro Khanna's staff for retreat at EEC, discussing challenges and need for Refuge funding

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From the Field / Community Voices

- CORFA shirt reminds public of importance of their votes for wildlife
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- Young environmentalists consider seasonal changes in marshland, call on community to reduce pollution

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 SFBWS' Quarterly Newsletter!

San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society

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USFWS: Melisa Amato, Matt Brown

Community: Billy Roark, Da Potato Sisters

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Masthead: Earth Day Graphic (Olivia Poulos)

REFUGE WEEK EVENTS

Beginning Bird Watching: Instructions & Short Walk - Fremont (October 12, 9:30a-11:30a)

Creative Nature Journaling with Watercolor - Fremont (October 12, 10:15a-1:40p)

Flyway Trail Opening Celebration - Menlo Park (October 19, 10:00a-1:00p)

For Details and More Upcoming Activities, see pages 19-21

Partnerships and Supporters

Meet a Long-Term SFBWS Supporter and Partner: Brian Luce

by Cecilia (Ceal) D. Craig, PhD, President, SFBWS

This edition, I asked one of our long-term partners a couple of questions to share their ideas about why the work they support is important to them, professionally and and personally. **Partners are the lifeblood of our organization and we appreciate their support!**



Brian P. Luce, Cargill Salt, Land Management

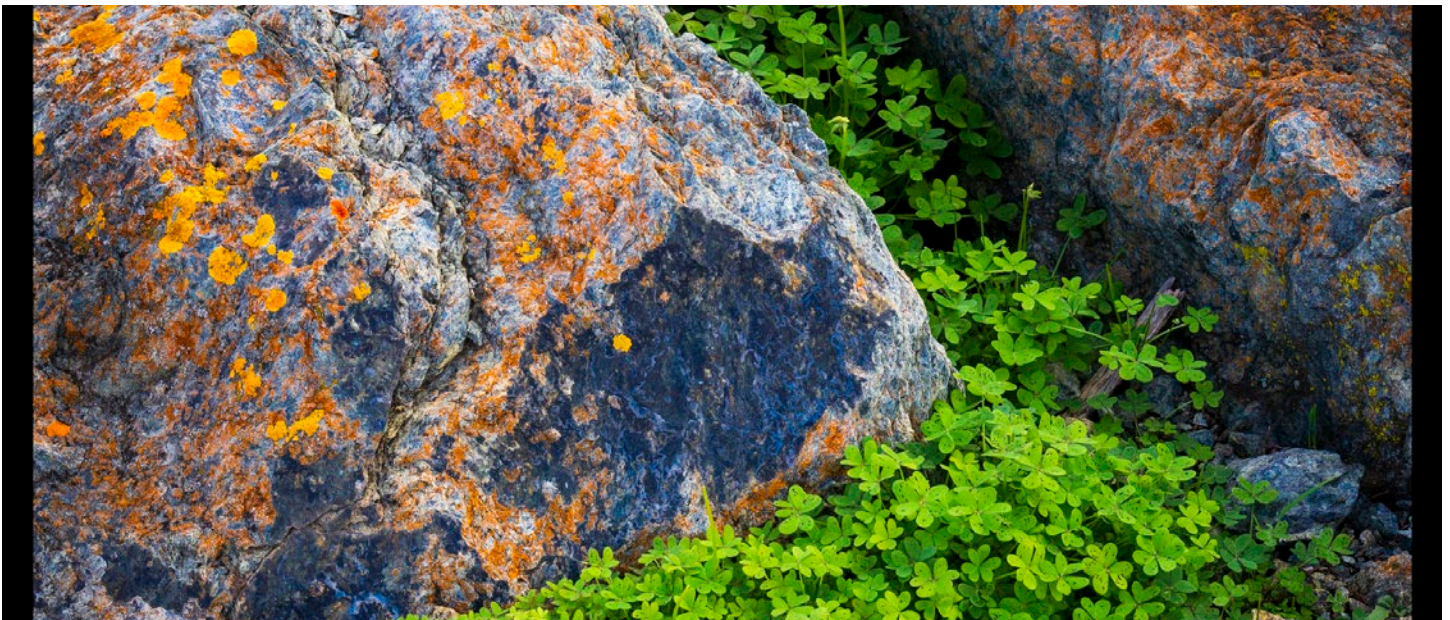
Why is the financial support your organization provides to SFBWS important?

Cargill's purpose to nourish the world in a safe, responsible, and sustainable way, leads our giving policies. It is important for us at Cargill Salt to support environmental causes in the community in which we operate. Environmental stewardship not only affects us as a business but also our employees who live and work in this area.

What is your story? What brought you into the world of environmental stewardship?

Cargill's story in the San Francisco Bay Area starts in the 70's after acquiring Leslie Salt Company, who had been the prevailing salt making company in the Bay Area for nearly a hundred years. The Cargill company has always had a keen interest in environmental stewardship as one of the largest agricultural companies in the country.

On a personal note, as a Bay Area native, I have been tied to this area all my life. I've been to every beach, swam in the bay, hiked in the hills, volunteered at Ano Nuevo State Park, and was educated at UC Santa Cruz. This is my home and I want to keep it safe and healthy for myself, my family, and those that come after me.



