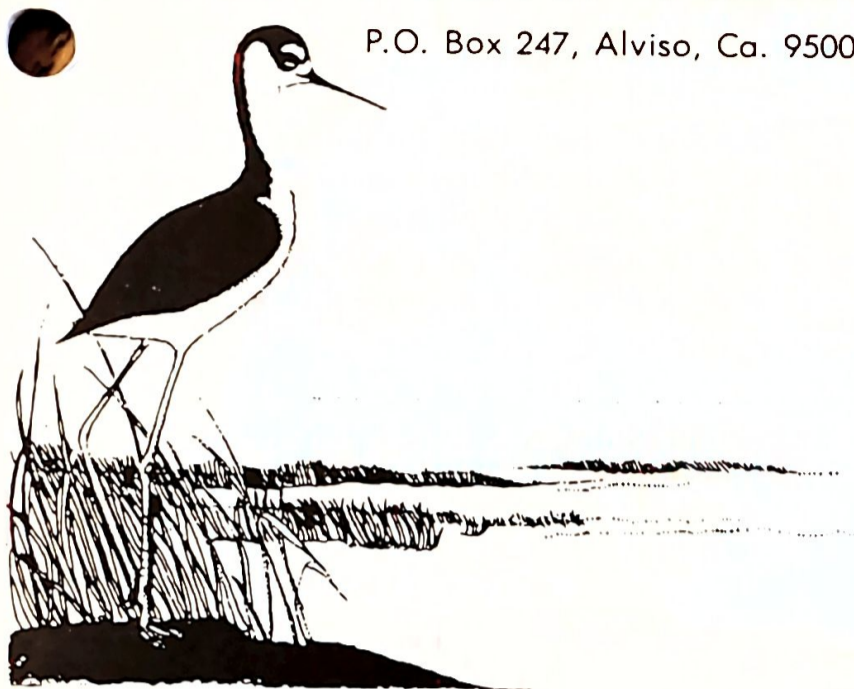


SAN FRANCISCO BAY BIRD OBSERVATORY NEWSLETTER

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PLUMMER CREEK STUDY

SFBBO has contracted a study from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to survey the aquatic fauna and their distribution in Plummer Creek. Plummer Creek is a tidal dead end slough with no upstream fresh water connection located in south San Francisco Bay. During the winter and early spring of 1986, bittern seeped from a pond owned by the Leslie Salt Company into Plummer Creek. Bittern is a bitter solution remaining in the saltmaking process after the salt has crystalized out of the sea water or brine.

This study was prompted by a desire to determine the effect of discharge of bittern on the aquatic fauna of Plummer Creek. The objectives of this project will be to survey fish and benthic invertebrates using Plummer Creek and investigate the influence of the physical and chemical environment, and potentially, the impact of bittern discharges on the distribution of intertidal and subtidal benthic invertebrates.

The study will provide the refuge with some basic biological data on seasonal use of Plummer Creek by bay fishes, and benthic invertebrate macrofauna. Since this project began in September, thirty SFBBO volunteers plus eleven students from Hopkins Junior High in Fremont have completed the sorting of 32 out of the 36 samples collected and are now beginning the process of identification. This stage of the project could use people experienced in the identification of benthic invertebrates or if you have taxonomic skills and would like to put them into practice, please call the Bird Observatory office. Update articles on the progress of the Plummer Creek Study are forthcoming.

The Plummer Creek Invertebrate Study Team would like to thank the following volunteers for generously donating their time: Nanak Bopari, Louise Accurso, Jean Alexander, Jose Castillo, Gail Cheeseman, Carole Chicoine, Dave Chicoine, Helen Chism, Terry Coddington, Susan Dickey, Jan Dierks, Brian Donahoo, Jean DuBois, Julie Dunn, Linda Fenner, Greg Fijman, Harold Fijman, Peter Folan, Eric Ford, Margaret Galvin, Jane Hawkey, Phil Hawkins, Ken Israel, Cynthia Kevorkian, Eric Kuwada, Missi Lauber, Matthew Morgan, Paul Noble, Debbie Oexmann, Amardeep Rai, Stephanie Reshel, Laura Scarbora, Dave Seals, Roberta Seals, Pat Selfridge, Jean Takekawa, Paul Travis, John Venzor, Christi Yarbrough, Jean Young and Lou Young.

