



## Executive Director's Corner



Dear Friends,

**As we embark on our year-end fundraising campaign, I hope you will give generously to help us reach our goal of \$50,000. Our online donation site, Flipcause, is easy to use and we receive the funds immediately.**

Our first field trip, Birding for Kids (7–12) and their Families, officially starts up on October 9th at the SF Botanical Garden from 9:30 to approximately 11:30 am. Our new interns from USF – Lauryn, Theo, and Jupiter will join Senior Intern, Joy Chang, in leading the field trip.

Birding for Teenagers (13 and up) and Adults continues on the same day and time at SFBG. Trip leader, Alan Hopkins, will lead the group on a separate trail. Please see our calendar for more information: [www.sfnature.org/calendar](http://www.sfnature.org/calendar). Starting this winter, all of our field trips rotate around the city to birding hotspots. Please check our calendar for directions and fees as we post new trips.

This winter we gently restarted our school program by providing field trips to Herons Head Park for two first grade groups. We hope to continue our classroom visits and field trips this winter and spring as long as it is safe for us to do so.

This past spring we had an enormously successful Heron Watch program at Stow Lake. At least 1,500 adults and children joined us for up close and personal views of the eight chicks. We also led field trips for children and families. Five interns graduated from our Youth Internship program.

Thank you for supporting our end of year campaign!!!

Best regards,

Nancy DeStefanis

### [Become a Member/Donate Online](#)

Donate online or mail a check to: SFNE, PO Box 210303, SF CA 94121

[www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org)

Tax ID no.: 54-2111941. Membership: Adults, \$35; Seniors 65+, \$30. Joint Membership for two seniors at same residence \$50; students 21 or under, \$25.

Email: [info@sfnature.org](mailto:info@sfnature.org) tel.: 415-205-0776

### Around Stow Lake in May Photos by Richard Drake



Canadian gosling



Mallard duckling



Hooded Merganser

## Lands End Field Trip Report by Alan Hopkins



The September 10th San Francisco Nature Education field trip to Lands End brought out a crew of nine eager birders. The overcast and fog were a relief from the extreme heat we had all suffered through earlier in the week. We began by checking

Seal Rocks from the Lands End Visitors Center Lookout; the rocks were covered with **Brandt's Cormorants** and **Brown Pelicans** but there was little activity on the ocean. The Sutro Baths pond had two **Double-crested Cormorants**, as well as **Heermann's** and **Western Gulls**. We decided to head east on the Coastal Trail.

Some sharp eyes spotted two **Black Oystercatchers** on the rocks far below us. The Pigeon Guillemots that nest on Hermit Rock had already left for the year. But a single **Pelagic Cormorant** on the rock was a highlight. Far out into the straights in the wake of Mile Rock Lighthouse was a large feeding flock of pelicans and gulls but they were a bit too distant even for the scope. We continued to the West Wash, and up to the El Camino Del Mar Trail and headed back to the west. Along the trail **Bewick's Wren**, **Wilson's Warbler**, **Northern Flicker**, and **Elegant Terns** were spotted. At the USS San Francisco Memorial we decided to go check Sutro Heights Park rather than the Cliff House.

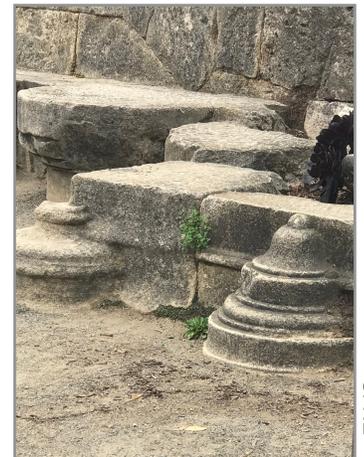
At Sutro Heights Park are the remains of the formal Italian Gardens created by Adolf Sutro in 1881. Although the splendor of the park has diminished over time, the GGNRA has maintained the garden's historic appearance. Even with its formal appearance it can be a fine place to look for birds. The view of Ocean Beach and some of the Seal Rocks is spectacular but we couldn't find anything new. Around the trees, lawn, and hedges we did have a close encounter with a **Red-tailed Hawk**, and **Downy Woodpecker**, **Pygmy Nuthatch**, **Dark-eyed Juncos**, and **White-crowned Sparrows** were easily seen. One of our final birds of the day was a bright migrating **Yellow Warbler**. We had a great time and saw 36 species!



