

SAN FRANCISCO BAY BIRD OBSERVATORY NEWSLETTER

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

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GOALS PAST AND PRESENT

Bird Observatory Bylaws state that a planning or goals meeting is held once a year. This year we'll meet at the Eastridge Clubhouse on Saturday, November 23 to set priorities for the coming year, but before we think about goals for 1986, let's consider the priorities we set for the Bird Observatory in November 1984.

- Obtain professional marketing advice for publicity materials.
- Formulate letters to inform local colleges with ornithology classes and local bird clubs of research possibilities at the Bird Observatory.
- Attend DeAnza Days and the B.A.E.E.R. Fair.
- Develop information packets for the National Wildlife Refuge.
- Computerize all data from four years of studying California Gulls, then write detailed proposals for research publications.

These areas were targeted in our Goals Meeting last November as areas that needed special effort. This was not all we expected to accomplish throughout the year, but these action plans were viewed as important to the overall success of the organization.

To improve our public image, we did, indeed utilize professional advice for the development of a new brochure and slide show; we wrote letters and gave a presentation to an Ornithology class at SJSU. We set up the Bird Observatory display at both DeAnaza Day and the B.A.E.E.R. Fair. the Gull Study data is projected to be computerized in the near future. We now also have an outline of the gull Study data; first step for publication.

We have accomplished some of the goals set at last year's meeting, some may be completed by the November 23 Goals Meeting; others have been tabled for the time being. (The Gull Study is the topic of a Master's thesis and will probably be published by the graduate student. The grant that was submitted for production of the publicity slide show was turned down, tentative plans are for submission elsewhere. The brochure is about to go the printer. Development of the information packets for distribution through the National Wildlife Refuge hinges on the new brochure.)

This is just a sampling of Observatory accomplishments this last year. If you have any thoughts about the direction you'd like to see the Observatory headed in the future, I hope you'll join us and voice your suggestions on November 23. For additional information call the Bird Observatory office (408) 946-6548.

Phyllis Swanson, President

REFLECTIONS

In August of 1982, the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge offered to let SFBBO use the historic Bayside Cannery Building as its office. When we "moved in", the cannery building was a warehouse for discards of its former tenants. Several refrigerators, stoves, a safe, a dishwasher, a doctor's examining table, several kitchen sinks and lots of garbage were left from nearly a decade of boatbuilder-tenants living in and using the buildings and grounds.

Members and friends of SFBBO spent hundreds of hours clearing out garbage, and washing and sweeping away the dirt and grime in this beautiful building which has suffered from years of neglect. In the fall and winter of 1982-83, we also painted, put up wood paneling and sheetrock, rewired, and installed lights, and re-roofed half of the building. That winter, our office and library occupied two downstairs rooms. It was cold and a bit damp, but the rooms were functional and well furnished.

In March 1983, the Alviso flood soaked the sheetrock and dissolved most of our library, and several desks and chairs, but not the energy and enthusiasm of our friends. After the flood, with the help of these friends, we washed away the mud and threw out the warped and disintegrating chairs and desks along with truckloads of old furniture and garbage that had literally floated out of the corners of the building. We knew that we hadn't cleaned out all of the leftover trash when we moved in, but it still surprised us to see how much stuff had been hidden in the corners. Picture a garage full of decades of discards or a packed closet exploding...

After the clean up, we needed to build a dry office upstairs, and repair some damage to the building before we could get back to work on restoring the building. The first step was to re-roof the rest of the building with materials purchased mainly by the refuge. Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society and members of SFBBO contributed generously to a special fund set up to purchase materials to rebuild the office and replace items that had been lost in the flood.

Preparation of the upstairs office required rewiring, hanging sheetrock, painting, replacing windows, installing a door, a sink, and repairing the stairs.

Downstairs, we replaced several doors and windows, redirected the rainwater drainage system, installed a new water heater and sink and repaired plumbing and sewer lines. When the last boatbuilder-tenant moved out of the downstairs room last year, we hauled away most of his garbage and began to work on that room as well.

The most visible changes during this past year, have been the planting of native wildflowers and grasses along the levee, the restoration of the offices downstairs, and the establishment of the lab downstairs.