Clovers and Rocks at DESFBNWR on Sept. 24, 2024
(Ambarish Goswami)

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

Latino Conservation Week at Salinas River NWR

by Matt Brown, Complex Manager, San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex, USFWS

On Saturday, September 21st, the community came together to celebrate Latino Conservation Week at Salinas River National Wildlife Refuge. Refuge Staff worked with numerous conservation and community groups to highlight the resources of Salinas River NWR, and to help raise awareness of the Refuge in nearby Castroville and across Monterey County.

Food, music and activities were provided by numerous partners at the event including Saved by Nature, Visionary Arts, Big Sur Land Trust, the Hispanic Access Foundation and the Bureau of Land Management. The event also coincided with California

Coastal Clean-up Day, with local school groups joining in the festivities to pick up garbage along the beach and on refuge trails.

The cloudy skies didn't dampen any spirits that morning - as fishermen celebrated their Striped Bass catches on the beach, the laughter of volunteers pulling invasive weeds in the sand dunes floated over the sand. "It is amazing to see how many people came out today to demonstrate their love for this place," said Complex Manager Matt Brown, "Salinas River NWR really is a asset to the community!"



Event Outline
(USFWS)



Partners come together to celebrate Latino Conservation Week at Salinas River NWR
(USFWS)



Refuge Manager Diane Kodama leading a tour of Salinas River NWR
(USFWS)

"It is amazing to see how many people came out today to demonstrate their love for this place. Salinas River NWR really is a asset to the community!"

- Matt Brown, Complex Manager, San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex, USFWS

Perfect Partnership: East Bay Delta Waterfowl Rebuilding Blinds at Don Edwards

by Billy Roark, East Bay Waterfowl & Melisa Amato, Refuge Manager

Waterfowl hunting is an important wildlife-oriented recreational activity at Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, which occurs from late-September to early-February each year. Hunting occurred on this land years before it was a national wildlife refuge dating back to when the Ohlone and Miwok people relied on hunting for recreation and survival.

Today, the Refuge has more than 10,000 acres of tidal areas and salt ponds that are open to waterfowl hunting. Several of the ponds contain roughly 47 duck blinds that require regular maintenance to be safe and huntable. Because of declining US Fish and Wildlife Service budgets and staff, the Refuge does not have the resources necessary to perform the needed maintenance. However, we have wonderful volunteers who are willing to spend their time and money; and use their own equipment and gear, to help us make these blinds safe for all hunters.

One of those volunteers is Billy Roark, a native South Bay resident and a volunteer for the East Bay Chapter of the Delta Waterfowl Organization – the duck hunters’ organization that traces its roots as a premiere waterfowl conservation organization back to 1911. The East Bay Chapter of the Delta Waterfowl Organization had its inaugural banquet in May of 2024 drawing in

members, volunteers, supporters, and their friends and families. A portion of the banquet proceeds went directly into the Waterfowl Heritage Funds, which are funds that can be spent on local projects to improve habitat, nesting boxes, levee maintenance, and duck blinds amongst countless other opportunities to improve their goal of 1 million ducks.

Billy Roark has hunted Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge ponds for nearly 4 decades and his passion for the Refuge led him to propose a blind maintenance, rebuild of the ADA blind and 2 new blinds to his fellow Delta Volunteers. The Bay Area being rich in history of waterfowling made this local conservation group a perfect partnership to meet the Refuge’s need for blind improvements. The proposal was accepted by the Delta Waterfowl Board of Supervisors after creating a relationship with Refuge managers and staff. The Delta Waterfowl crew of volunteers got to work using their Waterfowl Heritage Funds on materials for this project. In August and September 2024, staff from the Refuge and Delta Waterfowl volunteers got to work and finished the ADA blind and 2 total new blinds for this public hunting space. If you would like more information about the Delta Waterfowl Organization, go to: <https://deltawaterfowl.org/> or you can contact Brock Gardner at brock.eastbaydw@gmail.com.



Members of Delta Waterfowl Rebuilding Blinds
(Delta Waterfowl)

Advocacy and Collaboration Efforts at Don Edwards SFB NWR

by Ceal Craig, President, and Mary Deschene, Program Administrator, SFBWS

A warm summer July day to share the challenges facing the DESFB NWR, capped off by a visit to the Drawbridge viewpoint by van, those were the highlights of the visit orchestrated by San Francisco Bay Joint Venture (SFBJV). From SFBJV, Nikki Roach, PhD (Policy & Communications Coordinator) and Kelli McCune led the collaborative team. Working with US FWS, The Tamien Nation, and the San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society, we all hosted U.S. Representative

Ro Khanna's local and Washington D. C. staff for their retreat in San Jose, Alviso, at the Environmental Education Center (EEC). After briefly describing each organization's mission, responsibilities, and impact, we went out to the Drawbridge viewpoint in vans. This required working with the Army Corps of Engineers and the contractors building the raised levee on the south side of A16, to gain safe access to get to this lovely spot about 3 miles north of the EEC.



Engaged and passionate advocates for the Refuge
(SFBJV)

For the Society, Mary Deschene (Program Administrator), Ravi Kohli (BOD Director), and Ceal Craig (BOD President) answered questions and discussed how the challenges of declining FWS staff funding are affecting our ability to deliver programs and support the Refuge.

SFBJV shared the history of sixteen plus years of underfunding the Refuge system and how this continued situation is having severe impacts. See the

insert on next page for an overview. Thank you to SFBJV for developing this important message for us all.

USFWS talked opportunities for building an improved EEC and what was in the EEC's future.

