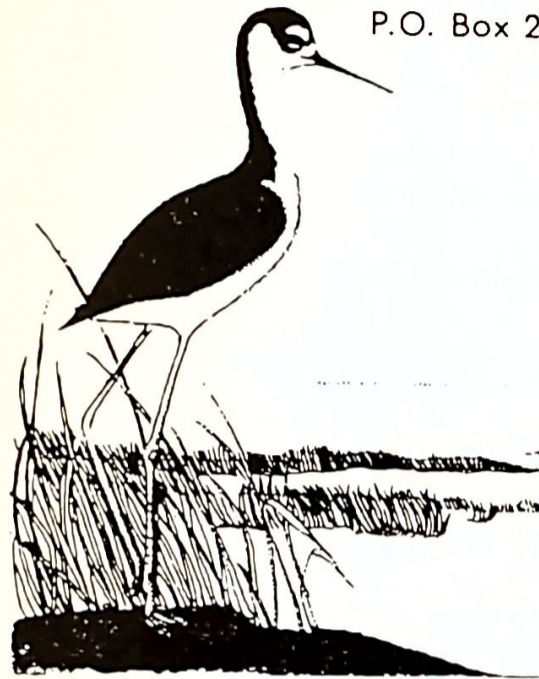


# SAN FRANCISCO BAY BIRD OBSERVATORY NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 247, Alviso, Ca. 95002 • (408) 946-6548

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## PROJECT UPDATE

**BOTULISM STUDY** - This study began June 14 and will continue through October 15. Dates have been set for collection & survey trips twice a week. Field work involves a 3 hour boat trip along Artesian (Mallard) Slough and a portion of Coyote Creek. During these survey trips, we take water quality measurements and benthic samples from five specific sites and census the wildlife within the area. In the event of a botulism outbreak, more frequent trips will be scheduled. We will also collect sick and dead birds, and dead fish and mammals to help prevent the spread of the disease. The sick birds will be treated and later released. After each survey trip, the benthic samples are brought to the Observatory for processing. Laboratory work involves identifying the invertebrates and testing samples for toxicity. Training will be provided for all aspects of this project.

**COLONIAL BREEDING BIRD SURVEY** - We are continuing our census of colonially nesting birds in Southern Alameda County, Southern San Mateo County and Santa Clara County. Approximately 540 Caspian Tern nests were counted on Turk Island. The second census has been completed on Bair Island and 22 Great Blue Heron young were banded. In 1983, there were 30 Great Blue Heron nests on Bair. In 1984, there were only 7 nests. In 1985, the total number of nests was 10, a slight, but not significant increase. We also counted 190 Black-crowned Night Heron nests. Three Least Terns were seen flying over the Island, and a few possibly new nests scrapes were seen in the colony, but it's too early to tell if they will nest there this year.

**CALIFORNIA GULLS** - Volunteers have completed eight evening banding trips to the colony on the Knapp property and banded over 2300 chicks. The colony has grown from 900 nests last year, to approximately 1100 nests this breeding season. In addition, there are approximately 400 more California Gulls nests at the Alviso and Newark colonies. This year each chick we band receives a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service band on the left leg and two color bands on the right leg. The blue over white color bands will designate it as a 1985 banded bird. The last banding trip will be June 22, the last census will be July 13.

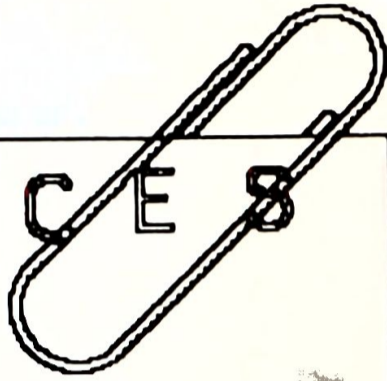
**CLAPPER RAILS** - The California Clapper Rail project now entering its 3rd year has expanded to include censuses of Clapper Rail populations in San Pablo & Suisun Bays to get a better understanding of total populations and habitat requirements of this subspecies. We will be banding birds in the south bay in the fall, and censusing in both the north and south bays. Volunteers are needed all year for this study.

Continued on page 2

SALT POND STUDY - Dave Lonzarich's study of the invertebrates, vertebrates and water quality of seven Alviso salt ponds will continue thru April 1986. A significant find in this study so far has been that fish are found in ponds with a salinity count of 100 parts per thousand. Dave is looking for volunteers to help census birds on the seven salt ponds. For those who would like to participate, bird counts are conducted two weekends each month and you can contact Dave through the Observatory office.

SALT MARSH YELLOWTHROAT STUDY - Approximately 400-450 breeding pairs of Saltmarsh Yellowthroats have been found in Salt marsh edges, fresh marshes, swamps and brackish marshes from Marin County and the Napa marshes to South San Francisco Bay and Pescadero Marsh. The Salt Marsh Yellowthroat is a subspecies of the Common Yellowthroat and is found only in the San Francisco Bay region. It is slightly smaller and darker than other western races. This project will continue through the 1985 breeding season.

