

**Amigos de  
Bolsa Chica**

**The Tern Tide**  
Since 1976

Photo by Ross Griswold



**Spring 2011  
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### **THE TERN TIDE**

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## **One Hundred and Seventieth Anniversary of the Name Bolsa Chica**

By Dave Carlberg

Manuel Nieto was a corporal in the service of King Carlos III of Spain when he was ordered to join Gaspar de Portolá's 1769 march from New Spain (now Mexico) into Alta California. Fearful of incursions by Russian and English explorers, Carlos charged Portolá with establishing presidios and settlements throughout Alta California to discourage foreign occupation. Other members of Portolá's expedition were two Franciscan friars who were to set up missions in the territory for the purpose of converting the natives to Christianity.

Nieto was eventually stationed at the San Diego Presidio, but he was occasionally assigned duty at the San Gabriel mission, giving him the opportunity to see the flat, open grassland that extended for miles around the mission, in great contrast to the dry, hilly sage scrub around most of the San Diego Presidio. Nearing retirement, Nieto petitioned the Governor of Alta California for a grant of land near the San Gabriel mission on which to raise cattle and horses. The grant was originally for 300,000 acres, but when it was discovered that about half of that was already granted to the San Gabriel mission, it was reduced to 166,000 acres. Once the grant was confirmed in 1786, Nieto built a house near what is now the city of Whittier and raised four children. The property extended from the Santa Ana River to the Los Angeles River and from the ocean inland about 20 miles to his home site.

Nieto died in 1804 and according to Spanish custom, the land remained undivided and was managed by his heirs. It was only after Mexico became independent of Spain in 1821 that the Nieto family was able to have the property partitioned into separate ranchos. In addition, the governor conferred titles to the land, which the Spanish grant did not. Catarina Ruiz, Nieto's widowed daughter-in-law, inherited about 34,000 acres that ran from the sea for about 10 miles along the north shore of the Santa Ana River and 5 miles to the north. She named her rancho "Las Bolsas", or "The Purses", after the group of low rolling hills that run along what is now Newland Avenue and north of Adams. From a distance the hills looked like a row of leather purses. Catarina allowed her brother, Joaquin Ruiz, to raise his own cattle and horses on her property, but in 1841 she decided to grant him 8100 acres out of her land as his own rancho. Joaquin named his rancho "La Bolsa Chica", or the Little Purse, referring to the one small hill on his rancho, now known as the Upper Bolsa Chica Mesa. Thus this year, 2011, we celebrate the 170th anniversary of the origin of the name "Bolsa Chica".

## Welcome Aboard to Amigos New Curriculum Developer

Amigos de Bolsa Chica has selected an outstanding candidate to develop age and content-appropriate themes that bridge the interdependency of coastal wetlands and the ocean. These newly designed lessons will target students in grades 6 thru 9 and follow appropriate California State Department of Education curriculum standards. They will be given by Amigos docents at the newly renovated Visitor Center at Bolsa Chica State Beach within a year. The interview committee sorted through 15 resumes from educators applying for this 12 month part time position. 4 finalists were asked to come for personal interviews. Several strong candidates made the final decision difficult.

Amigos is pleased to announce that Joana Tavares-Reager will be our new curriculum developer. She brings a host of ocean experience from different parts of the world with a passion to teach others. Joana presently works as an oceanography instructor at Fullerton College. Several times a week, she instructs at the Discovery Science Center in Santa Ana, where she teaches hands-on science lessons in an after school program. Her educational resume includes a B.S. in Oceanography from the Federal University of Rio Grande (FURG), RS, Brazil, (2005). She acquired a M.S. in Marine Studies, with Concentration in Policy from the University of Delaware, (2008). Her thesis involved "assessing the importance of biological uncertainties in the management of species introductions via ballast water." From 2007-2009, she was an Aquatic Invasive Species Research Specialist for the state of Hawaii.

Joana is also a documentary filmmaker, (Art Center College of Design, 2010), PADI certified scuba diver, computer whiz and co-founder and editor of "Earth, Actually, the Earth Science Blog" ([www.actualearth.org](http://www.actualearth.org)). She is bilingual in English and Portuguese and proficient in Spanish. It is a pleasure to have her on board and we look forward to her rich contributions to Amigos de Bolsa Chica.