The Tamien Nation representatives described their deep connection to the land and how we need to think of what the land does for us all.

“Sixteen plus years of underfunding the Refuge system [...] is having severe impacts.”

- Ceal Craig, President, and Mary Deschene, Program Administrator, San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society



Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge

A vision toward a better future

The National Wildlife Refuge system is the largest mosaic of public lands and waters in the world, specifically tasked with protecting our nation's wildlife under changing environmental conditions.

Benefits

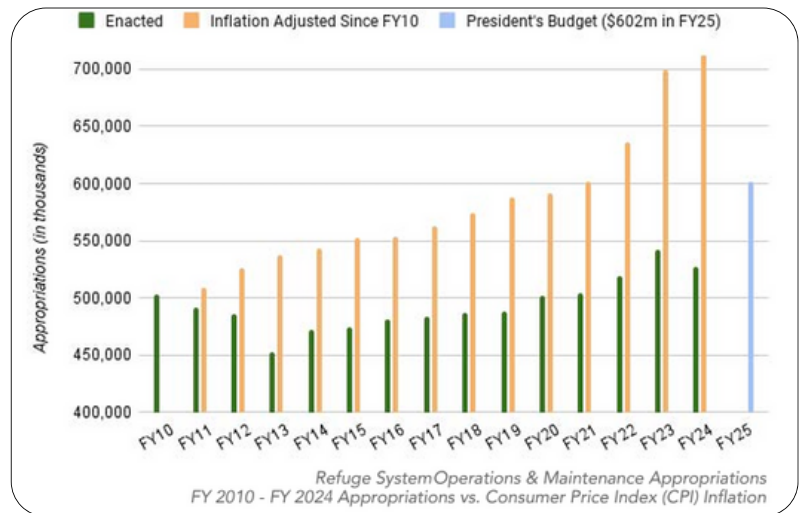
- Endangered species protection
- Mitigate climate change impacts (sea level rise & flooding)
- Further environmental justice through community partnerships

Challenges

- The NWR has inadequate resources to manage public lands and services, ultimately hurting the communities they serve

Opportunities

- Appropriate \$602.3M to the NWR System in FY 2025
- Update the Environmental Education Center at Alviso



Credit: National Wildlife Refuge Association



Reimagined Environmental Education Center at Alviso (US Army Corps & USFWS)

*This publication was funded by SFBJV non-federal partner contributions.

Advocacy and Collaboration Efforts at Don Edwards SFB NWR (continued)

Ceal Craig, resident Drawbridge expert, shared stories and history about the historical area, and how to think of it as a lesson on human impact on the marsh. She described how it is sinking into the marsh to ultimately benefit the endangered and threatened species on the Refuge.

Birds and soft breezes surrounded the South Bay communities, giving each of us who were there a measure of solace and inspiration for why we advocate

for these lands and the wildlife that inhabits them.

Sharing the needs for Refuge funding and advocating for those funds is an important part of the Society's mission. We appreciate the leadership and drive of the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture group to make this event happen. If you want to voice your support for Refuge funding, please contact your US Senators and Representatives.



Tamien Nation members sharing their love and deep history with this land
(SFBJV)



Chris Barr (FWS), Ceal Craig & Mary Deschene explaining facts and sharing stories about Drawbridge and the Refuge.
(SFBJV)



White pelicans on north side of pond A17
(Ceal Craig)



Drawbridge building from viewpoint
(Ceal Craig)

SFBWS Quarterly Column

by Cecilia (Ceal) D. Craig, PhD, President, SFBWS

Where has the summer gone? For me, the summer focus has been the Nature Store in Fremont at the Visitor Contact Station for Don Edwards San Francisco Bay NWR, that and applying for grants, supporting CORFA's Friends Share monthly Zoom calls, and preparing for SFBWS to pick up Volunteer Coordination at the Complex after Paul Mueller, long time USFWS Volunteer Coordinator for the Complex retired in September. If you are interested in volunteering (from a few hours for specific activity to being a program docent), please complete this Google Form:

<https://forms.gle/YHgow2R4KKkzwTyJ9>

Fremont Visitor Contact Station

Volunteers have been keeping the Visitor Contact Station open on Saturdays and several Sundays. We have greeted many people from around Fremont and from far-off countries. I remember visitors from the East Coast and from the Netherlands and Germany. We have added new items to the store (hats!!), and are looking at adding more, including nature-themed jewelry, tee-shirts, and a new birding book or two. **Big shout out** to Nature Store volunteers: Ian, Nathan, Aneri, Quynh, Karen, Arnav, and Neels.

Advocacy

In mid-July, SFBWS and FWS along with representatives from the Tamien Nation hosted staff members from local and Washington DC offices of Ro Khanna. We all shared why funding was important to be able to support the Refuge mission and protect endangered species on the Refuge. Our focus was primarily on DESFB NWR. See a separate article about this event.

Nationwide Friends Group Support

Since early 2024, I've volunteered on a team made of members of CORFA: Coalition of Refuge Friends and Advocates. As part of a team of ten from across the United States, we have organized and hosted monthly open Zoom calls since April: Friends Share. The idea is to foster connections, share problems and successes with each other, and learn things. Breakout room topics have included advocacy, member development, governance, fund raising, nature stores, membership engagement, partnerships, remote refuges, feeling effects of FWS staffing shortages, and every month an OPEN session. We encourage you to join these sessions - they are not limited to BOD members. Learn about other Refuges, learn things.