## NOTICES



Since the first Thursday of the month falls on the 4th of July, the General Membership meeting has been changed to July 11, same time, same place. Please mark your calendars.

Also, note that there will be no newsletter or General Membership meeting for the month of August. The Bird Observatory office will remain open as usual from 1-5pm, Monday thru Friday. This is the busiest time of the year for our research projects and volunteer help is needed. If you would like to volunteer, call the office or stop in and sign up.

### STAFF

Executive Director - Kathy Hobson  
Administrative Asst. - Peter Perrine  
Biologists - Dave Jensen  
Nancy Norvell

### DIRECTORS (1983-85)

Lorrie Emery  
Ginny Becchine  
Jean Dubois

### DIRECTORS (1983-86)

Susie Formenti  
Peg Woodin  
Ed Roberts

### DIRECTORS (1984-87)

Terry Hart  
Phyllis Swanson  
Don Starks

Listed above are the 1984-85 staff and directors for the Bird Observatory. In September the Observatory will elect three new directors to serve a three year term. This will be an election voted on by the membership at the September general meeting. If you are interested in running for a position on the Board or know of someone you would like to nominate call Peg Woodin, Chairperson for the Nominating Committee, at (408) 946-6548. Your input is needed.



*Have a good Summer of Birding!*

## BANDING AT CCRS

During May many migrant birds passed through our Coyote Creek Riparian Station. We caught and banded Wilson's Warblers, Swainson's Thrushs, Yellow and Orange-crowned Warblers, Black-headed Grosbeaks, and Northern Orioles.

In addition to our banding activities at CCRS, we have also resumed censusing this unique riparian habitat. Among the birds seen or heard recently were Nashville Warblers, Western Flycatchers, Western Wood-Pewees, Western Tanager and Cedar Waxwings.

As part of our training program for bird banders, Dick Mewaldt contributed many hours to help banders gain valuable experience in judging brood patches, cloacal protuberances, and feather topography especially on White-crowned Sparrows, California Quail, Bushtits and Mourning Doves. Banders looked at feather molt sequence, new feather growth, shape and coloration. Many thanks to Dick for his contributions to educating banders, both new and experienced and for being there when needed.

Tim Gates

## CLERICAL HELP NEEDED

Spring and Summer are the busiest time of the year at the Bird Observatory with all our on going research projects, and this adds a lot of extra work for the office staff. Clerical assistance is needed to keep up with the typing, filing, volunteer calls, record keeping, and processing and recording of the large amounts of data that is coming in. Our hard working Executive Director, Kathy Hobson, puts in many more hours than she is paid for just to keep operations running smoothly. She spends much of her time on office work which leaves her less time for the many duties of managing the Observatory. In order to keep our staff from a complete burn out and still put out quality work, help is needed. This could be accomplished by getting others to jump in and volunteer their time with office work to get us through this period.

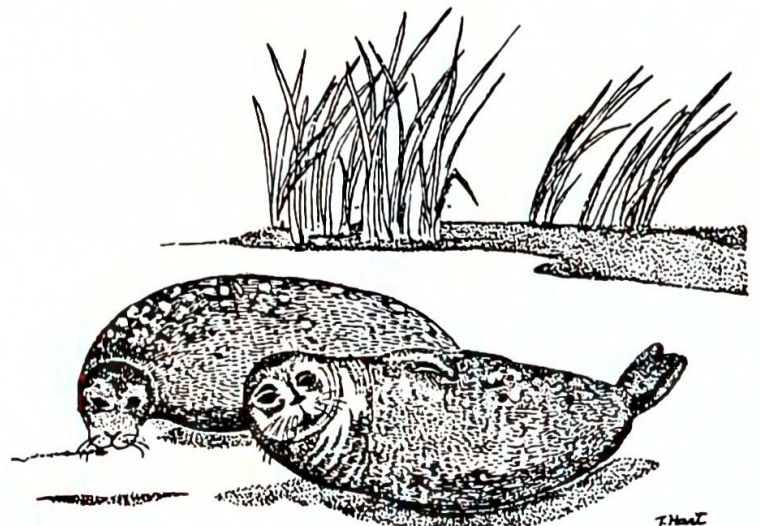
If you can commit a few hours a week on a regular basis, it would help take some of the load off the staff. And what better way to become familiar with what's going on at the Bird Observatory and the people who volunteer their time there. Maybe you can give some of your vacation time to the organization. It will be time well spent. If you would like to volunteer, call the office at (408) 946-6548.

## Classes & Trips

### SFBBO BIRDING TOURS

From August 3-11 you can bird Arizona with Bob Hargis and Dan Singer. This is the time of year to visit Arizona. It's not as hot as you may expect, the area is going through its "second spring", and the birds there are terrific. Southeastern Arizona is unique in that the mountains of the area have birds that are representative of both America's Rockies and the Sierra Madre of Mexico. In fact, some of the birds can be found only here and nowhere else in the US. We will be spending most of our time within the boundaries formed by Tucson, Nogales, and the borders of new and old Mexico. Habitats to be covered include Saguaro cactus desert, grasslands, riparian, and coniferous forest. We're looking for specialties such as Elegant Trogon, Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Elf Owl, Gray Black, and Zone-tailed Hawks, Varied Bunting, and many others. The cost of this trip is \$240 per person. Don't miss this trip. You'll be sorry if you do.