SFNE members at Lands End. Alan Hopkins fourth from right



Interns from USF prepare to lead field trips for kids. From left: Lauryn, Jupiter, and Theo



Right: Monastery stones behind the SFBG library

San Francisco  
Nature  
Education



Please support our end of year  
fundraising campaign!

Please [donate online](#)—Network for Good portal is secure—  
or mail a check payable to SFNE: PO Box 210303, SF CA 94121  
e-mail: [info@sfnature.org](mailto:info@sfnature.org) telephone: 415-205-0776 [www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org).  
All contributions are tax-deductible. Our tax ID no. is 54-2111941.



San Francisco Nature Education is in its 22nd year of delivering comprehensive environmental education programs to students from schools in the San Francisco Unified School District and conducting Saturday field trips and programs for adults and children.

## Visit Lodi on Nov 5-6 for the Sandhill Crane Festival By Nancy DeStefanis

I visited Lodi several years ago and lucked out when I saw two Cranes leap into the air and do the dance!!!

Great Blue Herons are often compared to Sandhill Cranes, but two major differences separate them: Sandhills have only three toes so they cannot nest in a tree (Great Blues have four toes) and secondly, they eat vegetation - not fish and gophers like the Great Blue. Many folks who come to Stow Lake call them Cranes, perhaps because they were called Blue Cranes and Big Cranky in olden days!

I highly recommend The Lodi Crane Festival to appreciate these majestic birds. They have all sorts of tours planned, or go and enjoy by yourselves.

In 2002, I had the opportunity to visit the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, Wisconsin and enjoy a tour with George Archibald the co-founder. We observed all 13 species of Cranes in the world at the Center. George became famous for living with a female Whooping Crane named Tex and getting her in the mood to lay an egg!!!

Shortly after, I flew to Kearney, Nebraska for the great fly-in of thousands of Sandhill Cranes - an experience not to be missed.

As luck would have it, I had the opportunity in June to observe a family of Sandhill Cranes at Burnaby Lake in Vancouver, Canada. After the Great Blue Heron, the Sandhill is surely my favorite bird in North America.

So, take this opportunity to enjoy these spectacular birds — visit <https://lodisandhillcrane.org/>



Paul Dixon

Two week old Sandhill chick, Burnaby Lake



Paul Dixon

Sandhill parents with six week old chick at Burnaby Lake, near Vancouver, BC

## New interns learn to lead field trips by Lauryn Wong, USF intern

USF seniors, Jupiter, Lauryn, and Theo, met with Nancy DeStefanis on September 10th at the SF Botanical Garden (SFBG) to learn about the local birds as well as how to lead field trips for kids 7-12. We discussed the projects we would undertake during the internship (which ends at the beginning of December) as well as the route we would be taking during the October birding walk, our duties as guides, and tips for getting the kids engaged during the walk.

As we gathered behind the SFBG library entrance and took photos, Ms. D. told us about the Monastery Stones that can be found around the Garden. When the 13th century Santa Maria de Óvila Monastery (located south of Madrid) fell into disrepair, William Randolph Hearst purchased it and shipped the intricately carved stones to San Francisco. He had planned to rebuild the Monastery at his home near Lake Shasta. However, Hearst went bankrupt, and he donated the stones to the City of San Francisco. The plan for rebuilding the Monastery soon burned except for the Chapter House which was gifted to the Cistercian Priests in Vina, CA. There it was rebuilt and restored. The rest of the stones are now inside the Garden, around Stow Lake, around Golden Gate Park, and along the lagoon at the Palace of Fine Arts. For more information visit: <https://www.outsidelands.org/monastery-stones.php>

We then walked around the garden to practice our birding skills. With binoculars and bird guides in hand, we spotted a lot of birds. Right away, we found a **Lesser Goldfinch** at the bird bath! Later we spotted **American Robins** in the grass, along with a gaggle of **Canada Geese**. **Anna's Hummingbirds** zoomed around us quickly as we continued down the path, with their loud buzzy calls being heard every now and then. We then spotted the **Black Phoebe**, the **Steller's Jay**, the **Fox Sparrow**, a couple of **Common Ravens**, the **California Towhee**, the **Orange-crowned Warbler**, and the **Tree Swallow**. We then took a break for lunch and discussed what to say during the tours, as well as strategies for finding a bird using the clock method in a tree. We made plans to meet again so we could walk the trails one more time in preparation for leading the first Birding for Kids walk on October 8th at the Garden.