

Photo by Ross Griswold



**Fall 2014
Volume 38 Issue 3**

**First Saturday
of the Month Tour:**

**Free tours on the
first Saturday of
each month from
9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.**

**Last Saturday
of the Month Tour:**

**FREE bird talk and
nature walk at the
Bolsa Chica
Ecological Reserve.
Led by Amigos docents.
9:00 am.**

**Carpooling is encouraged as
parking at the Bolsa Chica
Ecological Reserve is limited.**

Published quarterly by
Amigos de Bolsa Chica
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President's Tern – Summer Review

By Jerry Donohue

As summer is drawing to a close and some of our migrant birds are beginning to return, it is good to reflect on summer activities at the Bolsa Chica. In the past we were strictly speaking about the Bolsa Chica wetlands, which was a relatively quiet time for our docents. Today we volunteer on the west side of PCH as well. Through our Co-operative agreement with the State Beach, we hosted a FLOW night, 3 campground programs, 8 Fridays involving Junior Ranger activities and an evening with Birds and Beaks at their movie night.

We had meetings at the end of September to review strengths and weaknesses of the various programs offered at the beach. We often say "it's all connected" and yet do little to engage beach visitors. My hope is to introduce wetland opportunities while covering beach topics in our programs at the State Beach. The west side of PCH attracts a younger crowd and we all know that youth yields energy and optimism as seen with our community college students who work with us on FLOW.

So, although summer is ebbing, our planning process should be engaged as to how we can improve our current beach offerings. The campground programs are usually 30-40 minutes in length, depending upon the audience. They are mostly RV campers with a majority of children. Presently, we talk about birds, showing pictures from our Saturday docent folders and play the Birds and Beaks game. This format has been well received but it would be nice if we could offer another program or two during the summer. We could advertise FLOW several evenings during the summer to again showcase one of our most unique programs.

Several years ago, we sang sea shanties at the conclusion of our bird program. We have the opportunity to broaden our base with this new relationship with the beach and late September and October isn't too early to float ideas that engage and excite young and old alike. You don't need to do all the planning or even present the program. We are eliciting ideas at this point and your input is crucial to success at Bolsa Chica State Beach. Thank you and I hope to see you on the west side of PCH as well.

Attention Amigos Docents: 2014 Docent Day October 25th

Attention docents, trail guides, naturalists and interpreters! OC Wild Proudly Presents the 17th Annual Docent Day, Saturday, October 25, 2014 at the Ocean Institute in Dana Point, 8:00 am to 2:30 pm. Join us for an educational outing featuring informative presentations by OC's finest researchers, biologists and specialists. Learn new details about your favorite niche to share with others. Network with your fellow educators while enjoying a scenic day outdoors.

Docent Day 2014 Workshops Presentation Topics include: Bird Walk, Tidepool Ecology, Native Plant Walk, Geology of Dana Cove, Archaeology of Orange County, Structure and Function of Feathers, History of Dana Point and the Tall Ship "Pilgrim" and the The Terrible "10" Invasive Plants and Restoration. Attend any three of these 1.5 hour sessions.

Please join us at the Ocean Institute located in beautiful Dana Point Harbor. Directions can be found here at www.ocean-institute.org. As space is limited, advanced reservations are required. Lunch and educational literature are provided with program fees. The program fee is \$10.00 per participant. Reservations are required by Monday, October 20. For more information or to register please contact Winter Bonnin by phone at (949) 497-7647, or via email at winter.bonnin@parks.ca.gov.

Amigos de Bolsa Chica 2015 Docent Training Class

The next Docent Training Class will be held in January and February of 2015. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about the Bolsa Chica and leading Amigos public and private tours, please contact the Amigos at 714-840-1575 or info@amigosdebolsachica.org. Amigos de Bolsa Chica Docents also give offsite presentations to schools and groups. The exact class dates have not yet been confirmed, but will take place from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. once a week for 6 weeks.

The subjects that will be covered include Birds, Endangered Species, Ecology, History and Restoration of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. The cost of the class is the Amigos Membership plus \$50 which includes a Docent Training Manual and a Docent Photo Binder. The classes will take place at Bolsa Chica State Beach Visitor Center, Pacific Coast Highway between Warner and Seapoint. The entrance is across the street from the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve on the ocean side of the street.

Amigos de Bolsa Chica has a free Public Tour the first Saturday of each month starting at 9:00 a.m. at the south parking lot of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve on Pacific Coast Highway between Warner and Seapoint across the street from the entrance to the Bolsa Chica State Beach. You are encouraged to attend the tour for an overview of the classes.