Learn more and join yourself at :

<https://coalitionofrefugefriends.com/>

On the Trail

With most of my focus in Fremont and inside the VCS, not too many "On the Trail" photos from me. Only two. Humpback whale watching in Pacifica: I saw whales, but no good photos, only one of a Brown Pelican in flight. The other photo is of the truly incredible and unobstructed view of the Golden Gate Bridge from **Tunnel Tops**, an area in the *Presidio National Park*. If you have not visited it yet (it opened the summer of 2022), you need to go. Bring your visitors there! I stayed at the Presidio Lodge with unobstructed view of the bridge from my window. Special visit. The NP has outstanding informative and thought provoking Visitor Center as well, as a place just to view the inspiring views we have living in the Bay Area.



Brown Pelican at Pacifica, July 2024
(Ceal Craig)



Golden Gate Bridge from Tunnel Tops
(Ceal Craig)

Get Out the Vote for Wildlife - Your Vote is Their Voice

by Mary Deschene, Program Administrator, SFBWS



From: Birds of Don Edwards
(USFWS)

The Coalition of Refuge Friends and Advocates presented a T-shirt design and this message to share among Refuge and Wildlife advocates, to help the public remember how important their votes are for wildlife. To research how your members of congress support wildlife conservation, you can look on websites such as the League of Conservation Voters. Here is the full CORFA messaging campaign link:

<https://coalitionofrefugefriends.com/resource-center/get-out-the-vote-2024-a-friends-messaging-campaign/>



Vote as if your WILDLIFE depended on it.
You can order this T-shirt in several colors and styles
at: <https://www.bonfire.com/store/corfa/>

(The Flying Birds Checkmark V is a CORFA Design)



Blue Checkmark - SUPPORT
Die cut stickers



GOTV MAIN
Square stickers

Stickers
*(Coalition of Refuge Friends and Advocates,
coalitionofrefugefriends.com)*

Watershed Watchers Corner

by Sirena Lao, Interpretive Specialist & Watershed Watchers Coordinator, SFBWS

This summer marked the beginning of another year of Watershed Watchers programs funded by the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Prevention Program, a stormwater management association of 15 public agencies in the Santa Clara Valley. Through our programs, we educate communities about the importance of keeping our watersheds clean to help protect the Refuge and our wildlife. Last year, we served over 3,200 people with our outreach, education, and volunteer programs, and we are looking forward to continuing our momentum!

Despite the heat we've experienced this summer, we have continued to keep ourselves busy with educational programs, field trips for groups, and volunteer events. One highlight was bringing back some of our docent-led programs to the Environmental Education Center;

long-time USFWS volunteers Laurel Stell and Larry Rosenblum gave wonderful presentations and walks. Another highlight included our partnerships, both ongoing and new. We continued our partnership with Saved by Nature to serve the Boys & Girls Club of Silicon Valley; partnered with Santa Clara County Parks to host field trips for the American Association of University Women's Tech Trek, a summer camp for 8th grade girls interested in science and technology; and worked with Santa Clara Valley Bird Alliance (formerly known as Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society) to table at their first Young Birders Club Festival and to host a shorebird program. Of course, the cornerstone of our summer programs is Marsh-in Summer Camp, which you can read more about in Danielle McCormick's article!



Participants enjoying a twilight walk on the New Chicago Marsh boardwalk led by volunteer Larry Rosenblum
(Sirena Lao)



Laurel Stell giving a presentation about the importance of tides in the EEC Pavilion
(Sirena Lao)

This fall, we are looking forward to hosting more public programs (see the list of upcoming events!), field trips for several local colleges, and much more.

If you'd like to get involved, contact us at:
watershedwatchers@sfbayws.org

"Last year, we served over 3,200 people with our outreach, education, and volunteer programs, and we are looking forward to continuing our momentum!"

- Sirena Lao, Interpretive Specialist and Watershed Watchers Coordinator, SFBWS

Marsh-In Summer Camp

by Danielle McCormick, Summer Camp & Programs Associate, SFBWS

This year, I had the privilege of leading Marsh-In Summer Camp at the Fremont unit of Don Edwards SF Bay NWR. I joined SFBWS after having gained volunteer and educational experience with USFWS and California State Parks, as well as having worked for the East Bay Regional Park District, and I recently graduated with a degree in Forestry and Wildlife Conservation from Penn Foster College. It was this combined experience and enthusiasm for teaching that was the driving force behind building a comprehensive and exciting curriculum for this year's campers. Prior to camp, the Summer Camp team worked together to provide an online At-Home Activities packet that had an abundance of inclusive activities and science experiments to get campers excited for the upcoming week. These materials were also made available to families that were on the waitlist and it was posted

via a link on the SFBWS website for public access for families in the community to enjoy together.

During camp, students joined in on an array of activities that were chosen and designed to engage them through interactive means. This included crafts like the Bird Book, that campers were able to make themselves and then use as a guide on their Bird Walk around LaRiviere Marsh. For older students, they enjoyed making and personalizing nature journals that could be used long after camp whenever they go exploring. Other camper favorites included the Salmon Obstacle Course, as well as the Plankton Lab. All of our campers were thrilled to have a wonderful and educational presentation and craft provided by the Tamien Nation on the last day, as well as receiving their annual camp shirts and certificates.