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## Monthly Help Needed, Part 1

**2nd Sunday of each month, 9:00 am - 12 noon: Native Plant Landscaping Maintenance at Bolsa Chica State Beach Visitor Center.** Located just north of the entrance to BC State Beach, across from BC Ecological Reserve South parking lot. Light weeding, some planting, general tidying. Wear closed shoes, jacket. Tools and instructions are provided. Joint project between Amigos and Bolsa Chica Stewards. Call Margaret at 714-842-5619 for more information, or to RSVP.

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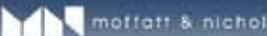
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# Earth Day

Co-Chairs Margaret Carlberg and Jerry Donohue

On Saturday April 9 from 10:00 to 3:00 the Amigos de Bolsa Chica, the Bolsa Chica Conservancy, the Bolsa Chica Land Trust and the California Department of Fish and Game are co-hosting the Earth Day event at the North Parking Lot of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve, on Warner near Pacific Coast Highway. More than 500 people generally attend this 5-hours of environmental education activities, including a bit of music and dance of the Native American nations.

Amigos needs volunteers to help with 6 of our activities, which include: Amigos information and membership booth, monitoring Birds and Changing Tides, the Birds and Beaks interactive activity, Plastics and Ocean Pollution puzzle, History and Restoration display, and monitoring the volunteer food area. Please contact Jennifer Robins if you can help for 3 hours, or all day. (jjrobins@dslextre.me.com)

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## New Docent Class

By Margaret Carlberg

Congratulations to our nine new Amigos docents: Sanford Adelman, Gary Charlton, Sue Hardgrave, John Hayes, Greg Leo, Stephanie Rubio, Mick Siroy, Donna Starr, and Laura Yu. They successfully completed five weeks of classroom training, 3 field activities in Bolsa Chica and were awarded their docent status on February 2. All are so enthusiastic that nearly all have already shadowed on tours or assisted at stations. John, Mick, Donna and Laura have also been active with the Community Education Committee. The docents had a pot luck dinner showing their appreciation of the class teachers and coordinators and getting to know each other better.

A special thanks goes out to all of the presenters: Vic Leipzig—Natural History and Ecology, Barbara Sentovich—Birds and Endangered Species, Kelly O'Reilly—Fish and Marine Invertebrates, Louann Murray—Local Native American Culture, and Dave Carlberg—History and Restoration. We were again able to use the Bolsa Chica State Beach Visitor Center for providing the facility and support to conduct the training.

Jonathan Zschoche, videographer, recorded all the classes and is preparing DVDs for each topic, which will be available to docents upon request for one-week loan. After March 24 contact Margaret Carlberg if you are interested in borrowing any of the topics.



*2011 Docent Class, left to right:  
Donna Starr, Gary Charlton,  
Greg Leo, Mick Siroy,  
Sue Hardgrave, Laura Yu,  
John Hayes and Sanford Adelman.  
Stephanie Rubio inset.*

## Advertise in the Tern and on the Amigos Website

By Thomas Anderson

Amigos de Bolsa Chica is offering your business a new opportunity to advertise on our website.

In addition to the business card ad in the printed version of Amigos de Bolsa Chica's quarterly newsletter, The Tern Tide, Amigos is now offering the opportunity to advertise on our website, [www.amigosdebolsachica.org/news.htm](http://www.amigosdebolsachica.org/news.htm). A text link to your business' website will appear in a scroll just under The Tern Tide masthead at the top of the page. The scroll invites visitors to click on the links to The Tern Tide's sponsors. If you do not have a website, the link can be directed to your email. This link will be seen by thousands of people who visit the Amigos website. The number of visitors to the Amigos' newsletter page is approximately 10,000 annually. We are asking \$150.00 a year for your business' sponsorship of Amigos' efforts to publish news about the current events, education, history and science of Bolsa Chica.