Some of the ongoing work has been restoring or repairing. Some of it has been basic cleanup - a job that seems endless. And some of it, is maintenance and improvements to existing facilities. All of it has been very costly. Though the refuge has paid for some of the materials, much of the responsibility and the cost of repairing and restoring the building falls on us. Though we manage to stay within our budget on all other items, we always spend more on the building than we can afford. I'm telling you this, not to ask for money, but to let you know that, although it isn't always visible, we are always working on the buildings and the garden. Repairing and restoring, cleaning out the crazy drainage system and worrying about the winter rains or the possibility of earthquakes damaging it. It is like a valued friend, a place where we have spent and do spend hundreds of hours with friends discussing birds, insects, plants, life and the leaking roof. A place where we plan for the future, and where we hope we can stay for many years.



PREPARING FOR WINTER

The Bird Observatory has set aside Saturday and Sunday, November 9 and 10, as work days to prepare the Cannery building and grounds for the coming winter. We are all very proud of the improvements we have made in the building since we moved in in 1982. But all those improvements took a lot of hard work and volunteer help. Of course we would all rather spend our time on bird studies, but in order to make the Observatory building functional we have to devote some time to maintenance. If you're a gardener, carpenter, or just want to do some good healthy work outdoors your help is needed. Won't you join us on the 9th or 10th and we'll supply drinks, snacks and fun. If you can help, please give us a call at 946-6548.

**JOINT MEETING OF
PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP
and
COLONIAL WATERBIRD GROUP**

From December 4-8, the Pacific Seabird Group jointly with the Colonial Waterbird Group will hold its 1985 annual meeting in San Francisco. This conference will be held at the Holiday Inn - Financial District in San Francisco, with sessions running from 10am to 10pm Wed. Dec. 4, and 8am to 10pm Thursday thru Saturday. Two field trips are planned for Sunday, December 8. One trip will be an early morning visit to the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge and adjacent salt marshes, to view wintering waders, ducks, and other birds of the Bay. The other trip, weather permitting, will be a pelagic trip around the Farallon Islands.

This is an opportunity for SFBBO members to find out about current studies of pelagic and coastal birds. You can meet with other researchers and hear presentations of papers on a number of interesting topics. Among the presentations tentatively scheduled, is a paper by Harry M Ohlendorf, Thomas W. Custer, Roy W. Lowe, and Mike Rigney, former SFBBO Executive Director. Their topic is, "Organochlorines and Mercury in California Coastal Terns and Herons," a study to which a number of SFBBO members contributed field data.

The conference is being hosted by SFBBO, San Francisco National Wildlife Refuge, and Point Reyes Bird Observatory. If you can help by assisting with registration and other organizational duties, or if you would like to attend the presentations, call the office at (408) 946-6548 for more information.



RAPTOR SYMPOSIUM

The 1985 Raptor Research Foundation Conference will hold a Symposium on the Management of Birds of Prey from November 1-11 at the Capitol Plaza Holiday Inn in Sacramento. Topics of the symposium include; Raptor Reintroduction, Raptor Rehabilitation, Captive Breeding, Public Education, Western North American Osprey Symposium, Second International Vulture Symposium, and the Western Hemisphere Meeting of the World Working Group on Birds of Prey. For further information contact the Raptor Conservation Office, San Francisco Zoological Society, Zoo Rd. & Skyline Blvd, San Francisco, CA 94132, or call (415) 661-2023.

SFBBO RESOLUTION

At its meeting of Tuesday, October 1, the SFBBO Board of Directors issued the following commendation to our Executive Director, Kathy Hobson:

Whereas Kathy Hobson has performed the duties of Executive Director of SFBBO to a degree which exceeds all expectations by:

- performing all regularly expected tasks with a high level of expertise
- acting as a knowledgeable and personable emissary from SFBBO to the public and to other professional organizations
- working many hours above and beyond any standard work day, week, month, or year
- consistently displaying levels of knowledge and skills which exceeded the expectations of a person in her position
- and, furthermore, displaying wit, courage, and a sense of humor in the process of doing her job and of leading the rest of us as we learn how to do ours.

Now therefore, let it be resolved that the SFBBO Board of Directors wishes to commend Kathy Hobson and to express its appreciation for her continuing excellent work.

