



The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of birds and their habitats through science and outreach, and to contributing to informed resource management decisions in the San Francisco Bay Area. Our goals include:

- Continue to gather long-term data to track the health of the Bay’s wild bird populations;
- Make results of our research available to government and private agencies, businesses, and the public for informed decisions on the preservation and restoration of habitat crucial to species survival;
- Educate the public about the importance of the Bay’s wetlands and tidal marshes to support species diversity;
- Encourage active volunteerism in order to assist in achieving our organization’s goals and mission.

## Organizational Overview

Over the past twenty-seven years, the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory has been an authority on shorebirds, waterbirds, and landbirds that rely on the San Francisco Bay and its surrounding habitats. Birds use the Bay as a migration stopover point, wintering grounds, year-round home, or breeding grounds. Our long-term projects in the Waterbird and Landbird Programs are crucial to our understanding of population trends and behaviors of these birds. Furthermore, through Outreach Programs, we seek to educate and foster awareness among Bay Area residents regarding the sensitivity and importance of birds and their habitats to our local heritage.

What makes the Bay Area livable and unique is its rich diversity in species and natural environments. The largest threat to species diversity is loss of habitat. Ninety percent of the Bay’s original tidal marsh has been developed or converted into salt evaporator ponds. Despite these drastic changes, the San Francisco Bay remains the largest of the three key resting and foraging (also known as “staging”) areas for migratory and wintering shorebirds on the Pacific Flyway.

Ongoing pressures on remaining habitat, including development, contamination, and disturbance, as well as ongoing restoration opportunities, create the need for continued monitoring of waterbird, shorebird, and landbird populations. Long-term data on population trends is instrumental in decisions affecting the preservation and restoration of important wetland and tidal marsh habitat. The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory provides that data through our Waterbird and Landbird Programs



## VOLUNTEER BILL OF RIGHTS

**As a volunteer of the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory, I have the right to:**

- Be treated as a coworker: to be treated as an equal and not taken for granted.
- Have my time used wisely: the Bird Observatory recognizes that my time is a valuable donation and not to be wasted.
- A suitable work assignment with as much consideration for personal preferences, temperament, life experience, education, and employment background as the Bird Observatory is able to provide given limited resources.
- Be informed about the organization, the people who manage the Bird Observatory and the future plans of the Bird Observatory.
- Sound guidance and directions by someone who is experienced, well informed, patient, and thoughtful, and who has time to invest in giving guidance along with effectively presented training.
- A place to work: an orderly, designated place conducive to work and worthy of the job to be done.
- Be heard: to have a part in planning, to feel free to make suggestions, and to have respect shown for one's opinion.
- Recognition in the form of promotion and awards, through day-to-day expressions of appreciation, and by being treated as a valuable member of the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory.
- Promotion and a variety of experience through advancement to assignments of more responsibility, through transfer from one assignment to another or through special assignments.
- Continuing education on the job as follow-up to my initial training, including information about new developments and training for greater responsibility.



## VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

### **As a San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory Volunteer, I will:**

- Represent SFBBO with professionalism, dignity and pride, and be responsible for conducting myself with courtesy and appropriate behavior.
- Follow through and complete accepted tasks.
- Conduct myself in a respectful manner, exhibit good sporting conduct, and be a positive role model.
- Accept training for my volunteer role by participating in meetings, self-study, or other training opportunities to help me work more effectively.
- Display respect and courtesy for employees, other volunteers, program participants, visitors, clients and property.
- Keep SFBBO staff informed of progress, concerns and problems within the program(s) in which I participate.
- Welcome supervision and work cooperatively as a team member with employees and other volunteers.
- Keep personal opinions and actions separate from those made as a representative of this organization.
- Avoid conduct, both on and off duty that would jeopardize program effectiveness.

--volunteer copy--



## VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIABILITY RELEASE

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of birds and their habitat through science and outreach, and to contributing to informed resource management decisions in the San Francisco Bay Area. Begun in 1981, we have years of experience in carrying out long-term projects using trained volunteer field assistants under the supervision of skilled biologists, as well as working with volunteers in other capacities. This approach enables us to conduct studies that would otherwise be too costly or logistically impossible to attempt, and increases public appreciation and support for wildlife of the Bay. The Bird Observatory maintains longstanding relationships with the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Santa Clara Valley Water District, and other landowners, allowing us access to areas not open to the public.

We ask that our volunteers maintain a professional code of conduct while carrying out Bird Observatory research and fieldwork and abide by the following:

1. Make protection of wildlife and the environment top priority. No activity performed shall in any way adversely affect wildlife health and well-being or be destructive to the environment.
2. To ensure that data is accurate and complete, return all original datasheets **as soon as possible**. For applicable projects, such as the Colonial Waterbird Monitoring and Snowy Plover Recovery, please return datasheets within 48 hours of collection due to access agreement requirements.
3. Become a member.
4. Participate in any mandatory training provided by Bird Observatory staff to ensure that you are properly prepared.
5. Respect all governing agencies' and landowners' rights.
6. Follow through on commitments once made. A missed survey can hamper our analysis of data and make reporting your findings more difficult.
7. The Bird Observatory has rights to all data, photographs, and reports of any type pertaining to our established programs. Nearly all our studies are team efforts and for the results to be worthwhile, the data must be analyzed and reported as a whole.
8. While we encourage you to informally share news of your fieldwork, we must prohibit the communication of site-specific data regarding "closed areas," that is, any area behind locked gates. Our access privileges may be jeopardized by the inadvertent encouragement of trespassing to view rare birds or by unauthorized release of data. If you would like to report the specific location of a rarity, please call us and we will work with you and the landowner toward some compromise.

