

Photo by Koss Griswold



## Congratulations New Docents

By Patty Overly & Margaret Carlberg

Congratulations to our new docents. Ten students earned their official docent vests by completing a vigorous six weeks of training, including two field trips and a public tour.

Classes for the 2012 Amigos de Bolsa Chica docents were held at the Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy. Amigos president, Tom Livengood, opened the first class with a brief introduction about the Amigos. This was followed by the first course topic, History of Bolsa Chica, presented by Helen Higgins. Overall, the course covered six general topics over a period of 6 weeks. The subjects were: History, Ecology & Natural Setting, Birds, Endangered Species, Restoration and finally Fish and Macro Invertebrates of the Bolsa Chica. In addition to the classroom lectures, the students attended two field trips to Bolsa Chica. The first field trip was a perimeter tour led by Vic Leipzig, where the students learned first-hand more about the ecology and natural setting of the wetlands. The second was a birding field trip to the Bolsa Chica led by Barbara Sentovich.

A special thanks goes out to all of the presenters Helen Higgins, Vic Leipzig, Barbara Sentovich, Dave Carlberg, Kelly O'Reilly, Margaret Carlberg, Jennifer Robins, Jim Robins and Laura Holdenwhite for their hard work and dedication that made the learning experience a great success. Also, thank you to the Huntington Beach Wetlands Conservancy for providing the facility and support to conduct the training.

If you are interested in attending a future Docent Training program, please contact the Amigos office at 714-840-1575.



From left to right: Front row: Barbara Felberg-Jackson, Diane Kopit, Tami Olson, Nancy Boyd-Batstone, Dennis Pope; Back row: Ray Fellerman, Chris Murtland; Absent: Kristen Bender, Jim Childers, Karen McReynolds

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## Festival of the Whales

By Jerry Donohue

Thanks to all Amigos who interacted with young and old alike on Sunday, March 4 in Dana Point. Our Birds and Beaks activity kept young people engaged for over 5 hours. Amigos docents were also able to share their love of the Bolsa Chica and to highlight our concern for the threatened Western Snowy Plover as part of our discussions. Parents and casual observers alike directed compliments our way as to the excellent learning opportunity this program provides. Thanks to Donna Starr, Barbara Felberg-Jackson, Patty Overley and Ron Davis for their excellent teaching moments. Mic Siroy helped Jerry and Lori Donohue with set-up and clean-up besides being an enthusiastic teacher.



Front from left: Lori Donohue, Patty Overley, Barbara Felberg-Jackson, Back: Donna Starr, Jerry Donohue

## South Coast Marine Protected Area Effective January 1

New marine protected areas (MPAs) went into effect January 1, 2012 from Point Conception in Santa Barbara County to the U.S./Mexico Border. The State Office of Administration Law approved the regulatory package put forward by the California Fish and Game Commission that sets rules and boundaries for the south coast MPAs.

Nearly one year ago the Fish & Game Commission adopted regulation to create a suite of MPAs in the south coast region. Developed pursuant to the California Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA), this network of 50 MPAs (including 13 pre-existing MPAs retained at the northern Channel Islands) and two special closures covers approximately 354 square miles of state waters and represents approximately 15 percent of the region.

On January 1, Department of Fish and Game wardens began enforcing regulations in the MPAs. Wardens can take appropriate actions as of that day which could include education, warning, citation or arrest, depending on the violation. Final regulations and maps for all MPAs can be found at [http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/scmpas\\_list.asp](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mlpa/scmpas_list.asp).

DFG's MPA mobile website, [www.dfg.ca.gov/m/MPA](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/m/MPA), has also been updated to reflect the new MPAs going into effect January 1. The mobile website allows the public to search for any current MPA by name, county or general area to find information about the MPA's boundaries and regulations, and use an interactive map to locate any MPA and learn about its boundaries and regulations. Mobile device users can also find and track their current location using the device's GPS, locate the closest MPA to determine whether or not the user is currently within an MPA, and read a summary of regulations or complete regulations for any MPA.