If you can't make the Arizona trip or you did and are eager for more good birding then travel to Condor country on August 23-25 with Dan Singer and Carolyn Frederiksen. The California Condor is one of the world's most magnificent and most endangered birds. To see one of these beauties is a birder's dream. We'll be camping high in the mountains near Mt. Pinos. Therefore, our days and nights will be pleasant grading into warm as we head down the mountains. Last year, in addition to the Condor, we saw Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Bluebird, LeConte's Thrasher, and others. The cost of this trip is \$70 per person. And like all SFBBO Birding Tours the cost includes camp site reservations and fees, museum entrances fees, and the guidance of experienced tour leaders. Not included in the cost are meals, transportation, and sundry items such as beverages, etc. For more information call Don Starks (tour organizer) evenings at (408) 371-9720 or write him at 2076 Foxworthy Ave., San Jose, Ca. 95124.



# GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, July 11, 1985

Refuge Environmental Education Center  
in Alviso

7:30 pm

**FEATURED SPEAKER:** Carol Baird will speak on, "The Ecology of Hummingbirds of Costa Rica."

**Donations . . . .** Thanks to Sandy Kinchen for her generous donation of a new wheelbarrow for the Observatory. Also, thanks to Terry Hart, Peg Woodin and Lorrie Emery for the refreshments for the June General Membership meeting.

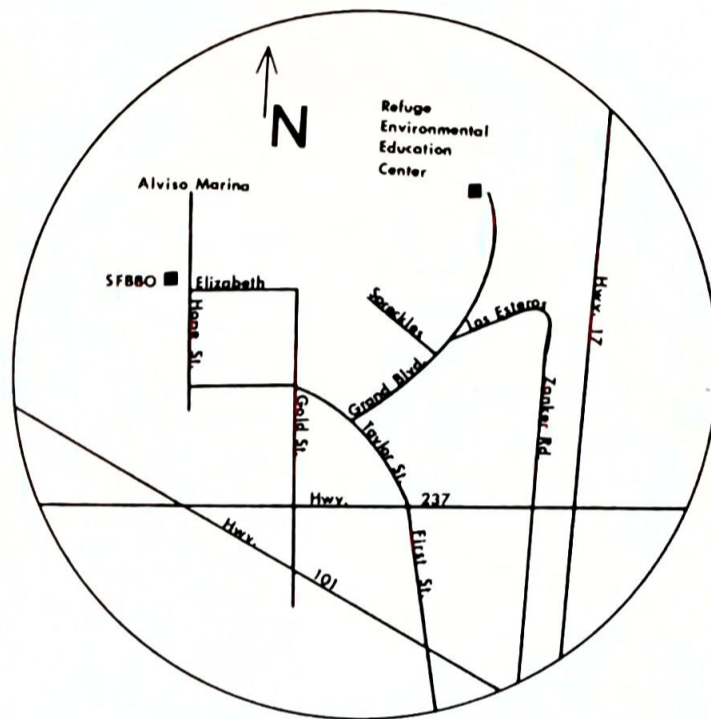
**Volunteers.** . . Thanks goes out to the following people who volunteered their time to work in the office; Ada Childs, Jean Young, Michealle Havenhill, Paul Noble, Ginny Becchine and Lorrie Emery. Also thanks to Aileen Brodsky, Jean Young and Fran & Dick Mewaldt for their help on the newsletter mailing.

**Editor Susie Formenti**

**Assistant Editor, Dave Nauer**

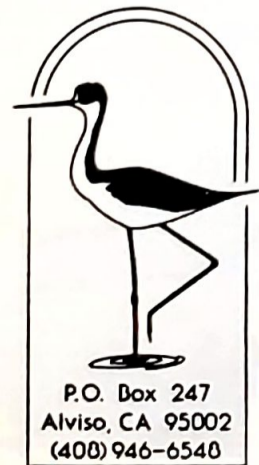
The Bird Observatory office is located at 1290 Hope St. in Alviso. The office is open from 1-5 pm weekdays and some weekends. But before stopping in, call (408) 946-6548 and check the schedule.

The General Membership meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm at the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Environmental Education Center in Alviso. (see map below). The Board meetings are open to the membership and are held monthly. Call the Observatory for dates and times.



The newsletter deadline is the first Monday of the month. Send contributions to the editor: Susie Formenti, 16675 Buckskin Ct., Morgan Hill, Ca. 95037.

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is a non-profit corporation under IRS statute 501(c)3. All memberships and contributions are tax deductible.



I would like to join  Renew my membership  in the  
San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to SFBBO. Your gift membership is tax deductible.

Student/Senior	\$10
Regular	\$15
Family	\$20
Associate	\$50
Contributing	\$100
Sustaining	\$200
Life	\$400 *
Patron	\$2000 *
Corporation	\$500 +

\* Single payment becomes part of an endowment fund