Gardening Program at Bolsa Chica State Beach

4th Saturday of the Month

By Jerry Donohue

Amigos has revamped our second Sunday of the month gardening activities at Bolsa Chica State Beach. What formerly has been a weeding activity, with an occasional month or two of planting, has morphed into a series of educational activities which will supplement our usual maintenance of the landscaped area outside the Visitor Center. This year we will be joined by a group of 9th and 10th graders from the Cypress area. In the past they have volunteered in Palos Verdes and El Segundo for ecological projects but were looking for something a little closer to home.

So, with 5-10 students coming the 4th Saturday of each month, myself and Rachael Lloyd thought of broadening the program to include some additional activities that we already do at Bolsa Chica. We are still working on a calendar as to which topics will be addressed on which dates but the program includes: testing soil samples from the gardens, a bird tour led by David Beeninga, a day of our FLOW program, constructing a path at the gardens, adding signage to the area, seed collection and yes planting, hopefully when we get some rain. We anticipate other volunteers besides this ecology club and hope to excite them with this program as well.

We will be meeting regularly the 4th Saturday of the month from 9:00 am - Noon, except in the holiday months of November and December when we will meet the 3rd Saturday of the month. For additional information please contact Rachel or Jerry and join us as we embark on this new adventure at Bolsa Chica State Beach. info@amigosdebolsachica.org.

Clearing the Inlet of Sediment

By Vic Leipzig

Every few years, the inlet to the full tidal basin needs to be cleared of sediment (mostly beach sand) that washes in with the current. The eight public agencies in charge (collectively the Bolsa Chica Steering Committee) have recently hired CJW Construction to “dredge” out that sand. The machinery to be used is actually a giant vacuum that will suck up sand from the channel bottom and pipe it out to be deposited on the beach. Work is expected to begin in November and continue through the winter months, the season when few birds are nesting. The Steering Committee has required that CJW stop work for the year in mid-March, to avoid disrupting the nesting that typically begins in spring.

Larger scale dredging has been done several times in the past. This time around, more limited sand removal will occur and the agencies have given the construction company a longer amount of time as a trade-off for using a small, and less expensive, dredge.

Removing sediment from the inlet is essential. An open inlet allows the basin to fill and drain properly with the ebb and flow of the tides. Bolsa Chica is currently in an interim condition because the 240-acre future full tidal area has yet to be restored because it is still in active oil production. When that additional restoration happens, the tidal prism (volume of water moved by the tides) will be greatly increased and it is expected that more water flowing through the inlet will minimize the need for repeated dredging.

Over the next few months, the beach south of the inlet will get a well-deserved infusion of new sand, and the tidal basin will function better for fish, birds, and other wildlife.



Amigos Welcomes New Program Manager

By Tom Anderson

Terri Bidle joins Amigos for the next several months (and hopefully longer) as our new Program Manager. This is an independent contractor position funded by recent grants from the Gillespie Foundation as well as Edison International and Walmart. Terri's tasks include recruiting and training new Docent and Citizen Scientists for the wetland tours and the FLOW program. She will build relationships with schools to make sure educators are aware of Amigos education programs and return to Amigos education programs year after year. One of the goals of the Edison International grant with which Terri will be focused is reaching a greater number of underserved schools and bring a greater number underserved students to Amigos' wetland tours and FLOW through bus transportation scholarships. Says Terri, "Wetland and ocean programs with hands-on activities are very important and can change the life of these students. Empowering them to explore their world, feel connected, ask questions and make informed decisions about their future is very rewarding to me."

As a graduate of the Amigos 2014 Docent Training class, Terri comes to us with an extensive background in managing environmental education programs that involve school-age children. She currently works as Program Manager for ExplorOcean in Newport Beach, a new learning center dedicated to educating K-12 students about the seven principles of Ocean Literacy. Before that, Terri was a Marine Science Educator with the Los Angeles County Floating Marine Science Laboratory leading students through various oceanographic laboratory stations in the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach Harbor. Previously, Terri was the Marine Education Program Manager at the USC Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies for 7 years. There her assignments included managing the QuikScience Challenge Competition for middle and high school students, conducting teacher workshops and training student mentors, organizing community events and coordinating student scientific expeditions in foreign countries as well as on Catalina Island.

Terri wants to meet and talk with all Amigos docents, so don't be surprised if you get a phone call from her. Terri says, "I love working on a team with dedicated volunteers. Each one of us brings different life experiences and skills to the playing field and together we create a dynamic team to offer the visitor of the Bolsa Chica Wetlands a memorable wildlife experience." We are very fortunate to have such a highly qualified individual whose life is very clearly dedicated to environmental education.