## It's All Connected Update

By Tom Anderson

Amigos' Curriculum Developer, Joana Tavares-Reager, is busy getting "It's All Connected" ready for a trial run with interested classrooms before the school year is over. We are contacting teachers that are familiar with Amigos' docent led tours so their classrooms can participate in this pilot program. Lessons and activities for the 6th grade were completed in December and approved by our partners at Bolsa Chica State Beach. Lessons and activities for the 7th and 8th grades are now being finalized. The State of California recently revised science curriculum standards,

so this gave Joana a little extra challenge. Training of docents interested in presenting the new activities will take place March 16 and 17 (as this issue of the Tern Tide is going to the printer) at the Huntington Beach Wetlands Wildlife Care Center. We had hoped to be conducting the trainings at the Bolsa Chica State Beach Visitor Center where the program will eventually be held, however the renovations to the interior of the building are not yet completed. Joana will also be having 2 interns, Joseph Williams and Kyle Picco, job shadowing her for their senior exit project. Joseph and Kyle are creating a video from their experiences with Amigos de Bolsa Chica by attending tours and events such as Earth Day and interviewing Amigos members.

# 15th Anniversary of State's Decision to Purchase Bolsa Chica

By Tom Livengood

At the Huntington Beach City Council meeting on Monday, February 6, Mayor Don Hansen called on current Amigos President Tom Livengood to present Amigos de Bolsa Chica with a Proclamation that commemorated the 15 year anniversary of the action of the State Lands Commission to provide funds to purchase and restore the Bolsa Chica Wetlands. Eleven past Amigos presidents joined in accepting the honor.

Fifteen years ago, on Valentine's Day 1997, the State Lands Commission met in the Huntington Beach City Council Chamber. With Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis as the Chair, it took action to have the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles transfer \$67 million to the Bolsa Chica Wetlands restoration project. Thus, the ports were able to meet their mitigation requirements and expand their deep-water ports. The state funds were used to purchase 880 acres of wetlands, begin the design and restoration of the first 590 acres, which included a full tidal basin and an inlet from the ocean. When costs rose, the ports later contributed an additional \$36 million to make their final support total \$103 million.

For more than thirty-six years the Amigos de Bolsa Chica have been dedicated to saving, acquiring, restoring and maintaining the Bolsa Chica Wetlands. As a result of the Amigos' leadership for this project, support was received from elected officials, Democrats and Republicans at all levels of government. There was not a single letter sent in opposition! The city councils of Huntington Beach and Seal Beach voted in support. The Mayor of Long Beach submitted a letter of support.

A letter from Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis dated March 24, 1997, said: "Dear Mr. Livengood & All Members of Amigos de Bolsa Chica: I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank you and all members of Amigos de Bolsa Chica for your years of hard work and dedication toward the noble goal of acquiring and restoring Bolsa Chica. I am convinced without your efforts this goal would not have been possible. Your vision of what could be will now become reality. Your work has made it possible for future generations to experience nature on a grand scale. Thank you once again."

The following environmental groups also sent letters of support: American Oceans Campaign, Amigos de Bolsa Chica, Center for Marine Conservation, Defenders of Wild Life, Heal the Bay, Izaak Walton League, League for Coastal Protection, National Audubon Society California, National Resources Defense Council and Sierra Club Defense Fund.

The eight Federal and State agencies, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, U. S. E.P.A., Army Corps of Engineers, California State Lands Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, California Coastal Conservancy and the California Resources Agency, working together on this historic project were a key in gaining support for the restoration project. Today you can see and enjoy the restored wetlands.