Bird Books
(Danielle McCormick)



Predator-Prey Game
(Danielle McCormick)



Day 2 Plankton collection
(Aidona Kakouros)



Day 3 Tamien Nation presentation
(Sirena Lao)

Working as a team with Tia Glagolev, Ann Spainhower, Sirena Lao, Leila Inocentes, and other fantastic adult volunteers and USFWS staff, I was proud to provide another year of exciting experiences and create lifelong memories for our campers and Habitat Heroes. The goal of Marsh-In Summer Camp

is to encourage and inspire the next generation of young minds to grow up with a passion for science, conservation, and environmental activism. With the continued support of Cargill and our local communities, we hope to see this wonderful program keep going for decades to come.

Fall Calving and Grazing at the Warm Springs Unit, Don Edwards SFBNWR

by Armando J Valencia, Wildlife Biology Associate, SFBWS

If you get a chance to pass by the Warm Springs Unit, you might see some small animals running across the landscape in the distance. This is because many of our mother cows have just given birth to young calves, with the fall calving season typically beginning around September. At the refuge, grazing

is more than just a livestock practice, it's an essential tool for maintaining the health of sensitive ecosystems, particularly the vernal pool grasslands. A key factor in managing grazing here is the timing of calving, which has a significant impact on both livestock productivity and the surrounding environment.



Grazing Calves
(Armando Valencia, SFBWS)

Cow-calf operations dominate California's rangelands, with ranchers often making decisions based on the available forage throughout the year (Huntsinger et al. 2007). In California, many ranchers choose fall calving over spring calving, and there's a good reason for that. The Mediterranean climate, marked by cool, wet winters and dry summers, naturally stimulates a surge in forage growth during the fall and winter. Fall calving aligns perfectly with this cycle, providing nursing cows and their calves access to fresh, nutrient-rich forage during the crucial early lactation period, when their nutritional needs are highest. It also helps cattle avoid the challenges of

heat stress that can reduce milk production and hinder calf growth during the summer months (George et al. 2020).

On the other hand, spring calving is more commonly practiced in areas where forage is plentiful in late spring and summer, but this system isn't as well-suited for California's coastal regions (George et al. 2020). The dry summer conditions here limit the availability of fresh forage, making fall calving the more sustainable option for ranchers and cattle alike.

(continued on next page)

Fall Calving and Grazing at the Warm Springs Unit, Don Edwards SFBNWR (CONT.)

Grazing doesn't just support livestock and give us adorable calves to admire, but it also plays a vital role in maintaining the ecological health of vernal pool grasslands. These unique ecosystems, home to a wide variety of native plant and animal species, are highly vulnerable to invasive species and the buildup of thatch, a thick layer of dead grass that can smother delicate vernal pool habitats in the absence of grazers.

When properly managed, grazing mimics the natural disturbances that ecosystems have historically adapted to, particularly from animals like elk and other ruminants displaced by Spanish and European settlement (Kleppel et al. 2022). The hoofprints of grazing cattle create small depressions in the soil, which help retain water, creating ideal microhabitats for vernal pool species (Michaels et al. 2021). At the Warm Springs Unit, this type of grazing management is part of a regenerative approach, where cattle help maintain balance by keeping invasive species in check and ensuring that the ecosystem continues to support a diverse array of plants and animals.

Without the beneficial disturbances created by livestock grazing, invasive grasses often take over,

crowding out native species. Research shows that excluding grazing can lead to a rapid decline in biodiversity. Jaymee Marty (2015) found that after ten years of grazing exclusion in vernal pool grasslands, native plant cover significantly decreased, and the pools themselves held water for shorter periods—conditions that negatively impact native wildlife and plants adapted to longer inundation periods (Marty 2015). A similar experimental study conducted at Warm Springs that compared pool areas excluded from grazing with those open to grazing strongly demonstrates the positive effect of grazing on endemic vernal pool species, supporting grazing as a vital practice in maintaining the health of coastal vernal pools.

So, next time you spot a fluffy calf, remember they're not just cute, they're part of a much bigger picture of ecosystem care! At the Warm Springs complex, grazing isn't just about raising healthy cows; it's about keeping our delicate vernal pools thriving too. By letting cattle do what they do best (munching on grasses and trampling the ground) at the right intensity, we're giving our flora and fauna a little boost to stay balanced.

"[...] grazing is more than just a livestock practice, it's an essential tool for maintaining the health of sensitive ecosystems, particularly the vernal pool grasslands."

- Armando J Valencia, Wildlife Biology Associate, SFBWS

Citations:

George, M., Frost, W., & McDougald, N. (2020). *Ecology and Management of Annual Rangelands Series: Grazing Management*.

Huntsinger, L., Bartolome, J.W., & D'Antonio, C.M. (2007). *Grazing Management of California Grasslands*. In *Ecology and Management of California Grasslands*. University of California Press.

Marty, J.T. (2015). *Loss of biodiversity and hydrologic function in seasonal wetlands persists over 10 years of livestock grazing removal*. *Restoration Ecology*, 23(5), 548-554. [6](#).

Michaels, J.S., Tate, K.W., & Eviner, V.T. (2021). *Vernal Pool Wetlands Respond to Livestock Grazing Exclusion and Reintroduction*. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 59, 67-78.

Kleppel, Gary S., & Frank, Douglas A. (2022). *Structure and functioning of wild and agricultural grazing ecosystems: A comparative review*. *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 6, 945514.