SANDERLING - PLOVER CENSUS

It's time again for the Mid-Winter Census of Sanderlings and Plovers. The Sanderling Project, a non-profit research organization based in Bodega, has planned this year's census for the weekend of January 17 & 18. Very little information is known on these birds, so a census of the entire Pacific Coastline is planned. If you would like to participate in this Census, contact Nancy Norvell at the Bird Observatory office or the Sanderling Project, Bodega Marine Laboratory, P. O. Box 247, Bodega Bay, Ca. 94923.

YOUNG VOLUNTEERS GAIN EXPERIENCE

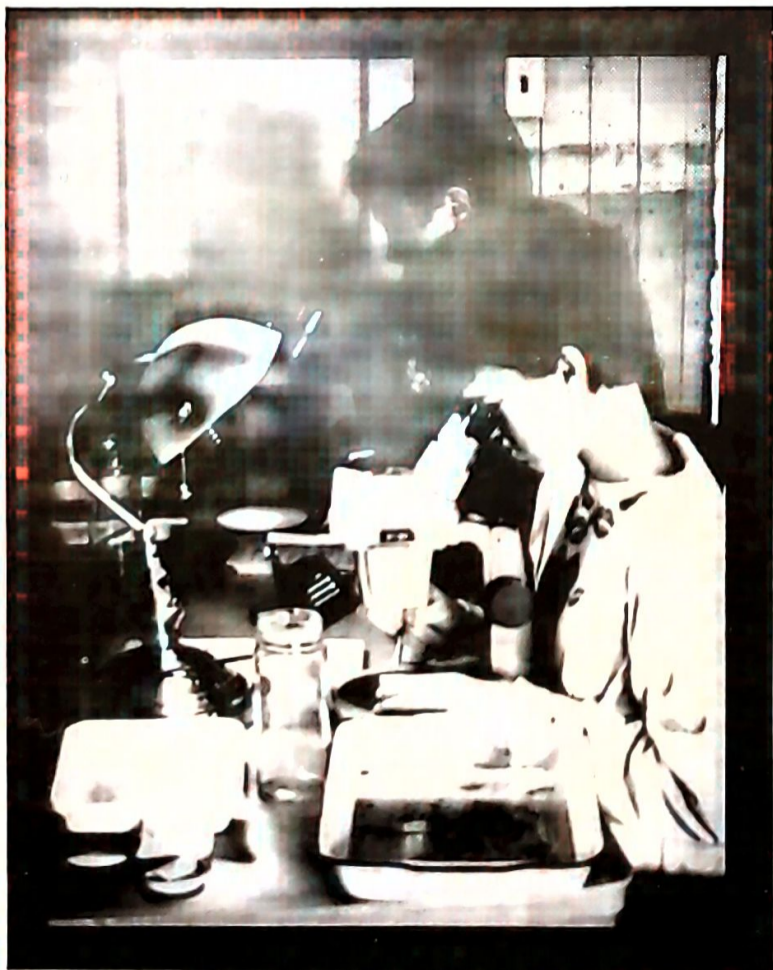
The young volunteers shown in the accompanying photo are eighth grade students from Hopkins Junior High, in Fremont. On Saturday, November 15, each of them spent two hours of time helping to sort invertebrate samples for the SFBBO project on Plummer Creek. This activity, supervised by David Lonzarich, Valerie Layne, and Linda Fenner, initiated a pilot project in which younger students are actively involved in research projects rather than the passive process of observing others at work.

This "hands on" activity proved to be quite successful. "The kids were eager and excited but very thorough in the work they did," Dave Lonzarich said.

We hope to provide more opportunities for young people to explore the "real stuff" of field biology at SFBBO. Students will be invited to work as volunteers on selected parts of some observatory projects and we will seek a grant to fund these activities.

