



GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015



THE OUTSTANDING HIGHLIGHT OF 2014-15 FOR GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY was establishment of a wildlife reserve at Alameda Point to permanently protect Alameda's nesting endangered California Least Terns.

GGAS had been working to protect the terns for two decades. Establishment of the Alameda Wildlife Reserve in November 2014 was a testament to the dedicated volunteers, public-private collaboration, and long-term vision and perseverance that characterize our approach to conservation.

During 2014-15, we mobilized over 1,500 volunteers in our conservation, education, and advocacy programs. We led habitat restoration efforts with five different land management agencies.

The results can be seen throughout the central Bay Area – from the protected tern colony at Alameda Point, to restored wetland habitat on San Francisco's industrial waterfront, to the delighted faces of Richmond children watching Western Bluebirds fledge from a nest box they built for their schoolyard.

Large photos at top: Eco-Education students with nest box (Anthony DeCicco), Nesting Least Tern (Darlene McNulty). **Row of photos from left to right:** Shoreline cleanup at MLK Jr. Shoreline (Nancy Johnston), Least Tern and chick (Rick Lewis), Least Tern in flight (Rick Lewis), Eco-Education (Anthony DeCicco). **Inset photo:** Least Tern with fish (Bob Lewis).



CONSERVATION

CREATION OF THE ALAMEDA WILDLIFE RESERVE was a landmark moment for Bay Area conservation. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – which took over ownership of the former Alameda Naval Air Station in November 2014 – is committed by law to protect the tern colony there, which has become the most productive Least Tern breeding colony on the West Coast as a result of great collaboration between the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and GGAS. The V.A. unveiled plans for a nature center and Bay Trail segment for public access. We give special thanks to GGAS volunteer Leora Feeney, who has led the campaign to protect Alameda Point wildlife for decades.

In other conservation achievements during 2014-15, we

- Initiated a partnership with the City of Oakland to educate neighbors about the nesting heron colony in downtown Oakland. We organized multiple public walking tours and our first Eco-Art Flash Mob. You can view a video of the Art Mob on our web site.
- Delivered training for arborists on bird-friendly tree care, in partnership with the Western chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture.
- Won symbolic fencing and educational signage for threatened Western Snowy Plovers' winter roosting site on Alameda's Crown Beach.
- Worked with the City of Orinda to protect nesting Cliff Swallows at Wilder Park.
- Supported the launch of National Audubon's landmark report on Birds and Climate Change, with extensive coverage in local media including the San Francisco Chronicle.
- Collaborated with the City of San Francisco on a pilot project to address residential bird-window collisions.
- Worked with the City of Alameda to require a safe haul-out for harbor seals being displaced by shoreline development.



Clockwise from top: Snowy Plovers in Alameda (Rick Lewis), Installing monofilament recycling bins (Ilana DeBare), Oakland heron art mob (Ilana DeBare).

- Installed a series of monofilament recycling bins at East Bay fishing spots to reduce the risk of discarded fishing line strangling and killing wildlife.

Throughout the year, our three conservation committees – San Francisco, East Bay, and Alameda – analyzed multiple local land use issues affecting wildlife to inform GGAS's public positions on these issues.

In the latest round in our decades-long fight to prevent bird deaths from wind turbines, GGAS pressed Alameda County to deny a permit renewal for an Altamont wind company that kills hundreds of raptors each year with outmoded, dangerous turbines. While we did not prevail in the permit debate, our efforts bore fruit in fall 2015 when that company announced it would shut down those turbines.

HABITAT RESTORATION

GGAS PARTNERED WITH LOCAL LAND MANAGERS to lead habitat restoration at eight different sites on both sides of the Bay. Over 1,300 volunteers contributed 3,500 hours at:

- Pier 94 (Port of San Francisco).
- Golden Gate Park, Bison Paddock (City of San Francisco)
- Golden Gate Park, North Lake (City of San Francisco)
- Crissy Field (Golden Gate National Recreation Area)
- Ocean Beach (Golden Gate National Recreation Area)
- Alameda Wildlife Reserve (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service/ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline (East Bay Regional Park District)
- Point Pinole (East Bay Regional Park District)

We mobilized not only GGAS members and school children but additional volunteers from civic/community groups and local companies like Salesforce.

At Pier 94 alone, we removed 59 thirty-gallon bags of weeds, 13 bags of trash, and planted 2,025 native plants that will continue transforming that former dump site into flourishing habitat for birds. Some species such as American Avocets are already nesting in our restored section.



Clockwise from top: American Avocets (Rick Lewis), Habitat restoration at Pier 94 (Lee Karney), Habitat restoration at MLK Jr. Shoreline (Ilana DeBare).

ADULT EDUCATION



Ridgway's Rail (Bob Lewis)

OVER 50 VOLUNTEER DOCENTS shared knowledge about local birds with visitors to Cesar Chavez Park, Lake Merritt, and the Bay Trail in Richmond. The Burrowing Owl docents at Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley alone spoke with 1,412 park visitors!

Sixty-eight volunteer field trip leaders broke a GGAS record by leading 159 bird walks for members and the general public.

About 900 people attended our monthly speaker series on topics that ranged from Climate Change and Birds to Gardening in our Drought. Four hundred people took part in GGAS's popular birding classes, including our third year-long Master Birder class co-produced with California Academy of Sciences.