For those businesses that do not have websites or email to link to, we are continuing to offer the business card advertising space in the printed version of The Tern Tide for \$150.00 a year. While 700 copies of The Tern Tide are printed, mailed and otherwise distributed to Amigos membership and to locations around Huntington Beach, a pdf version of the newsletter is also archived on The Tern Tide page of Amigos website. This gives people who do not physically receive the newsletter the opportunity to see your businesses card ad in the newsletter for as long as Amigos has an online Tern Tide archive.

If you're looking for the maximum exposure Amigos can offer, your business' ad can appear in both print and web locations for \$300.00 annually.

We hope that you will continue your much needed and much appreciated support of our mission to educate people about the importance of the Bolsa Chica and wetlands everywhere. To reserve your space today please call the Amigos office at 714-840-1575 and reserve your advertisement space today!

## President's Tern - Working Group Meeting News

By Jennifer Robins

The Working Group of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve meets every other month on the first Tuesday of the month at the Department of Fish and Game's office on the Reserve. The attendees are representatives from the Bolsa Chica Land Trust, the Bolsa Chica Conservancy, the Amigos de Bolsa Chica and the California Department of Fish and Game. The purpose of these meetings is to hear reports from California Department of Fish And Game and the non-government organizations about on-going and future projects that affect the Reserve and the interactions between the groups. The three non-government organizations committed to have transparency about all of our projects. But because each non-government organization has its own agenda and limitations, as we're mostly all volunteers, there are occasional disagreements about how we should proceed with projects at the Reserve.

At the meeting held on March 1, Carla Navarro spoke to us about the need to establish a better sense of cooperation between the groups by keeping in mind that we are all working for what is best for the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. Carla also spoke to the issue of the draining of vernal pools on the east side of the Warner Pedestrian Bridge. In January 2010 there had existed a depression of water from recent rains that the Bolsa Chica Land Trust felt was a hazard for the public. They received permission from Karen Minor of California Department of Fish And Game to drain the area by digging trenches. When a similar situation arose in January 2011 the Bolsa Chica Land Trust again drained the area due to a public safety concern. Vector Control had sighted faerie shrimp in pools on the west side of the Warner Pedestrian Bridge so it was thought that they could have existed in the pool on the east side. When rains again cause pools of water on either side of the bridge a one-time take permit will be issued to allow collection of any faerie shrimp in either pool. It will then be determined if they are a species of concern.

The Bolsa Chica Land Trust/California Department of Fish And Game Lower Mesa Mitigated Negative Declaration and plan were discussed and Carla reported that the public comment period was extended to March 17. She stated that the project would use adaptive management which means if any issues arise the project will be adjusted in order to correct the issue. Kim Kolpin explained that the terra farms are temporary in nature and will create new habitat when the project is completed in 10 years.

Kelly O'Reilly reported that the dredging in the full tidal basin is going well. She also reported that Aera Energy is looking for a buyer for their interests at the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve.

At this point in the meeting, the non-government organization's reported on activities that are going on with each of their organizations. Kati Patoni explained the bird surveys that the Bolsa Chica Conservancy is conducting on the Reserve and at Harriett Weider Park on two different Fridays per month. Bolsa Chica Conservancy started a new project called EONS (Eyes on Nesting Sites) in 2010 and kicked off its second year in February. The project's purpose is to monitor activity of the nesting Snowy Plover and the Least Tern in their nesting area on Nest Site 1. Grace reported that Bolsa Chica Conservancy is involved with the conceptual plan and raising funds for their Interpretive Center project.

Flossie Horgan reported that the Bolsa Chica Land Trust is in the process of getting approval for their Lower Mesa planting project and a Town Hall about the project on March 10. Kim reported that a split rail fence will be installed by the pocket wetland the following weekend if no rain. Margaret Carlberg reported that the Amigos de Bolsa Chica is planning a Science Symposium for late August. The meeting concluded and will meet again the first Tuesday of May. If anyone has any concerns or questions they would like addressed at a Working Group Meeting please email Jennifer Robins at [jjrobins@dslexreme.com](mailto:jjrobins@dslexreme.com).

