



100 years



# 2017 Annual Report

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017



**Imagine: one hundred years of continuous effort to protect Bay Area birds!**



Golden Gate Audubon Society celebrated its Centennial anniversary in 2017 with several signature projects. We created a vibrant traveling museum exhibit to share our story and engage diverse audience at a series of venues in Bay Area cities throughout the Centennial year.



Adding an ongoing thrill to the Centennial year, we launched the San Francisco Bay Area's first live Osprey nest cam. By late summer, more than 70,000 unique viewers were logging on to watch Ospreys who share our shoreline.



GGAS mobilized 2,430 volunteers in ongoing programs to restore habitat, connect under-served youth with nature, advocate for wildlife and habitats, and educate the Bay Area public about the wonder of birds and how we all can help them thrive.

It was a productive milestone anniversary year. Here are some of the highlights.

## Centennial Exhibit

The GGAS Board made a strategic decision to mark our Centennial by reaching out to new audiences, aiming to inspire more people to engage with our mission.

To achieve this objective, we produced a compelling traveling museum exhibit that featured stunning photos of Bay Area birds. The accompanying narrative highlighted GGAS's key accomplishments for birdlife and for our local communities.

By June of 2017, the exhibit had been hosted at the State of California Office Building in San Francisco, the Environmental Education Center in Berkeley's Tilden Regional Park, and Oakland's City Hall complex. (During the second half of 2017, fiscal year 2018, the exhibit moved to the Tides Thoreau Center in San Francisco's Presidio and then Lindsay Wildlife Experience in Walnut Creek.)

Each opening was celebrated by GGAS members with VIPs, allies, and new friends. Dignitaries presented



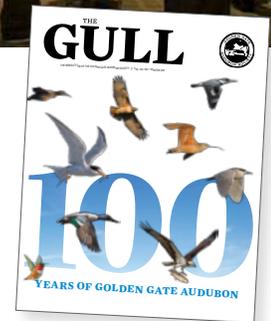
Ilana DeBare

Centennial exhibit at Tilden Park.

GGAS with formal proclamations from the California Legislature, City of San Francisco, City of Oakland, and Alameda County.

We further showcased GGAS's 100 years of conservation leadership with special free field trips throughout the year and featured guest speakers on key conservation topics relevant to our

history. A special 20-page Centennial issue of *The Gull* in January 2017 drew upon archival research and oral histories to highlight conservation battles and heroes from GGAS's first century.



## Osprey Nest Cam

Ospreys began nesting along San Francisco Bay for the first time only in recent decades. Realizing these remarkable raptors would be charismatic ambassadors for conservation, we installed the Bay Area's first 24x7 live-streaming Osprey nest cam array on the historic WWII-era Whirley Crane in Richmond.

With help from myriad partners, notably the Port and City of Richmond and PG&E, our two web cams provided dramatic high-definition views. San Francisco's skyline was an inspiring backdrop for close-ups of the Osprey nest. Adults Rosie and Richmond courted, bonded, laid and incubated eggs, and then hatched and raised two chicks. The March 2017 launch drew extensive media coverage and more than 70,000 people tuned in to the video stream during this initial season.

Inspiring eco-stewardship and conservation education was purposeful. The majority of our Osprey nest cam web site, [SFBayOspreys.org](http://SFBayOspreys.org), was devoted to ways people can help Ospreys thrive. Teachers eagerly downloaded our STEM-science lesson plans on Osprey-inspired topics. The live chat section on the site encouraged Osprey fans to share observations, ask questions, and build community. As one fan noted:



***“I had been watching the Osprey cam since the beginning.... I was amazed by the valuable information that was conveyed and the compassion of people who had never before observed bird life. I was so moved that I donated, ultimately joined GGAS, and volunteered as a docent.”***

## Oakland Heron Rescues

Downtown Oakland street trees have hosted the Bay Area's largest nesting colony of Black-crowned Night-Herons. However, not-yet-fledged herons risk severe injury and death when they tumble from those trees onto the concrete sidewalks. In such circumstances, there's no food, water, or protection. Nor is there a way for them to climb back into the canopies



Releasing a young Snowy Egret that was rescued from the downtown Oakland rookery.