Progress Report: The Fledging of Nora Papian

By Nora Papian

Editors Note: Nora Papian was the keynote speaker at the 2012 Bolsa Brunch.

The last time we spoke was June 2012, and I told you of the invaluable experiences I received in nature camps as a young girl. But 2012 was a long time ago, and I've been adventuring ever since! So here's a not-so-brief summary of what I've been up to.

In the summer of 2012, I completed the research for my senior thesis on California Gnatcatchers. I also worked at the California State Parks in Natural Resource Management, removing invasive species of plants, collecting native seeds, and managing illegal trails.

During my senior year of college, I worked in a lab uploading and analyzing song data from Black-throated Blue Warblers (BTBW). This research was looking at how the warblers use different song types and textures during the breeding season. The two textures are the normal sweet(ish) quality of the song, and the other was termed "growler" because it sounds like the bird is growling. The graduate student found that the growling sounds are

– *Continued from Page 4*

used most often to solicit females and in aggressive encounters with other males. It is generally thought the BTBW have relatively simple, straight-forward songs, but this research shows that there is much more variation.

I spent summer 2013 at the Montague Sand Plains in western Massachusetts working on a project studying Prairie Warblers, with side projects on Eastern Whip-poor-will and Eastern Hognosed Snakes. The research question was whether one of the wintering habitats contributed to better reproductive success the following breeding cycle. The two wintering habitats were described as a “dry” habitat (forest) and the other is a “wet” habitat (marshes) in the Bahamas. I spent the summer resighting color banded warblers, defining territories, following nests, and helping the grad student band other birds. I also searched for and followed Eastern Whip-poor-will nests, and caught the snakes for pit tag reading.

From September until late April, I worked at California State Parks. I did invasive removal, habitat restoration (especially the dune restoration at BCSB- which became a feeding location for Belding’s Savannah Sparrows!), and removing illegal trails. I also trained my coworkers in nest searching, and updated the protocol for California Gnatcatcher surveys. I did several outreach programs, including a discussion of the most common bird species at Crystal Cove State Park with the other employees, and I worked the opening of the Berns Environmental Study Loop (when I was lucky enough to meet the Director of California State Parks). I was, thankfully, able to attend Mr. David Pryor’s retirement party after 40+ years with the State Parks. He was my boss for 8 years, more than a third of my life, and he has left an incredible impact on my life, not to mention the conservation and restoration of habitats in Orange County.

In May, I moved to New Hampshire to work with TERNS, LLC, and New Hampshire Fish and Game on White and Seavey Islands, in the Isles of Shoals. I lived in the lighthouse keeper’s house on White Island with the other biologist, Virginia, and Diesel, the 160lb Newfoundland who maintained a perimeter around the house where birds didn’t nest. The majority of the colony is on Seavey Island, with a few hundred pairs also nesting on White. White and Seavey are connected at low tide, and separated by at least 4 feet of water during high tide. We quickly learned to plan our schedule around the tide so we wouldn’t have to swim from one island to the other!

This season we had 2842 Common Tern (COTE) nests, 3 Arctic Tern (ARTE) nests, and 76 Roseate Tern (ROST) nests. We measured the reproductive success of these three species. To determine the COTE success there are fifteen 16 square meter productivity plots, which are divided between 6 blinds. Every nest laid within a plot is labeled and monitored. We spent many hours in the blinds during the nesting period looking for Roseate Terns, which are federally endangered. While the COTES and ARTEs prefer to nest in more open areas, ROSTs prefer to conceal their nests with vegetation or hide them under rocks.

While there were chicks present, we spent many hours doing feeding studies to determine the forage fish that are fed to the chicks. To do a feeding study, we watched a plot for 2 hours and identified each fish, its size, what chick received it and who provided it. This is particularly interesting work because the accumulation of data shows what fish are abundant over several years. For example, there was an eruption in the number of sand lance (aka sand eel) that corresponded to a 200% increase in the diet of the chicks.

One of my favorite activities while at this colony was educating others about the birds. Most of this outreach work was with Shoals Marine Lab (SML) on Appledore Island. SML is a research island that offers field research classes to college and high school students. The students, who studied everything from ornithology to marine physiology and function, were able to learn about the birds, and then came to visit White and Seavey to see the colony and birds.

This Fall, I will be working on Bon Portage Island in Nova Scotia. I will help with a fall migration station, and with blackpoll warbler research. After this position, I will move to South Carolina to help finish a fall migration season study. After that, well, you’ll just have to wait to find out!

The Pumpkins Are Coming!