If you know of a junior or senior high school biology teacher who would be interested in having his or her class participate in one of these activities, contact the SFBBO office.

Thanks to the following students who helped make the pilot project a success: Nanak Bopari, Brian Donahoo, Julie Dunn, Greg and Harold Fijman, Missi Lauber, Matthew Morgano, Amardeep Rai, Stephanie Reshel, John Venzor, and Christi Yarbrough.



CCRS GOES INDEPENDENT

On Tuesday, November 25, representatives from Coyote Creek Riparian Station (CCRS) and SFBBO met to conclude the transfer of funds that establishes CCRS as an independent entity. This change has come about after a year of discussions of needs and goals. The decision was based on the belief that CCRS needs to operate in a more intensive way requiring greater commitments of time and energy on the part of volunteers who work there and methods of functioning which are different from those generally followed in most SFBBO projects. Additionally, CCRS is better served and more efficiently able to operate if the station has control of its own finances and operational procedures rather than attempting to run as a semi-separate entity under a bureaucratic umbrella.

Henceforth, SFBBO and CCRS will function as friendly, cooperative neighbors, especially since many people belong to both organizations. Activities such as dues collection and fund raising will be separate, but the goals of the two organizations will not change. All of us seek to increase the knowledge and understanding of wildlife and habitat in the south Bay region. We hope that this new step will increase our collective ability to obtain our goals. ■



SFBBO AWARDED GRANT

This past November, People for Open Space, a San Francisco based group, awarded a grant to SFBBO for the purpose of assessing current data on Bair Island. Upon its completion in January, the report we produce will ultimately be used as a basis for the development of a Congressional bill to purchase some parts of Outer Bair Island for inclusion in the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Our report synthesizes what is known about this most important habitat from nine aspects: 1) description of habitat; 2) value to wildlife; 3) catalog of species; 4) unusual features of the island; 5) vegetative communities; 6) endangered, threatened, or rare species; 7) commercially valuable species; 8) trapping and hunting data; 9) a literature search.

A short-term project such as this one provides a good example for us and for the public of how an organization such as SFBBO can use a volunteer work force to perform a large amount of work in a short amount of time. Congratulations to all SFBBO volunteers who put their individual efforts into this project. Names of participants will be published in next month's newsletter. ■

WINNERS OF THE DRAWING

The drawing is over and SFBBO would like to thank all those new members that joined and those current members who gave gift memberships to their family and friends. The winners of the drawing at the December General meeting are:

2 Tickets on the Whale Trip

Frank & Duane O'Sullivan

Bed & Breakfast Night In Santa Cruz

Josephine Calleri

Nature Company Gift Certificate

Aileen Brodsky

3 Volume Set of Audubon Fieldguides

Byron H. Westlund

2 Tickets to the Monterey Bay Aquarium

Janis Taylor

Santa Cruz Mountain Vineyard Wine

Sonio DeHazes & Matt Buchanan

SFBBO T-Shirt

Lou Young

SFBBO would like to thank **Doug Cheesman, Tom Medeiros, The Nature Company, Julie Packard, and Santa Cruz Mountain Vineyards** for their generous gift donations for the membership drive. ■



JANUARY MEETING HIGHLIGHT

Doug Cheeseman, Professor of Biology at De Anza College, will give a lap-dissolve slide show presentation on Marine Mammals of the Pacific Coast, specifically on Monterey Bay. Included in the discussion will be seals, dolphins, porpoise behavior, Gray Whales and Blue Whales which have been seen in great numbers along the coast of Monterey Bay recently. If time permits, he will also talk about marine mammals of the Antarctic. Doug is a frequent leader of Whale watching boat trips and was a guest lecturer and biologist on the 1984 Lindblad Cruising Expedition to the Antarctic. A ticket to Doug's January 17 Whale trip will be given away as a door prize, so this is a meeting not to be missed.