Reaching out to diverse communities, we published our Healthy Trees, Healthy Birds brochure in Spanish, produced Chinese language posters for the Oakland heron campaign, and promoted our Lights Out for Birds campaign on the local Univision (Spanish-language) TV station.

YOUTH EDUCATION

OUR AWARD-WINNING ECO-EDUCATION PROGRAM brought hands-on nature learning to over 650 students plus family members at ten Title I public elementary schools in Oakland, Richmond, and San Francisco. In addition to classroom sessions, we led students on a series of field trips to wetlands and creeks in their communities, plus three family trips to Muir Beach. For many of the students, the Muir Beach trip was the first time they'd been to the ocean.

We piloted our new Bird-Friendly Schools curriculum, in which students make their own schoolyards into healthier learning environments and improve habitat for wildlife, through activities like installing nest boxes or native fuchsias that attract hummingbirds. We deepened the alignment of the Eco-Ed curriculum with Next-Generation Science Standards and included activities like nature journaling that integrate scientific observation with verbal skills.

Older public school students benefitted from our new partnership with the environmental science program at Oakland High School, in which we introduced 70 tenth-graders to the avian diversity of Lake Merritt throughout the year.

In addition to our school-based Eco-Education program, GGAS produced a series of free summer bird and nature walks geared to families. Children and families discovered citizen science in Great Backyard Bird Count for Kids events led by GGAS at the San Francisco Zoo and Lake Merritt.



Top: Eco-Education at Muir Beach.

Bottom: Eco-Education (Eva Guralnick).



Christmas Bird Count (Ilana DeBare)

CITIZEN SCIENCE

The 2014 Christmas Bird Count broke participation records on both sides of the Bay, with 461 volunteers who logged 3,600 hours generating data that will be used by scientists to track bird populations. The count received extensive media coverage in the San Francisco Chronicle, Contra Costa Times, and elsewhere. The Oakland count is the fourth largest in the nation, and will celebrate its 75th year in 2015.



Birdathon 2015 (Ilana DeBare)

BIRDATHON

GGAS's fifth annual Birdathon fundraiser was our most successful to date, raising \$63,000 through special birding trips offered in the spring. At the Birdathon Awards Celebration, we awarded our 2015 Elsie Roemer Conservation Award to International Bird Rescue for its 40+ years of rehabilitating water birds, especially their efforts with the recent "mystery goo" in San Francisco Bay. Volunteers Herb and Randi Long were honored with our Paul Covel Environmental Education Award for longstanding service to our Eco-Education program.

Many thanks to the volunteers, donors, partners, and staff who helped us achieve so much this year! We look forward to working with you to accomplish even more for Bay Area birds and wildlife in 2015-16.

FINANCIALS 2014-15

STATEMENT OF REVENUES & EXPENSES FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2015

REVENUE

Individual Gifts & Bequests	\$364,102
Foundation Grants	294,460
Program & Events	126,254
Memberships	89,340
Other	80,362
TOTAL Revenue	\$954,518

FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

Program Expenses (Conservation, Education, & Membership)	\$463,481
General Operations & Management	149,132
Fundraising	44,643
TOTAL Functional Expenses	\$657,256

Change in Net Assets	\$281,649
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	429,560
Net Assets at End of Year	711,209

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF JUNE 30, 2015

ASSETS

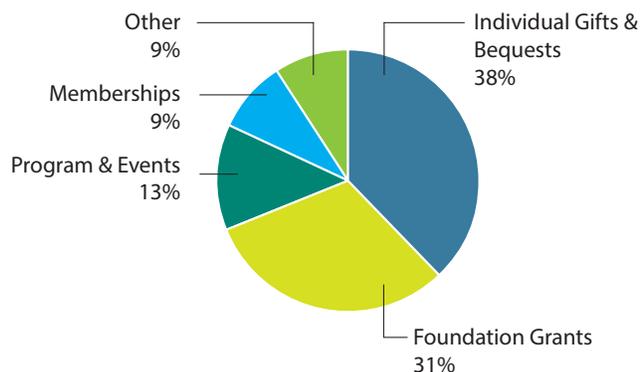
Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$478,284
Accounts Receivable	142,345
Inventory	2,936
Investments	123,883
Pre-Paid Expenses	1,887
Total Assets	\$749,335

LIABILITIES

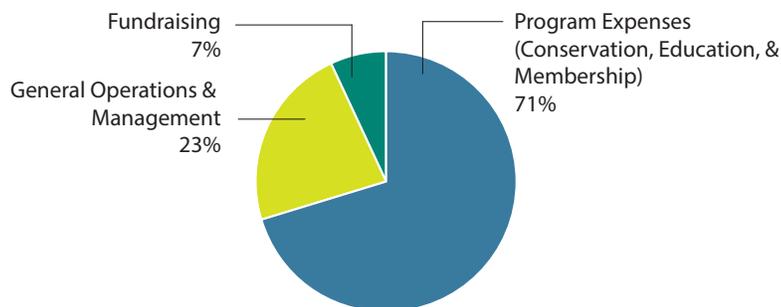
Accounts Payable	\$36,274
Taxes Payable	1,852
Total Liabilities	\$38,126

Net Assets	\$711,209
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$749,335

REVENUE 2014-15



EXPENSES 2014-15



Financial Review provided by Kirby and Forbes, Certified Public Accountants. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. 2015 revenue included some unexpected large bequests.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014-15

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