*Amigos Past Presidents, from left: Lorraine Faber, Tom Anderson, Vic Leipzig, Tom Livengood, Shirley Dettloff, Linda Moon, Jim Robins, Dave Carlberg, Jennifer Robins, Margaret Carlberg (founding member), Peter Green, Mayor Hansen, Ralph Bauer (former City Council Member) and Mary Ellen Houseal*

*Photo by Laurie Frymire*

## NEW Fun Run April 22

Join us Sunday, April 22, 2012 at the Bolsa Chica State Beach, Pacific Coast Highway, Huntington Beach, for the Inaugural BDR Earth Day Family Fun Run to support the Brian D. Robertson Foundation. This event is open to both competitive and recreational runners. All are welcome!

Proceeds benefit the Brian D. Robertson Foundation to support organizations that have a positive impact on the environment and that promote family wellness. The foundation is committed to putting resources raised by this Fun Run back into the local communities of Southern California.

Registration online now at:

<http://www.active.com/5k-race/huntington-beach-ca-ca/bdr-earth-day-family-fun-run-2012>

or visit <http://bdrfunrun.com/> and print a pdf registration form. Registration closes Friday, April 20, 2012 at 11:59 pm.

Event schedule and times:

**10:00 am** Packet Pick-Up & Late Registration

**11:00 am** Kids' 1Mile Fun Run Start

**11:30 am** 5K Run Start

**12:30 pm** Awards Celebration & Official Race End

**1:00 pm** Racers' Potluck Lunch

**2:00 pm** Earth Day Beach/Race Clean-Up--Volunteers welcome!

**3:00 pm** Fun & Games/Bonfire (based upon pit availability)

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## Earth Day at Bolsa Chica April 14

By Jerry Donohue

Mark your calendars for our annual celebration of Earth Day on Saturday April 14th from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the north parking lot of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. This year again, we will be hosting 4 booths to educate young and old alike about the values of protecting wetlands. We will have an information booth with brochures about Amigos and merchandise for sale. Our history booth will focus on both

past, as well as recent events related to Bolsa Chica. We will also have 2 interactive, kid-friendly booths. Birds and Beaks will compare the shape and length of various bird beaks with the type of food they seek. Birds and Tides will show the relationship between tidal fluctuations and bird numbers. We will have a morning and afternoon shift at each of these stations. Some folks may even want to work both shifts. Furthermore, we need a set-up crew as well as individuals to help clean-up. So there is something for every Amigo on this day. If you would like to volunteer or have additional questions, email Jerry Donohue, [gdonohue@socal.rr.com](mailto:gdonohue@socal.rr.com).

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## Lark Bunting at Bolsa Chica

By Vic Leipzig

Ever since early February, birders have been seeing a highly unusual avian visitor to Bolsa Chica known as a Lark Bunting. This is a species that normally summers on the Great Plains and spends its winters in Mexico or the southern parts of Arizona, New Mexico, or Texas. They are extremely rare in California. This one is a first for Bolsa Chica and is one of fewer than 10 that have ever been seen in Orange County. For the past six weeks, this one has been spending most of its time immediately behind the interpretive center at the north parking lot.

Birds will occasionally show up thousands of miles from home, sometimes pushed by the winds of major storms, or perhaps simply getting lost as a result of some error on the part of their inborn navigational mechanism. We'll never really know for sure what brought us our Lark Bunting.

What we can be sure of is that this individual is a female. Females are more plainly marked than males. In the winter months, both sexes are streaked all over in brown and off-white, but the males more heavily so than females. In summer, the males molt and take on a truly dramatic pattern,



*Photo by Tom Benson*

almost all black but with bold white flashes on the wings.

Despite the name bunting, this species is actually a type of sparrow. It is one of the larger species of sparrow; when standing next to the common Savannah Sparrows of Bolsa Chica, the bunting looks like a giant.

Over the years, Bolsa Chica has hosted numerous lost avian stragglers. The Amigos have worked together with the Bolsa Chica Conservancy to produce an updated checklist of Bolsa Chica bird species. The checklist includes all species known to have visited Bolsa Chica even once, including the newest, the Lark Bunting, added just before the list went to print!

Next time you drop by the interpretive center, pick up a copy of the checklist, then walk around back of the building and look for Bolsa Chica's rarest visitor!