Youth Perspectives

by Da Potato Sisters

Riya's Column

As the summer season gives in to the upcoming fall, the changes in the marshland make subtle changes at first to accommodate, then rapidly change to adapt for the upcoming fall. Quite noticeably, many migrating birds, such as sandpipers and egrets stop to feed and rest at the Don Edwards Marshland, and other neighboring marshes along the Pacific flyway. Species adapt their food too, now leaning upon detritus to make their fill. Less identifiable though, are the thousands of pickleweed, cordgrass, and other plants of the marshes gathering nutrients to survive the upcoming fall and winter, and falling into a state of dormancy (also known as slowed down growth). Soon enough, the marshland will change from its lush, alive appearance to a more browner one, as the evidence of summer slowly goes away. Chemical changes in the marsh are gradual, and salinity levels decrease as rain quantity increases with temperature, after the rapid rise from summer. After the rains from winter mix with the saltiness of the ocean water, this creates an ideal place for marine life such as sharks and fish to start their reproductive cycles. Overall, the Don Edwards Marshland is quickly changing to accommodate the upcoming fall season, but how will climate change be impacting these cycles?

Isha's Column

Hello! My name is Isha and I'm in 4th grade. Today I am here to educate you on pollution. Some people have heard about pollution in newspapers, articles like these, and even in books! Everyone has seen pollution whether it is on the sidewalk or in marshlands like Don Edwards. There are many types of pollution such as sound pollution and even air pollution. To reduce pollution, we can pick up trash when we go for a walk or by following the three R's: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. You can also do small things like turning off the lights when you don't need them, or being mindful of what you are throwing away. I hope everyone who is reading this contributes to saving the world.

“Overall, the Don Edwards Marshland[s] [are] quickly changing to accommodate the upcoming fall season, but how will climate change be impacting these cycles?”

- Riya

NEWS

SFBWS Staff Transitions



Danielle McCormick leading an introduction for Marsh-in Summer Camp participants (Sirena Lao)

Danielle McCormick completed her term as the Summer Camp and Programs Associate. She helped put together a tremendously successful Marsh-In Summer Camp and followed it up with a wonderful Stewardship Sunday volunteer event at Refuge Headquarters in Fremont. Her hard work this summer made a positive impact on so many families, undoubtedly helping foster the next generation of environmental stewards!



Madison Cline holding a plant to be transplanted during a volunteer work day (Miguel Marquez)

Madison Cline recently wrapped up her role as the Restoration, Education, and Interpretive Associate with SFBWS. For the last two years, she has been instrumental in helping us put on successful programs and volunteer events at all of our locations at the Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Her growth as a leader helped us navigate transitions in the Watershed Watchers program, and her enthusiasm for nature (especially plants) reached thousands of people in her time with us!

Paul Mueller, FWS Volunteer Coordinator, Retires

by Ceal Craig (long-term FWS Volunteer)



Paul Mueller (Ceal Craig)

Sadly for us, but so happy for him, Paul Mueller retired in September. We celebrated with him on Thursday, October 3, to wish him all the best in his next chapter. Paul's deep sense of caring for Refuges and all they provide was part of his every waking moment. Always willing to lend a hand, a smiling face, and helpful approach, inspired many volunteers to support the Refuges.

Paul has been with us for over 15 years. I remember him first from the *Sloughs News*, a newsletter for volunteers at the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex. This publication that he largely wrote shared upcoming opportunities and helped us feel valued. I think the last edition was March - May 2020. During the coronavirus epidemic times, we didn't have in-person programs and volunteering opportunities became more limited. This edition came out just as those gates and limits went in place for us all. Then as things started opening up, the Society began working with FWS to open up the Visitor Contact Station in Fremont, at least on Saturdays. And with Paul's help, we've been doing that, in particular, this past summer.

Paul began his Federal career in the National Park Service, in particular at Lowell National Historical Park in Massachusetts and also Mt. Rainier NP. He then joined our Complex as the Volunteer Coordinator.

In his recent retirement party, people described Paul as kind, caring, and supportive. A story teller, and always willing to help or share the load. Ken, a volunteer, "appreciated Paul putting up with his sea stories", thanking him for his years of service. Several of his FWS colleagues mentioned some shared beer and pizza time, and that Paul was an expert at flavor nuances in beers and coffees, often bringing coffee to them to start their day. Winnie thanked Paul for coordinating the many Coastal Cleanup events. SFBWS gave Paul some Nature Store items to remind him about us in his new digs in the Santa Cruz area. We wish him all the best, with gratitude for all he did for us.

NEWS (CONTINUED)

New Ravenswood Trail Opening October 19

On October 19th, the Refuge will be opening a new public use trail adjacent to Bedwell Bayfront Park in Menlo Park at 10am (flyer attached). USFWS is excited to be engaging with our community in a day of fun, food, wildlife viewing and partner led outdoor adventures!

The event will start with a celebratory opening and ribbon cutting event, with remarks from community leaders, for the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project's recently completed public access trail and viewing area in the Ravenswood Ponds. There will be a short program with a few brief remarks from key contributors, followed by activities, games, tours, etc., lasting until 1:00. As part of the program, we'll do an unveiling of newly installed informational signs. Then photo-ops, tours, and games and such will start.

