



Executive Director's Corner

Nancy DeStefanis, Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Our winter programs at Chain of Lakes, Heron's Head Park, and Crissy Field will take place on the second Saturdays of December, January, February, and March 2018. Please save these dates!

We are preparing to introduce K through third-grade students in the city to the wonders of birds and nature in their own local parks. Our school program starts this month and continues to the end of May.

I'm pleased to report that two seventh-grade students have signed up for our internships so far. You will meet them at Heron's Head Park and Stow Lake.

We still have openings for interns, so please help us get the word out! Please see information on page 6.

I look forward to seeing you on the trails.

Best regards,

Nancy DeStefanis



Ed Lee

Above: Great Blue Heron in the Presidio.

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A Great Blue Heron on a golf course wrestles a snake into submission.

Photos by Grace Ruth



Walking with Camera in Hand Jeff Harter

A few years ago I started carrying a lightweight camera with a powerful built-in zoom wherever I go. A cell phone's wide-angle lens just won't get the job done. I love being able to share my everyday bird encounters (Dark-eyed Juncos) or more elusive fare (a Great Horned Owl).

In our city, hawks, jays, and ravens soar, while finches, sparrows, and hummingbirds are ubiquitous. A trip to Golden Gate Park, the bay, or a beach provides an opportunity to see herons, sandpipers, plovers, cormorants, and other photogenic waterfowl.



Clockwise from above: Great Horned Owl; Cedar Waxwing; Cooper's Hawk; Red-crowned Parrot.

Birding for Everyone, September 2nd

Megan Prelinger, Naturalist



Photos: Jeff Harter

Clockwise from above:
Red-shouldered Hawk;
California Scrub Jay;
Song Sparrow;
Anna's Hummingbird
at the garden's
library fountain.



The intrepid group that turned out for the September walk is to be recognized for extraordinary endurance, as we faced mounting temperatures on a day that became one of the hottest on record. We started the walk in “moderate” temperatures in the mid-80s, and over the course of our walk the day climbed to the upper 90s on its way even higher.

And yet, the birds were out! As we gathered near the Botanical Garden gate an **Orange-crowned Warbler** was foraging in the monkey hand tree, as were **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** and a female **Downy Woodpecker**. **California Scrub Jays** were active between the big trees on the lawn, and we found our first-of-the-day **Black Phoebe** making flights over the main lawn—all before we commenced our circuit of the garden.

Along the south path we found the first of many **Anna's Hummingbirds**, as well as the reliable **American Robins** and **Dark-eyed Juncos**. In the California Garden were **White-crowned Sparrows**, **Song Sparrows**, a pair of **House Finches**,

and over-flying **Western Gulls**. Noisy first-year **Steller's Jays** were active in the Redwood Grove, and a late-season pair of **Allen's Hummingbirds** were near the Succulent Garden.

The Children's Garden hosted a **Nuttall's Woodpecker**, **Lesser Goldfinches**, **Mourning Doves**, and **California Towhees**. In the sky overhead we saw a swirling kettle of four **Red-tailed Hawks**, likely fall migrants.

The windy ridge that separates the Children's Garden from the main garden was the coolest spot of the day. Down in the Moon-viewing Garden was a bright male Wilson's Warbler. By that time the mounting heat had us flitting from one patch of shade to the other, as we hastened to wrap it up. On the way back to the gate **Mallards** were in the Waterfowl Pond, and **Pygmy Nuthatches** in the tall conifers.

The walk was capped by the overflight of a **Cooper's Hawk** and the loud rapid call of a **Red-shouldered Hawk**, both observed as we summed up our findings: 27 species.



Great Horned Owls! Photos by Sandi Wong



Merganser Time

Contributor Grace Ruth recently saw a male Hooded Merganser at Stow Lake stretching his neck and making an unusual frog-like sound, but she saw no sign of his female companion, a Mandarin Duck.



Photos by Grace Ruth

UPCOMING EVENTS

SF Nature Walks: From 10 am to noon; rain cancels all walks. Members free, non-members \$10, children always free. Please bring binoculars if you can, and a pencil. For directions see our [events calendar](#).

Birding for Everyone: First Saturdays from 10 am to noon in the SF Botanical Garden. Next: Oct. 7 and Nov. 4, with Megan Prelinger. Meet at SF Botanical Garden bookstore, 9th Ave. near Lincoln.

SF Botanical Garden: Free to SF residents with proof of residency; non-residents pay a fee.

Chain of Lakes: Saturday, December 9, with Alan Hopkins. Meet at Middle Lake parking lot in Golden Gate Park at 10 am.

Internship applications are available on [our website](#): http://sfnature.org/get_involved/intern.html.

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