# Presidents Tern

By Tom Livengood

“The Bolsa Chica has been saved.” A more accurate statement would be “There have been many victories in the battle to save the Bolsa Chica.”

The Amigos was established in 1976 by members of the League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women. The purpose of the organization was to stop the Marina Development Plan and save the Bolsa Chica as open space. This is like saying to David, “Go out and defeat Goliath.” Unlike David, who had a strong supporter, Amigos started out with no support.

For thirty six years Amigos has been a leader in many of the victories at the Bolsa Chica. In 1972 the Marina Plan included a commercial marina, hotels, thousands of homes and a 700 foot wide navigable channel. In August of 1985 the Amigos organized “Hands Across the Sand” to indicate the width of the channel. Nearly 600 people joined hands between the markers designating the channel. In comparison, the width of the now completed tidal inlet that was part of the restoration would require 50 people holding hands.

In 1989 the Amigos ended their lawsuit and participated in the Bolsa Chica Coalition Plan. This plan shelved the Marina Plan. Over 1000 acres for development in the Marina plan was reduced to 412 acres. A key to this victory was the Amigos education program. The public was made aware how important saving the Bolsa Chica was. The political battle and the need to raise funds for the lawsuit are a long story.

The next victory was led by The Bolsa Chica Land Trust. The Bolsa Chica Decision in 1999 prevented development of 185 acres of lowlands. The next victory in which the Amigos took a leadership role was having port mitigation funds transferred to Bolsa Chica. The Port funds made it possible to save 880 acres of lowlands and pay for most of the wetlands restoration (see “15th Anniversary of State’s Decision to Purchase Bolsa Chica” on page 3).

With the State of California closing State Parks and reducing funding for State Parks, it is important to continue to take on new battles to protect and maintain the 1,200 acre Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. In addition there are still about 100 acres of private land left in the Bolsa Chica. Can those acres be saved?

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## Save the Date - Amigos Brunch June 24

Save the date for the 1st Annual Amigos Bolsa Brunch to be held at Seaciff Country Club on Sunday, June 24th at 10:00 am. The cost will be \$50 per person.

We urge you to be there for this worthy event to help us gather funds for the outreach program for our local school children to enjoy and learn about our wetlands preserve. Bring your friends and family.

In addition to a fabulous brunch, a selection of baskets filled with great gifts will be available for prizes with the purchase of opportunity tickets. So plan ahead and join your fellow Amigos, potential new Amigos and your friends to fill up the tables and support the organization and its mission.

## Amigos de Bolsa Chica 2012 Board of Directors

Amigos de Bolsa Chica 2012 Board of Directors

President: Tom Livengood

Vice President: Jerry Donohue

Secretary: Jennifer Robins

Treasurer: Brian Westcott

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Tom Livengood

Mel Nutter

Patty Overley

Jim Robins

Donna Starr

Office Coordinator: Laura Holdenwhite

# Western Snowy Plover

By Ross Griswold

Hi! I'm Paula the Plover, Paula the Western Snowy Plover to be exact. I'm back at home now. How can you tell this is my home? Well, just look at my fancy anklets! They are read left leg first, top to bottom. Then right leg, top to bottom. So I am yellow over silver/yellow over white. Okay, so how does that tell you I'm home? The color combinations represent a special place where I was banded. These special bands in this combination represent Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve. I wasn't banded there, though, because the folks at the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve don't band Plovers. But they band Plovers just down the road at the Wetlands Wildlife Care Center. I was banded there in 2009. I am now at least 3 years old. I was last spotted at Bolsa Chica State Beach on Dec. 28, 2011. Banding is a special way to track Western Snowy Plovers. When we are seen, we are reported and our travels are noted. This helps keep our journeys and wintering spots documented. Not every Western Snowy Plover is banded, but valuable information is gathered when we are spotted. This information helps our fight to get off the Federal and California Threatened Species list.