By Dawn Pope

Our 3rd Annual Pumpkin Fundraiser has begun! We are happy to report we have orders for 60 pumpkins already. The first 10 centerpieces were for the HB Chamber of Commerce Green Forum on Saturday, September 13. Orders were taken from the sneak peak of this year's pumpkin collection at Amigos de Bolsa Chica's booth at the Green Expo that followed.

Pumpkin Camp for new and veteran pumpkin volunteers was held on September 23 at Pumpkin Central (the Pope residence). How to's for ordering, decorating and pick-ups were explained in detail. You can order Pumpkins now from the Amigos website: www.amigosdebolsachica.org/join.htm. Please read the PayPal instructions carefully.

Drought happens

This has not been the best year for pumpkins but our growers are doing their best to get us what we need. We will be sending out availability status notices frequently. Here's our 2014 Collection:

- A "stout" green (bluish) fellow has been added to our traditional size orange and white pumpkins selection. Please note our traditional pumpkin price has increased to \$35.
- We are continuing our Mini-Set of white pumpkins for \$35.00 while quantities last!
- New this year is an "Orange-Mon" pumpkin variety. This small pumpkin is orange with bright yellow speckles and has a whimsically long curvy stem. Perfect for kitchen and hostess gifts!



Save these dates for Huntington Harbor Philharmonic Holiday Boutique

Our booth is reserved for Friday, October 24, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Saturday, October 25, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. We'll feature a mix of this season's pumpkins and two wonderful "Show Specials." This event is held at the Huntington Harbor Algonquin Mall and we will have the same spot as last year. We'll need 3 to 4 volunteers each day to staff the booth (sales and set-up). Last year we sold out so we are expecting a great show. A schedule of set-up and shift hours will be available at Camp or you can email me at hdpopzz@verizon.net.

Time to donate succulents

Cuttings from your garden and/or a friendly neighbor's yard are needed. If you're out Pumpkin Central way just leave your donation in a flat or paper bag (bug free!) on bench out front! Thank you in advance for your continued dedication, support and volunteer hours to help with this fun Amigos de Bolsa Chica fundraising project.

Clapper Rails Get a Name Change

By Vic Leipzig

July 30, 2014 was the official date of this year's taxonomic changes by the American Ornithologists Union, including change in the name of our "Clapper" Rails. The birds known as Clapper Rails are found in marshes in both North and South America and came in many subspecies. The three subspecies found in California ('Light-footed' in coastal southern California, 'California' in the Bay Area, and 'Yuma' along the Colorado River and at Salton Sea) have been broken out from the rest and will henceforth be known as Ridgway's Rail, *Rallus obsoletus*. Robert Ridgway was one of North America's leading ornithologists of the late 1800s and early 1900s.

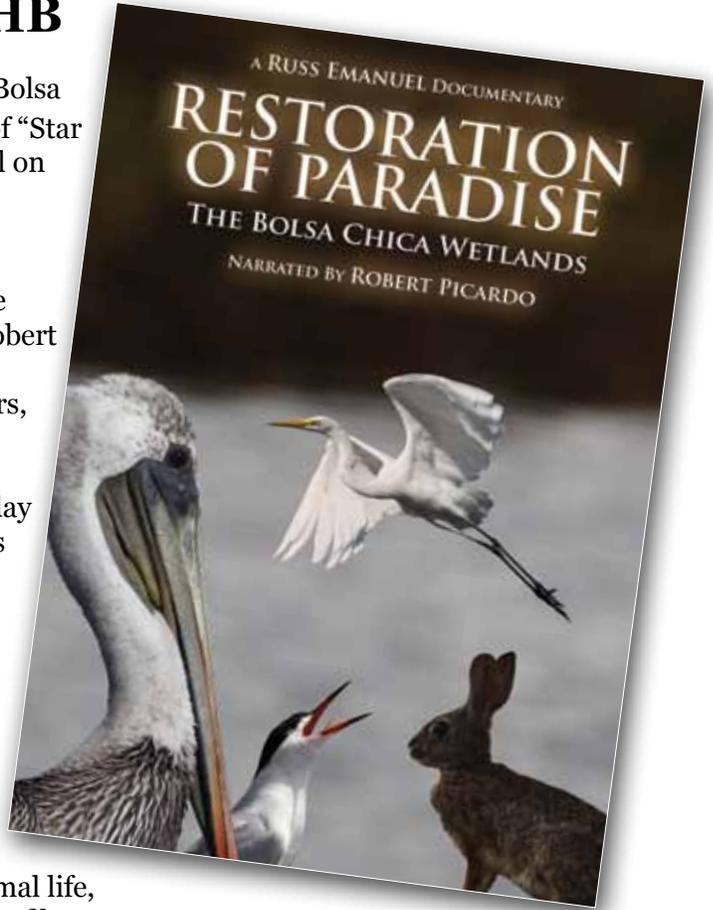
Note that the Latin species epithet has also been changed. The term "Clapper Rail" will still be used but only for the birds of the east and gulf coasts. The birds in South America have also been split off and will be known as Mangrove Rail. They will keep the Latin epithet "longirostris." So now there are three species instead of one: Clapper Rail, *Rallus crepitans*; Ridgway's Rail, *Rallus obsoletus*; and Mangrove Rail, *Rallus longirostris*. The ones we have in Orange County are now "Light-footed Ridgway's Rail." And they are still an endangered species!

