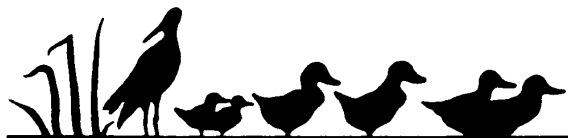
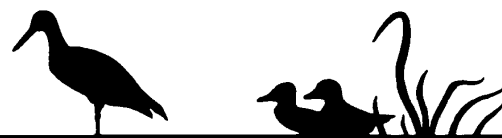


FRIENDS of FAMOSA SLOUGH



A California Non-Profit Corporation



Box 87280, San Diego, CA 92138-7280

FALL/WINTER 2011-12 NEWSLETTER

General Meeting and Program

Wednesday, December 7th, 7:00 PM

" *Three Restoration Success Stories* "

This program will look at three separate habitat restoration projects, each with its own story. Somewhat different approaches were used in the restoration process because of land ownership, location, and goals of the project. Each project moved from invasive eradication, to planting, to post planting care and finally long term maintenance and weed control. All three are restored both for wildlife habitat and for the enjoyment and education of visitors, and almost all of the work was done by volunteers.

Mel Hinton and David Kimball give workshops for the **San Diego Audubon Society** on "How to Create a Wildlife Friendly Garden" that uses native plants.

Mel is overseeing the restoration of several acres of former agricultural land at **San Diego Audubon's Anstine-Audubon Nature Preserve near Vista**. This 11-acre site has a 1-1/2 acre pond, coastal sage scrub, and oak/willow riparian habitat. Mel will give a photographic tour of the Preserve, showing the progress, including a variety of the California native plants there.

David oversees the restoration of **Sunset Cliffs Natural Park in Point Loma**. This 68-acre park overlooks the Pacific Ocean along the western edge of Point Loma. What was once a weedy field dominated by crown daisies is now a two-acre native plant garden. Much more work remains, but the side-by-side comparison of restored and un-restored land is striking.

Jim Peugh will review the progress at Famosa Slough so far and give an update on the next steps toward implementation of the Famosa Slough Enhancement Plan..

The public is invited.

Light refreshments will be provided.

Location — Loma Riviera Condominium Clubhouse, 3115 Loma Riviera Drive

(Directions are on the back page.)

Progress at the Slough

This has been a productive year at the Slough although all of it has not been visible. The vegetation we had to remove to get at the excess sediments to renovate Pond one of the Valeta Street Treatment Ponds has aggressively recovered. But we have already gotten a disappointing volume of new sediment. The Diagonal Trail Improvement project has proved very successful, and the plants in the adjacent bank restoration are growing well.

We have had to start removing some of the saltbush that we planted in the West Point Loma Blvd. Restoration Project because it was burying some of the other plants there. We noticed that the Fish and Wildlife Service had to do the same thing in a restoration area adjacent to the Tijuana Estuary. The bare spots do not look very nice right now, but there are lots of small native plants sprouting in them, and we have also put some new plants into them also.

The riparian area around the 2nd and 3rd benches below Famosa Blvd. is looking great after lots of persistent weed pulling and many new native plants. It is also a good place to look for riparian birds. The native plants in all portions of the Slough are expanding. Our normal range winter migrant waterfowl and shorebirds are arriving.

We are still working toward the purchase of three undeveloped lots within and adjacent to the Slough which we hope will be complete close to the end of this year. We will then need lots of help to remove ice plant and other non-native vegetation, plant natives to improve the habitat value, and upgrade the trail through it.



Black-crowned Night-Heron
by
Pierce Harris
(1935-2006)

Gray-scale copy
of color picture
from cover of
San Diego State
University's
*Extended
Studies Fall '88
Bulletin*

Litter

by Jim Peugh

I have heard people express how nice and clean the streets look after it rains. But, it is important to remember where the litter, dirt, oil, etc. from the streets end up after a rain. They are washed into our streams, rivers, wetlands, beaches, and ocean. The San Diego River Park Foundation recently announced that their cleanups have removed 1.3 million pounds of trash from the San Diego River since 2004. Litter sometimes clogs our storm drain causing flooding in our neighborhoods.

Any litter that washes from the 300 acre watershed of Famosa Slough ends up in the preserve. After each rain we collect a few bags of litter from the treatment ponds and the smaller treatment basins. But probably more litter than that gets by us and into the Slough with each rain. About twice a year we recover any litter that we can find from the Slough itself, but most if it remains hidden under the mud. Between rains, the wind blows litter from streets and the trails into the Slough.

In the Slough, the litter has impacts up and down the food chain. Small or decomposed plastic can be eaten by fish obstructing their digestive system and passing it up the food chain when they are eaten by larger fish and birds. Birds and larger fish can also eat the litter blocking their digestive systems also. Plastic bags can trap wildlife and can obstruct the movement of oxygen into the mud which affects the invertebrates that live there.

Most of the litter that gets by us and by the River Park Foundation gets into the ocean itself. Some of that ends up on our beaches, and some ends up in the middle of the Pacific Ocean where it has huge impacts on fish, seabirds, and sea turtles.

There is no reason that litter should be in our streets, parking lots, or school campuses. Putting litter immediately in trash cans is very easy and efficient. It is very difficult to see why people drop their cigarette butts, candy and snack packaging, plastic grocery bags, etc., in the street. But, they do.