Ilana DeBare

to be provisioned and tended by their parents.

In fiscal year 2017, Golden Gate Audubon leveraged the three-way heron rescue partnership we'd initiated in 2016 with Oakland Zoo and International Bird Rescue. Together we rescued 65 injured young herons, the vast majority of whom were successfully rehabilitated and released into safer habitat in appropriate locations.

## Bird-Safe Buildings

We expanded the number of Bird-Safe cities in the Bay Area by working with the City of Richmond to enact bird-safe building guidelines in November 2016.

We also trained more than 100 local architects in Bird-Safe Building Design, providing continuing education credit and LEED Credits through the American Institute of Architects.

## Habitat Restoration

GGAS volunteers restored habitat for wildlife at eight public land sites on both sides of the Bay: Pier 94 in San Francisco, Crissy Field in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the Bison Paddock, North Lake, and Land's End in Golden Gate Park, MLK Jr. Regional Shoreline in Oakland, Point Pinole Regional Shoreline in Richmond, and the Alameda Wildlife Reserve site on V.A.-managed land.

Our habitat volunteers planted 1,388 native plants, collected and then planted over 600 native seeds, and removed 512 thirty-gallon bags of trash, 441 thirty-gallon bags of weeds, and 16 bags of recyclable materials. They also installed ten nest platforms for swallows and doves at Pier 94 and three Wood Duck boxes in Golden Gate Park.



Noreen Weeden

Restoring habitat at Pier 94.

## Youth Education

Our award-winning Eco-Education program served 510 students and 500 family members from nine Title I (under-served) elementary schools in San Francisco, Oakland, and Richmond. This year, as part of the STEM Science curriculum, pupils used tiny endoscopic cameras to monitor the nest boxes they'd built themselves and installed at their own school yards. These lessons in stewardship and citizen science came alive in ways that thrilled the kids.



Eco-Ed student in the field; Eco-Ed field trip to Alcatraz nesting colony.

Sharon Beals; Anthony DeCicco

## Adult Education

Over 3,500 people participated in 166 free field trips led by 69 volunteer field trip leaders, including a series of specially curated Centennial trips focused on locations and topics of significance in GGAS's history.

We trained and coordinated sixty volunteer docents to provide public education about local birds along the Bay Trail in Richmond, at Lake Merritt, in downtown Oakland's heron colony, and at Burrowing Owl wintering sites in the East Bay.

Over 900 people attended our monthly Speaker Series and 500 people enrolled in our 24 birding classes.



Killdeer. Jerry Ting

## Citizen Science

Our Oakland Christmas Bird Count—which recently set a world-record for marshaling the most field counters—mobilized 302 participants who documented 179 species. Our San Francisco count mobilized 114 field observers who counted 178 species.

Other citizen science activities included a fall shorebird survey, spring and fall Brown Pelican roosting surveys, and Black Oystercatcher monitoring, nest box monitoring, and Bio-blitzes at Pier 94 and Heron's Head Park. We partnered with Citizens for East Shore Parks to publish a brochure on *Birds at the Albany Shoreline*, based on data from a year-long bird survey conducted by GGAS volunteers.



2016 CBC at Emeryville shoreline.

Ivana DeBare



Bob Lewis

Green-winged Teal.



Diane Winkler

Western Bluebirds, from our 2018 Birds of the Bay Area photo calendar.

## Birdathon

Our annual Birdathon in April mobilized 50 volunteer fundraisers and 209 field trip participants, who together raised \$61,000 in support of GGAS. At the Birdathon Awards Celebration, we presented our 2017 Elsie Roemer Conservation Award to Tony Brake, who founded a multi-year citizen science project focused on nesting Ospreys on San Francisco Bay shorelines and who became an integral part of our Osprey nest cam project.

Our 2017 Paul Covel Education Award honored outstanding bird educators Eddie Bartley, Jack Dumbacher, and Bob Lewis, who founded and teach the Master Birding class co-sponsored by GGAS and California Academy of Sciences.



Ilana DeBare

2017 Paul Covel Education Award winners Eddie Bartley, Jack Dumbacher, and Bob Lewis with GGAS Executive Director Cindy Margulis at the 2017 Birdathon Awards Celebration.



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