

Dear Friends,

We are excited to inform you that we have received a challenge grant of \$5,000 from one of our generous donors. The recession has severely impacted SF Nature Education. Although we operate on a lean and mean budget of only \$100,000, donations and foundation grants have seriously decreased.

*Between June 1st and 30th, each donation we receive will be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis.*

Our goal is to raise at least \$5,000 to match the challenge grant and to help us continue our work in school programs and Saturday public programs.

During the past year:

- We delivered the gift of nature education to more than one thousand children in our school programs.
- Our *Birding for Everyone* and *Heron Watch* programs have served over one thousand adults and children since January 2009. Our participants saw ten blue heron chicks learn to fly.
- We completed our inaugural season at Heron's Head Park with our partner, Lowell High School. SF Nature Education trained six Lowell students to lead birding tours for the public.

Please take advantage of this wonderful challenge grant so that SF Nature Education can continue our award-winning school and public programs into 2010.

You can donate online by visiting our web site, [www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org), and clicking on the "Donate Now" button. Donations by check can be sent to: San Francisco Nature Education, 3450 Geary Blvd. Suite 208, San Francisco, CA 94118. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Thank you for your valuable support!

**Nancy DeStefanis**, Executive Director

In May, naturalists from San Francisco Nature Education brought students to Stow Lake from the following elementary schools: New Traditions, McCoppin, Grattan, Bret Harte, and Miraloma.

Between January and May, SF Nature served more than one thousand students from San Francisco public schools.

On this page and the next are highlights from these trips.



Naturalist Tina Lui, teacher Ms. Scott (center, back row), and chaperone with students from Bret Harte Elementary School.



Naturalist Linda Grant and students from Bret Harte.



Executive director Nancy DeStefanis and her group at Stow Lake's rustic bridge.



Ms. Cooper, teacher (center, back row), chaperone (l), naturalist Rachel Townsend (r), and K-1 students from Bret Harte.

All photos: SFNE



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Teacher Mr. Esteban and naturalist Rachel Townsend (back row) with New Traditions students at Stow Lake waterfall.



Naturalist Rachel Townsend demonstrates birdcalls to an enthusiastic group at New Traditions Elementary.



Teacher Matt Campana with a student at the spotting scope.



Bret Harte students are ready for watermelon at Stow Lake.



A student records birds spotted at Stow Lake.

All photos of student groups: SFNE

## Elementary School Students Visit Stow Lake



Canada Geese

Photo: Judy Harter



Canada Goose and goslings

Photo: SFNE



Teacher Ms. Hong and naturalist Ken Moy with third-grade students from McCoppin Elementary School.



Mallards

Photo: Judy Harter



Naturalist Andy Kleinhesselink (l) and teacher Matt Campana with New Traditions third-graders.

## Heron Watch Report

### Rachel Townsend, Naturalist

The Stow Lake Heron Colony in Golden Gate Park had three successful nests this year, with ten chicks learning to fly.

Heron Watch volunteers Sharon Pretti, Peter Baty, and Klaudia Toporovski; naturalists Judith and Richard Finn; birder Brent Plater; senior intern Zev Brook; executive director Nancy DeStefanis; and this writer, Heron Watch coordinator, all contributed our expertise to Heron Watch on six Saturdays this spring. Large numbers of visitors showed up for the nature walk and to view heron chicks through high-powered spotting scopes.

Among the highlights: red-tailed hawks nesting with two chicks; great horned owlets moving from tree to tree; pied-billed grebes nesting on the water; pygmy nuthatches carrying nesting material into holes in trees; and, of course, the heron chicks squawking so loudly the din carried around the lake!

This is the sixteenth year that great blue herons have nested at Stow Lake. The total number of fledglings now stands at 129! We look forward to a new heron-watching season starting in January 2010.



Hungry chicks greet a parent with open beaks.

Photo: Monte Travis



Volunteer Richard Finn shows an observer where to find the heron nests.

Photo: SFNE



Heron chick tests its wings.

Photo: Jesse Krider



Pygmy Nuthatch

Photo: Ernest Gaudreau



Punk-looking heron chicks mouth off.

Photo: Monte Travis



Volunteer Peter Baty shows owlets to a visitor.

Photo: SFNE



Owlet

Photo: Ernest Gaudreau



Owlet

Photo: Ernest Gaudreau



Photo: SFNE

Observers catch last glimpses of the heron chicks in their nests.



Photo: SFNE

Visitors brave light rain to observe herons.

## Heron Watch: Last Photos of the Season



Photo: Ernest Gaudreau

Heron chicks are ready to fledge.



Photo: SFNE

On May 9th, Sharon Pretti (center) leads the nature walk to see herons.



Photo: Monte Travis

Big heron chicks have grown restless.



Photo: SFNE

Intern Zev Brook and naturalist Rachel Townsend at lunch on the last day of our Heron Watch program.



Photo: Monte Travis

Owlet with remains of a gopher.

## Fundraiser for San Francisco Nature Education

Nancy DeStefanis

On April 30th, Louise Renne, former SF supervisor and city attorney, kindly hosted a fundraising reception for SF Nature at her offices. A good time was had by all!



Joseph Kinyon, Mary Rose Cassa, Monte Travis (r).



Mary Hackenbracht (l), president of SFNE board of directors, with Louise Renne.



Tina Lui, Nancy DeStefanis, Linda Grant, Beth Kamieniecki.

All photos: SFNE



Kathleen Purcell, Ken Moy, Mary Hackenbracht.



Andy Kleinhesselink, Maryann Rainey.

### Birding for Everyone

On Saturday, May 2nd, a small group braved the rain and saw some great birds with volunteer naturalist Brian Fitch. Note: *Birding for Everyone* is on vacation during June and July. Naturalist Angie Geiger returns to lead a walk at 10 am on Saturday, August 1st, at the SF Botanical Garden.

**Wish List:** Used or new binoculars and backpacks for our programs.



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