We are inviting our partners and other local groups (mostly but not entirely non-profits) to participate by tabling at the event, to give out info, recruit volunteers or donors, and set up and run activities, demonstrations, or games for the attendees.

Nature Store Corner

The Refuge Visitor Center and SFBWS Nature Store at 2 Marshlands Road in Fremont is open from 10am-2pm Saturdays, and on Sundays when we have sufficient volunteers to maintain these hours.

We have some new items: Ridgways Rail Refuge Complex Hats, in two styles.

If you would like to volunteer at the Fremont Nature Store and Visitor Center, go to volunteermatch.org and search for Fremont Nature Store to sign up. See our ad on pg. 18.



Ridgways Rail hats designed by Kathy Kleinsteiber (SFBWS)

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 page 18)
- Donor / Member Management (see page 18)

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

FY24 SFBWS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Trail Opening Celebration

**OCTOBER 19, 2024
10:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.**

Don Edwards SF Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Help us celebrate the opening of the new Flyway Trail and Viewing Area!

Join us for a day of fun, wildlife viewing, and outdoor adventures!

Light breakfast snacks and beverages will be provided.

Lunchtime food and drinks will be available for purchase.



Cris Benton photo



Location: Flyway Trail viewing area adjacent to Bedwell Bayfront Park and off of the Bayfront Expy.

SCAN FOR MORE INFO



CONTACT US AT: SFBAYNWRC@FWS.GOV

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 volunteer@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 Volunteer Coordinator

- Same as the Volunteer role, 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](https://www.volunteermatch.org)

Contact: volunteer@sfbayws.org

Call or leave a message: 505-417-2561

ACTIVITIES ON THE REFUGE

Join us for free public events at the Refuge!
Check out the links to learn more and register.

OCTOBER EVENTS (Including Refuge Week)

Twilight Marsh Walk - Fremont

Saturday, October 5, 5:45pm - 7:30pm

Experience the salt marsh at twilight on an easy stroll along refuge trails (about 0.6 miles).

<https://TwilightMarshWalkOct2024.eventbrite.com>

History of Drawbridge, the Bay Area's Ghost Town - Alviso

Friday, October 11, 5:00pm - 6:30pm

Dive into the fascinating history of Drawbridge and then take a short stroll along the marsh at sunset.

<https://Drawbridge2024.eventbrite.com>

Beginning Bird Watching: Instructions & Short Walk - Fremont

Saturday, October 12, 9:30am - 11:00am

Learn about birds, what to look for, why they are important to humans and the environment, and take a short walk.

<https://BeginningBirdingOct2024.eventbrite.com>

Creative Nature Journaling with Watercolor - Fremont

Saturday, October 12, 10:15am - 1:40pm (drop during this time after registering)

Love nature and being creative? Join us at the VCS (Fremont) for a relaxing watercolor program. Be inspired by the beauty of nature.

<https://NatureJournalingOctVCSevent.eventbrite.com>

Flyway Trail Opening Celebration - Menlo Park

Saturday, October 19, 10:00am - 1:00pm

Celebrate the opening of the new Flyway Trail and Viewing Area with a day of fun, wildlife viewing, and outdoor adventures.

<https://RavenswoodTrailOpening.eventbrite.com>

Spooky Story Walk: Detective Bailey the Bat - Alviso

Friday, October 25, 4:30pm - 6:30pm

Explore the trails around the Environmental Education Center while reading an interactive story. This story and its activities are fun for all ages, and costumes are encouraged!

<https://SpookyStoryWalk2024.eventbrite.com>

NOVEMBER EVENTS

Discover the Flyway Trail - Menlo Park

Saturday, November 2, 9:00am - 11:00am

Join Park Rangers for a walk along the New Flyway Trail! Discover wildlife from a 360 degree view at the Ravenswood Unit of the Don Edwards SF Bay NWR.

<https://FlywayTrail-Nov2024.eventbrite.com>

Twilight Marsh Walk - Fremont

Saturday, November 2, 5:00pm - 6:45pm

Experience the salt marsh at twilight on an easy stroll along refuge trails (about 0.6 miles).

<https://TwilightMarshWalkNov2024.eventbrite.com>

Habitat Restoration Volunteer Work Day - Alviso

Sunday, November 3, 9:30am - 12:00pm

Help us improve the trails around the EEC through habitat restoration or other stewardship activities.

<https://EECVolunteerDay110324.eventbrite.com>

Native Seed Ball Workshop - Alviso

Sunday, November 17, 10:30am - 12:00pm

Create seed balls with native wildflower seeds that you can take home or plant in the Butterfly Garden.

<https://SeedBallWorkshop.eventbrite.com>

Beginning Bird Watching: Instructions & Short Walk - Fremont

Sunday, November 17, 9:30am - 11:00am

Learn about birds, what to look for, why they are important, and take a short walk.

<https://BegBirdWatching-NovVCSEvent.eventbrite.com>

ACTIVITIES ON THE REFUGE (CONTINUED)

Bird Walk at Pond SF2 - Menlo Park

Saturday, November 23, 10:00am - 11:30am

Join a leisurely 1.4 mile stroll to learn about resident and migratory bird species and the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project.

<https://SF2BirdWalk-Nov.eventbrite.com>

Habitat Restoration Volunteer Work Day - Alviso

Sunday, November 24, 9:30am - 12:00pm

Help us improve the trails around the EEC through habitat restoration or other stewardship.