“Restoration of Paradise” to Screen October 4 at the SoCal Film Festival in HB

“Restoration of Paradise,” a new documentary about the Bolsa Chica by Russ Emanuel and narrated by Robert Picardo of “Star Trek: Voyager” fame will screen at the SoCal Film Festival on Saturday October 4 at 3:30 pm at the Huntington Beach Central Library Theater, 7111 Talbert Avenue.

Russ Emanuel (“Legends of Nethiah”, “P.J.”, “Chasing the Green”, and the upcoming “Occupants” which also has Robert Picardo attached), is making his documentary directorial debut. With interviews by Amigos de Bolsa Chica members, Margaret and Dave Carlberg (who also assisted in writing and producing), this documentary takes you from the detailed and varied history of the terrain, to the present-day important Bird Sanctuary where over 200 species of birds can be spotted yearly, to what the future holds for this extraordinary paradise.

Russ says, “For myself, “Restoration of paradise” was a personal project. After researching the area and meeting avid groups such as Amigos de Bolsa Chica, I knew I needed to tell this fascinating area’s story. Over the past year, in my spare time, I filmed many days of footage - capturing beautiful sunrises and sunsets, watching the extraordinary scenery and breathtaking animal life, going to Bowers Museum in Santa Ana (Orange County) to film the mysterious cogstones, to finally following Amigos de Bolsa Chica to see what they do to help keep this area in its pristine condition. With this incredible collaboration, the pieces of the puzzle finally connected and this documentary has now reached its ultimate conclusion - a completed product ready for its potential audience. That said, I hope you will enjoy my first foray into documentary filmmaking.”



The film was also nominated for Best Documentary at the recent Action Film Festival. Tickets for the October 4 screening of “Restoration of Paradise” can be found at <http://socalfilmfest.com/>. To learn more about Russ Emanuel and future screenings of “Restortion of Paradise”, visit <http://rop.russem.com/>.

State Beach News

By Melanie Cox

As the Interpreter (Educator) at Bolsa Chica State Beach, I have increasingly seen that summer is my busiest time of year. This summer was no exception. Every month we had junior ranger programs, campfire programs, school groups & grunion run events (sadly, very few grunion were seen). In August, we had our annual end of summer movie night, filled with crafts, activities, educational booths, and of course, “Finding Nemo”! I am proud to say that the Amigos de Bolsa Chica were an amazing partner in the junior ranger programs, campfire programs, FLOW and movie night.

Now that the crowds are depleting, it is time for school groups, Coastal Clean-up Day and planning our new programs for 2015. It has been great fun working with Jerry Donohue & Rachael Lloyd on the new planting activities for volunteers that will be conducted around our Visitor Center. I look forward to working with the Amigos on future projects that will fulfill the mission statements of both the wetland and beach.



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THE TERN TIDE

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AMIGOS DE BOLSA CHICA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I support the specific and primary purpose of Amigos de Bolsa Chica, which is to advocate the preservation, restoration and maintenance of the Bolsa Chica, to encourage the public acquisition of all the wetlands and sufficient surrounding open space to create a viable ecosystem, and to provide education about the importance of wetlands.

- ANNUAL DUES
- \$ 10 Student
- \$ 25 Individual
- \$ 40 Family
- \$100 Sustaining
- \$1000 Life Member

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

Additional Contribution:
\$ _____ Fund operational expenses \$ _____ Fund education projects \$ _____ Total enclosed

Please check if you are interested in volunteering for:
Education outreach ___ Grantwriting ___ Social media ___ Wetlands cleanup ___ Leading tours ___ Fundraising ___

*All contributions to Amigos de Bolsa Chica are tax-deductible as allowed by law under IRS Code Section 501(c)3.
No goods or services were provided in consideration of this gift.*

Return application to: Amigos de Bolsa Chica, P.O. Box 1563, Huntington Beach, CA 92647