*Photo by Ross Griswold*

## Reporting Color Banding Western Snowy Plovers

Colors Used: Aqua = a; Black = k; Blue = b; Green = g; Lime = l; Orange = o; Pink = p; Red = r; Violet = v; Yellow = y; White = w; Buckskin = n; Silver (metal service band) = s.

1. Read left leg band first, top to bottom, then right leg bands top to bottom
2. Colors can fade – Aqua and Pink may fade to white
3. Important to note the date, color band combination, exact

location and if the bird is alive or dead. You may use the name of the color. If bird is dead report metal band numbers as well as color bands.

4. Report color banded Snowy Plovers found in Orange or San Diego Counties to: Cheryl Egger at [dc.egger@verizon.net](mailto:dc.egger@verizon.net)
5. Report all color banded Snowy Plovers to the BBL (Bird Banding Lab) at: <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/>

## Welcome to New Amigos Members!

By Margaret Carlberg

We welcome the following who have become Amigos members since December 2011: Kristen & Jon Bender, James Childers, Kristen Curtiss, Chris & Jean Epting, Mary Feather, Barbara Felberg-Jackson, Raymond Fellerman, John Fine, Jody Ford, Maya Greenfield, Chris Murtland, Dennis & Dawn Pope, Brittany Rochow, Jeffrey Rokos, John Stebbins, Rich Stewart

and Sarah Thomas. We also thank the many members who renewed or sent end-of-year donations.

The Membership Committee suggests that you invite your friends and neighbors to join Amigos. You can donate a membership to someone as a birthday gift or for some other celebration. You can also invite friends to join you at the various Restaurant Events that we are having this spring and encourage them to become members of Amigos de Bolsa Chica. Your participation helps to ensure our mission to provide education about the importance of the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve continues successfully.

# The Railing Wall

By Dave Carlberg

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Amigos' spectacular "Railing Wall", an oversize mural depicting the Bolsa Chica Wetland and its wildlife. The mural was painted on a wall adjacent to the Amigos' office on McFadden Avenue in Huntington Beach in 1992. The mural got its name from an image of a Light-footed Clapper Rail in the painting. The rail is an endangered species that once nested in Bolsa Chica and has been showing signs of its return.

The Amigos found that visitors had a hard time finding their office that was in a hidden corner of the building's parking lot. They contacted Sunset Beach wildlife artist and author Neill Ketchum with the idea of painting a small sign to direct visitors to the office entrance. Once Ketchum saw the large, smooth concrete wall on which she was asked to paint the sign, she had a better idea. As a long-time member of the Amigos, Ketchum was fully aware of the key role the organization had played in preventing the Bolsa Chica Wetland from becoming another Marina del Rey and wanted to reward the organization in some way. Inspired by an illustration in her children's book "Clapper Rail: The Secret Bird of the Marsh", she designed a mural that would cover nearly the entire two-story wall.

It took seven weeks to complete the mural, which ended up 18 feet high and 36 feet wide. Tall ladders and scaffolding were needed to work on the upper reaches of the painting. Ketchum was aided by 15 professional and amateur artists, including distinguished wildlife artists Thomas Anderson and Robert Reichert. Asked if she encountered any problems taking on such a massive task, she responded that the difficult part was to find a way to coordinate the various styles and skills of her assistants. In addition, because of the life-size images in the mural, Ketchum had to bring in biology experts to aid in getting the details of the plants and animals right.

An inscription at the bottom of the mural reads, "To the Amigos de Bolsa Chica, the best friend a wetlands ever had".

The mural can be seen behind the office building at 5811 McFadden Avenue, at the corner of Assembly Lane, Huntington Beach.





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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  
\$ 20 Individual  
\$ 30 Family  
\$ 50 Patron  
\$ 75 Sponsor  
\$100 Sustaining  
\$300 Life Member

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Contribution:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Fund operational expenses      \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total enclosed

Please check if you are interested in volunteering for:

Office assistance \_\_\_\_\_ Community Education \_\_\_\_\_ Grantwriting \_\_\_\_\_

*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*