<https://EECVolunteerDay112424.eventbrite.com>

DECEMBER EVENTS

Creative Nature Journaling with Watercolor

Saturday, December 7, 10:15am - 1:40pm (drop during this time after registering)

Love nature and being creative? Join us at the VCS (Fremont) for a relaxing watercolor program. Be inspired by the beauty of nature.

<https://NatureJournalingDecVCSEvent.eventbrite.com>

Habitat Restoration Volunteer Work Day - Alviso

Sunday, December 8, 9:30am - 12:00pm

Help us improve the trails around the EEC through habitat restoration or other stewardship.

<https://EECVolunteerDayDec2024.eventbrite.com>

Twilight Marsh Walk - Fremont

Saturday, December 14, 4:00pm - 5:45pm

Experience the salt marsh at twilight on an easy stroll along refuge trails (about 0.6 miles).

<https://TwilightMarshWalkDec2024.eventbrite.com>

Discover the Flyway Trail - Menlo Park

Sunday, December 15, 9:00am - 11:00am

Join Park Rangers for a walk along the New Flyway Trail! Discover wildlife from a 360 degree view at the Ravenswood Unit of the Don Edwards SF Bay NWR.

<https://FlywayTrail-Dec2024.eventbrite.com>

Bird Walk at Pond SF2 - Menlo Park

Sunday, December 15, 2:30pm - 4:00pm

Join a leisurely 1.4 mile stroll to learn about resident and migratory bird species and the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project.

<https://SF2BirdWalk-Dec.eventbrite.com>

REFUGE WEEK EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Beginning Bird Watching: Instructions & Short Walk - Fremont

Saturday, October 12, 9:30am - 11:00am

Learn about birds, what to look for, why they are important to humans & the environment, and take a short walk.

<https://BeginningBirdingOct2024.eventbrite.com>

Creative Nature Journaling with Watercolor - Fremont

Saturday, October 12, 10:15am - 1:40pm (drop during this time after registering)

Love nature and being creative? Join us at the VCS (Fremont) for a relaxing watercolor program. Be inspired by the beauty of nature.

<https://NatureJournalingOctVCSevent.eventbrite.com>

Flyway Trail Opening Celebration - Menlo Park

Saturday, October 19, 10:00am - 1:00pm

Celebrate the opening of the new Flyway Trail and Viewing Area with a day of fun, wildlife viewing, and outdoor adventures.

<https://RavenswoodTrailOpening.eventbrite.com>

OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS

ADVENTURES FOR OLDER ADULTS 50+

Hosted by



Registration is required. Please use this link <https://www.bayareaolderadults.org/october> for more details and to register.

The Fauna and Flora of Anderson Lake October 9, 2024

During the 2017 California floods, Anderson reservoir reached 104% of its capacity and flowed over the spillway into Coyote Creek, which overflowed and flooded five San Jose neighborhoods. The Anderson dam is undergoing a \$1.2B seismic retrofit expected to be completed by 2032. As we take a leisurely 2.5-mile walk, we will learn about how this affects the wildlife on this expert-led walk. Transportation and lunch are provided.

Lake Walk & Guided Tour of the Ranch at JD Grant Park October 18, 2024

Travel along trails past two lakes to observe and learn about shorebirds and the history of Santa Clara County's largest regional park. Along the way, our

expert guide will teach us about the history of this area. BONUS: After lunch, we will take a guided tour of the historic ranch house. This is an easy-to-moderate 3-mile walk. Transportation and lunch are provided.

Fall Colors & Birds Along Stevens Creek October 23, 2024

As we take a leisurely 2-mile walk along Stevens Creek our expert Audubon Society guide will help us identify wildlife supported by this watershed. We will stop halfway to have a picnic lunch near Stevens Creek before heading back. Lunch is provided.

Overfelt Garden Cleanup Day October 25, 2024

Join us for a social volunteering event and improve wildlife habitat and our cultural history! Overfelt gardens is an historic site representing San Jose agriculture and Chinese history. It is also home to percolation ponds that provide habitat for local wildlife. All volunteering activities will be standing up and supplies and tools are provided in addition to snacks, lunch and a bottle of water.

Celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week!

October 13-19, 2024

National Wildlife Refuge Week is observed the second full week of October each year. This special week celebrates the important network of lands and waters that conserves and protects Americans' precious wildlife heritage.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY WILDLIFE SOCIETY: DONOR RECOGNITION

We gratefully acknowledge the donors who have made gifts to the San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society from June 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024 (and previous months) Our Refuges appreciate your support!

Senior/Student (\$20)

Patricia Callaway
Laurence Stearns
Sally Smyth
Joyce Lewis

William & Annie Henzel
Kenneth & Dee Himes
Stanley & Sandra Ketchum
Gerard McChesney

Olivia Poulos/PayPal Fundraiser
Pavel Jirousek/ Abbott Labs
Rajarshi Bhadury/HP
Sajeemas Pasakdee/PayPal Fundraiser
Xiaotao Liu/NVIDIA

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Dave Halsing
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William Nisbet

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American Online Giving Foundation
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Sally Smyth - for the EEC

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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, visit <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"/> \$35 Individual <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Family <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Supporter <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Participant	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200 Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Sponsor <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Sustainer <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Leader
<input type="checkbox"/> Check Enclosed	<input type="checkbox"/> Credit card payment at www.sfbayws.org/donate (processed by PayPal, but no PayPal account is required)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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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/>