The January General Membership meeting will be held on the second Thursday, **January 10**, instead of the first Thursday due to the New Year holiday. ■

Classes & Trips

Winter Field Recording and wildfowl viewing trip to the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge on January 17 & 18. Space is limited, so make your reservations early. To reserve your spot, send a \$2.00 organizational fee (Check made out to Nature Sounds Society), along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope, to William Gilbert, 4630 Driftwood Ct., El Sobrante, Ca 94803.

Sequoia Adult School is offering two classes for birdwatchers during the winter quarter.

Birds At Home and In The Field - Starts January 7 at 7:30pm at the San Carlos Senior Center. Class fee is \$40.

Bird Study For Serious Birders - Starts January 5 at Menlo Atherton High School, Room C-6. Eight evening lectures and five Saturday field trips.

Registration at first class for each series. Instructor: Maryann Danielson. Call Sequoia Adult School (415) 369-6809 for additional information.

Sunbeam Ecology Explorations is offering two winter field trips led by Maryann Danielson.

Santa Barbara and Environs - January 23-25, fee \$70 which includes a pre-trip slide lecture and two nights lodging.

Tule and Klamath Lakes for Raptors and Waterfowl - February 13-16, fee \$95 which includes a pre-trip slide show and three nights lodging.

For further information on these trips call Maryann Danielson (415) 342-6919. Registration is limited.

Fremont Adult School is offering the following classes and trips.

Birding Field Trips Class - Starting January 13 for six weeks from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. Instructor Alice Hoch

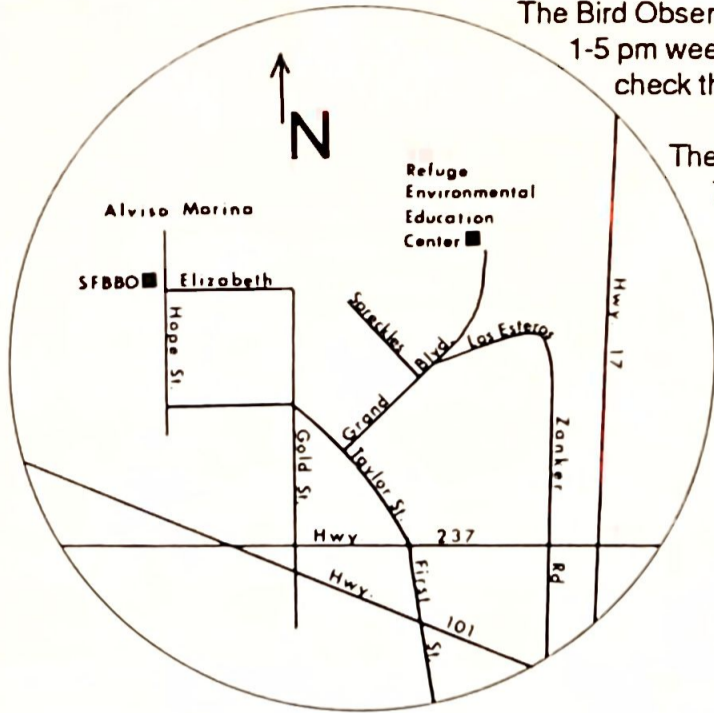
Wednesday Birding Field Trips Class - Starting January 14 for six weeks from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. Instructor Alice Hoch

Birds of the Delta Class - A one day field trip to the Delta on January 31 from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. Fee is \$14.50.

For more information, call Fremont Adult School at (415) 791-5841 or the instructor at (415) 657-0475.



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 times.

The newsletter deadline is the first Monday of the month. Send contributions to the editor: Susie Formenti, 16675 Bucksin 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, January 8, 1987

Refuge Environmental Education Center
in Alviso

7:30 p.m.

FEATURED SPEAKER: Doug Cheeseman
will give a slide show presentation on Marine Mammals
of the Pacific Coast. (see article this newsletter)

DONATIONS. . . Thanks to Mark Sutherland, Jane Hawkey, Joyce Bizjak, Pat DuBois, Susie Formenti and Lorrie Emery for the refreshments for the December General Meeting.



Editor, Susie Formenti



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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.