## Mesa Restoration Town Hall Meeting

By Vic Leipzig

On Thursday night, March 10, the Bolsa Chica Land Trust held a public meeting about their plan for restoration of the lower bench of Bolsa Chica Mesa. The meeting was well attended, with about 175 people there to learn more about the plan. In attendance were members of an Amigos committee chaired by President Jennifer Robins as well as numerous other Amigos members. Committee members posed numerous questions to the plan's proponents, but committee members felt that for the most part their questions were answered vaguely or not at all.

Amigos continue to have concern about the massive soil alteration component of the plan, the impact on sensitive species, especially birds of prey and the Southern Tarplant, and the closed process by which the plan was developed. Amigos will submit a detailed letter to the California Department of Fish and Game expressing our concerns and our desire that outside experts be brought in to review key elements of the proposal. The deadline for submitting comments was March 17.

To read the Mitigated Negative Declaration and view maps of the plans for the Lower Mesa is <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/regions/5/lower-mesa/>.

## Writer Gave Momentum to Save Bolsa Chica in the 1970's

By Linda Moon

Dale Fetherling, *Los Angeles Times* writer, editor and author died Tuesday, January 19 at Kaiser Foundation Hospital in San Diego of complications following heart surgery. He was 69.

Known as an aggressive and fair journalist, the "Save Bolsa Chica" movement really took off due to a *Los Angeles Times* story written in 1975 by Dale Fetherling. The League of Women Voters and Association of University Women had done a joint study on Bolsa Chica and had recommended the formation of a single issue organization to advocate protection of the Bolsa Chica Wetlands. The Amigos de Bolsa Chica had not yet been formed. But when Fetherling's story appeared in the *Times*, people came running to join this new organization which had it's initial meetings just after the story broke.

The Amigos de Bolsa Chica are grateful to Mr. Fetherling for the boost his story gave to the momentum that eventually preserved and restored the Bolsa Chica.

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## Monthly Help Needed, Part 2

**Last Saturday of each month, 9:00 -11:00 am (this may change to Fridays 3:00-5:00 pm). Trash cleanup at South Parking Lot.** Wear closed shoes, old clothes. Tools provided. This Amigos project is to clean up for our 1st Saturday of the month free public tour. Call Margaret at 714-842-5619 for more information, or to RSVP.



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It's your TERN to help monitor us! Who are we? We are the Threatened Western Snowy Plovers and the Endangered California Least Terns.

We want a chance to increase our population-but we need your help! Will you help find our nests and eggs-so we will be protected? My brothers (and sisters) require your assistance to keep those BIG-BAD predators away.

There are not one but two different ways you can help us in our quest. The first is EONS (Eyes on the Nest Sites). It is sponsored by the Bolsa Chica Conservancy, and it's located at the end of the footbridge at the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve at the south parking lot. Just 2 hours a week-that's all we ask-to educate the public on this vital nesting site. You will be totally educated to teach the public. For more info on this site; e-mail [Kati@bolsachica.org](mailto:Kati@bolsachica.org).

The second opportunity is at the Huntington State Beach along the Santa Ana River @ the Tern Reserve. This project is sponsored by the Sea and Sage Audubon. For this program there is an orientation Wednesday, April 20 from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at Huntington State Beach Lifeguard Headquarters, Pacific Coast Highway and Magnolia. For more info contact Cheryl at [dc.egger@verizon.net](mailto:dc.egger@verizon.net). With this program you receive a free beach pass!

Great times outside and you are helping us!

Thank you,  
Penny Plover and Timmy Tern



## A Green Change

One of our advertisers, Fritzankotter's, made a green change in their serving dishes. The change was at the suggestion of Phil Smith, a long-time member and docent. Amigos members head to Fritzankotter's after many of our Saturday Public Tours for lunch. Several months ago Phil commented

to Larry Soong, owner of the restaurant, that he should make a change from styrofoam plates to a reusable container for the sandwiches. When docents arrived at our lunch spot after the March tour we found that Larry had indeed taken the suggestion seriously and made the change. Larry said he was actually saving money with the change. All it takes is for us to make suggestions to the establishments we shop and eat at in order for green changes to take place.



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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.

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