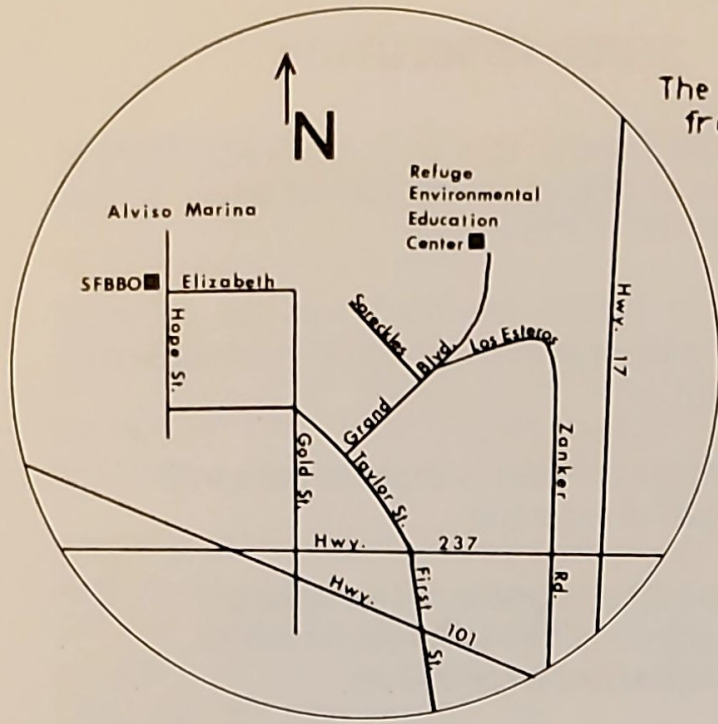
The editors of this newsletter and, we're sure, the membership of SFBBO join with the Board in congratulating Kathy for the terrific job she is doing.

DONATIONS. . . . Thanks to Lorrie Emery, Hazel Tilden and Jean Young for the refreshments for the October General Meeting.

ITEMS FOR SALE - A booklet put out by Western Bird Banding Association titled, "Body Weights of 686 Species of North American Birds", by John B. Dunning, Jr. Selling for \$3.75 while supply lasts.

SFBBO 1986 pocket appointment calendars, at \$4 each. Great Christmas gifts.

Checklist Available. The 1985 revised edition of Checklist of Birds of Palo Alto and Adjacent Areas is available from the city of Palo Alto's Arts & Science Division. This checklist, which includes 289 species of birds, was revised by David Suddjian and Paul Noble.



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) The Board meetings are open to the membership and are held monthly. Call the Observatory for dates and time:

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.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, November 7, 1985

Refuge Environmental Education Center
in Alviso

7:30 pm

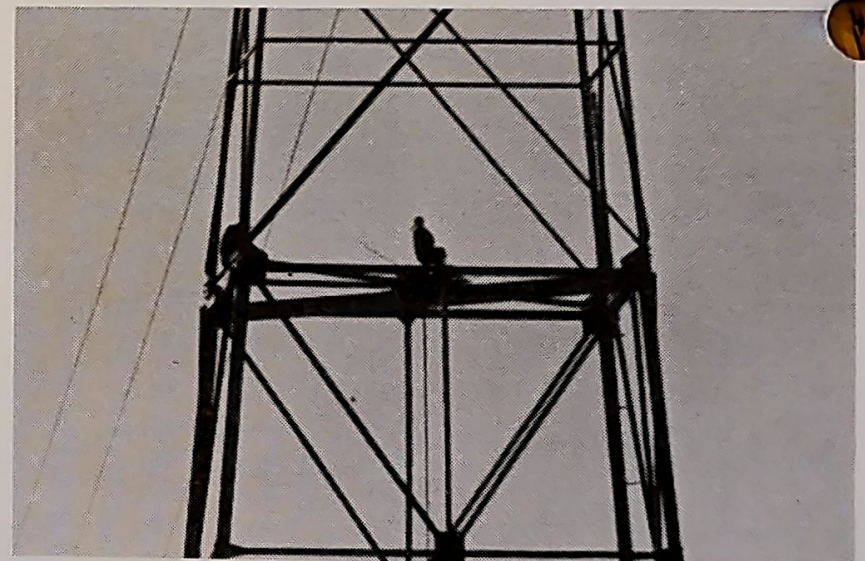
FEATURED SPEAKER: TED CHANDIK

ON

**BREEDING SEABIRDS ON THE ISLANDS
OF THE SEA OF CORTEZ**

HERON SIGHTING...

The Bird Observatory received a note from Nicholas Coiro of Foster City in response to the Great Blue Heron article in the October newsletter. He has observed two Great Blue Heron nests on PG&E transmission towers near the shore of Belmont Slough in Foster City for the past two years. Below is a photo he took of one nest with young. He noted that the distance was too great to get more than a small silhouette, even with his 600mm lens. He is unsure of how many young fledged from the two nests, but he did observe at least two young in each nest. Thank you, Nicholas, for the interesting information.



Editor Susie Formenti

Assistant Editor, Dave Nauer



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

NAME _____

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CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (____) _____

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

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

* Single payment becomes part of an endowment fund