9. Please remember that only Bird Observatory fieldwork has been approved by agencies or landowners. If you would like to collect data at the same time for another project, such as a breeding bird atlas, please seek permission directly from the landowner.
10. Access to private property has been granted only for the times specified for a specific project. Please do not use your key or knowledge of lock combinations to enter private property at any other time.
11. Please do not drive on wet levees. A moderate rain 3 days or less before a survey renders the surface undrivable. Foam created by high winds across the surface of the ponds is extremely slippery and dangerous to drive through, even in small amounts. You may get stuck or slip, and this may also damage the surface of the levee. In fact, damaging levees violates our access permits with landowners, possibly resulting in revoking of our access permits. If in doubt, please call the Bird Observatory for new updates.
12. Do not present yourself as a representative of Bird Observatory business/positions to agencies, landowners, or the public if you are not.
13. While on Bird Observatory business, remember that you represent the Bird Observatory and that your actions and conduct will reflect on the organization. Please present yourself and the Bird Observatory as a steward of the birds and environment.
14. Remember that all activities that you undertake on behalf of the Bird Observatory are at your own risk.

This list is not all-inclusive. Any activities resulting in unintentional or willful disregard for the rights and safety of others and wildlife, or damage to the reputation and standing of the Bird Observatory in the community may be cause for Board action and/or removal from volunteer status.



## VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City Zip Code

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Current Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact (Name, Phone Number, Relationship)

\_\_\_\_\_

Court Referred Volunteer?	Y/N	First Aid Certification?	Y/N
CPR Certification?	Y/N	Driver's License?	Y/N

How much time would you like to devote to volunteer work with the Bird Observatory?

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you available weekdays?	Y/N	Weekends?	Y/N
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When can you start? \_\_\_\_\_

Please tell us briefly why you would like to become a San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory volunteer.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have prior experience as a volunteer? If yes, for which organization and what were your duties?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of the Bird Observatory? Y/N

How did you learn of the Bird Observatory? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# VOLUNTEER INTEREST

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out this form in order to let us know about your interests for volunteer opportunities.

List in order of preference the top three volunteer positions in which you are interested (please see descriptions of available volunteer opportunities at <http://www.sfbbo.org/volunteer/opportunities.php>). Note that if you only have one or two preferences, merely list those. However, if you interested and can manage the time, multiple positions are possible.

1	
2	
3	

Indicate to us certain skill areas and interests you might be interested in sharing with us. Many are general and some require that you have specific skill or prior experience to be eligible. Please place a mark to the left to all that apply.

	Indoor Work		Fundraising and Donations
	Outdoor Work		GIS/GPS
	Physical Work (e.g. vegetation clearing)		Grant Writing/Research
	Clerical, General Computer Work		Law (e.g. legal issues, contracts, etc.)
	Data Entry		Library Resources/Research
	Database/Data Management		Tabling and Events
	Desktop Publishing/Design/Graphics		Web Maintenance
	Environmental Education		Web Design
	Event Planning		Working with Kids
	Food (e.g. chef, baker, distributor, etc.)		Working with Adults
	Fieldwork/Surveys (data collection)		Other Languages (Please list):
	Finance		

Tell us more about your general skills and interests that might not be reflected in the list above:

What are your special skills, interests, or hobbies? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Which skills do you most enjoy using in your volunteer service? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you prefer to work alone or as part of a team? \_\_\_\_\_

What birding abilities or experience do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How would you rate your bird identification skills on a scale of 1 – 10? \_\_\_\_\_



## Volunteer Responsibilities and Release of Liability, Volunteer Bill of Rights, and Volunteer Code of Conduct Agreements

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of birds and their habitat through science and outreach, and to contributing to informed resource management decisions in the San Francisco Bay Area. Begun in 1981, we have years of experience in carrying out long-term projects using trained volunteer field assistants under the supervision of skilled biologists, as well as working with volunteers in other capacities. This approach enables us to conduct studies that would otherwise be too costly or logistically impossible to attempt, and increases public appreciation and support for wildlife of the Bay. The Bird Observatory maintains longstanding relationships with the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Cargill Salt, and other landowners, allowing us access to areas not open to the public.

The “Volunteer Responsibilities and Liability Release” is not all-inclusive. Any activities resulting in unintentional or willful disregard for the rights and safety of others and wildlife, or damage to the reputation and standing of the Bird Observatory in the community may be cause for Board action and/or removal from volunteer status.

**I have completely read the “Volunteer Responsibilities and Release of Liability,” “Volunteer Bill of Rights,” and “Volunteer Code of Conduct” included in this packet.**

**I understand that I am entitled to the rights listed in the “Volunteer Bill of Rights” and agree to maintain a professional code of conduct while carrying out Bird Observatory research and fieldwork by abiding to the “Volunteer Responsibilities” and “Volunteer Code of Conduct.”**

**In order for you application to be complete please read the Safety Plan and sign page 13. Please return page 13 with your application.**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this signed agreement, along with the volunteer application, to the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory.*

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