There is another possibility. Lots of people take walks – for exercise, their dogs, relaxation, or transportation. Carrying and using a trash grabber and trash bag does not detract from the purpose of a walk. The trash grabber eliminates the need to get your hands dirty or to stoop down to pick up litter. It is usually easy to find trash cans or dumpsters along the way to dump your bag so you can have room for more. If more people picked up trash while they walk, we would be able keep our runoff free from litter and perhaps could shame litter bugs into being responsible about their own trash. Then, we could have clean looking neighborhoods and healthier rivers, bays, and wetlands with or without a rainstorm.

Pierce Harris

In our last newsletter, we wrote about some of the individuals involved in saving Famosa Slough. One important person we forgot was Pierce Harris, who passed away in 2006. Pierce was a long-time activist in Ocean Beach, and he developed a portfolio of pictures of birds in the area to increase public awareness of the beauty of the avian residents that relied upon the native vegetation and nesting areas for survival. One example is on the first page.

Bird Activity at Famosa Slough

by Jim Pea

We had a nice quiet summer with little change to the expected bird happenings. The downside to the season was only one Avocet chick hatched, and I don't think it survived more than a week. The Black-necked Stilts did have a good nesting season with at least seven chicks surviving to young adults. The Belding's Savannah Sparrows had at least three nests, but this could be normal or not since they are so hard to spot when hiding in the pickleweed. There were 93 species of birds seen this season, two of which were new to the Slough, and one was unusual. We saw and photographed a Yellow-breasted Chat in the treatment pond area (south end of the Slough), and a Northern Waterthrush (picture on back page) was seen and photographed by many, a first-time bird for most of them. An American Redstart was also seen at the same time, possibly a first for the Slough. A Cattle Egret showed briefly on the channel side.

The California Rare Bird Committee still requires notification when a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron is seen, and Famosa Slough continues to be the location where most are seen. Two chicks survived from the nest at Pacific Isle Apartments, adjacent to the Slough. A special thanks goes to the management of the Pacific Isle Apartments for allowing me access once a week for bird counts.

The migratory ducks and shorebirds were a little late this year but are now starting to show up in numbers. The migratory tree peeps showed on time for a week, then stopped for a couple of weeks, and are now starting to come through again in October.

The Friends of Famosa Slough (FFS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established to protect and restore the Slough as a natural wetland preserve and to promote public awareness of the importance of wetlands. The Slough was purchased by the City of San Diego in September 1990 and is managed by the City's Park and Recreation Department.

FFS Board of Directors

- Chairman: Jim Peugh 619/224-4591
- Vice-Chairman: David Kimball 619/224-4975
- Secretary: Chet Nelson 619/222-7006
- Treasurer: Barbara Peugh 619/224-4591
- Directors: Cliff Hewitt..... 619/222-9849
- Callie Mack 619/698-9512
- Jim Pea 619/291-6612
- Jim Prine..... 619/224-3446

For more information about the Friends, see the FFS web site: <http://www.FamosaSlough.org> .
The City's contact is the **Mission Bay Senior Park Ranger, phone 858/581-7602.**

Please Watch for Illegal Dumping

by Jim Peugh

Some people have been dumping dirt, old turf, concrete, clippings, furniture, etc. at the Slough recently in the parking lot at Valeta Street and other places. It causes weeds in habitat areas, makes the puddling in the Valeta Street parking lot even worse, buries restored vegetation, costs the Park Department labor and dumping cost, looks awful, can cause a safety hazard. It wastes volunteer time that would be better used on more productive tasks. If you see anyone dumping at the Slough, please note the vehicle license number and a description of the vehicle and the people and call the police and the Park Rangers if you catch them in the act. Also, please take a photo of the person and the vehicle if you can. Contact the Police at their non-emergency number 619-531-2000 and the Park Rangers at 619-581-7602.

If you only observe it after the fact, please let us know what is dumped and where at info@famosaslough.org so we can work with the Rangers to take care of it.

New Trail Head Entrance, Channel Side

by Chet Nelson

The trail head on the north side of West Point Loma Boulevard has been made safer and more inviting for visitors. The gate has been replaced by bollards, and the Famosa Slough sign and the City’s sign stating park regulations have been moved to more effective locations. Thanks to City Park Ranger Lisa Wilson for getting the approvals, to the City’s Wastewater Department for removing the ugly gate that discouraged people from entering the Channel-side Trail, and Jim Pea and Chet Nelson for their work on the signs and posts

Farewell to Our Friend – Ranger Lisa Wilson

by Chet Nelson

Our City park ranger for almost four years, **Ranger Lisa Wilson**, transferred to Los Peñasquitos and Black Mountain Preserves, also in the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department’s system. We miss her very much, thank her for all of the wonderful work she did on behalf of Famosa Slough, and wish her well in her new job.

Maintenance – Volunteers Needed

Completing a project at Famosa Slough is satisfying, but almost always requires some follow up. For example, the wood post and cable fencing installed along the trail through the West Pt. Loma Restoration Project about 8 years ago.

Some cable repairs after vandalism have occurred over the years, and the first post replacement (rotted post) just happened recently, suggesting that more post replacements are to be expected in the near future.

Another example is watering recent plantings. Once a native plant is well established it needs no watering, since natives are used to the long periods without rain each summer. But we have been watering newly-planted native plants this summer as they need help during the first long, dry summer to get properly established.

Volunteers are always needed and welcome. If you or your group would like to make special arrangements for working at the Slough, please contact either Callie Mack at 619-698-9512 or Chet Nelson, 619-222-7006, two of our hardest working volunteers. We also have regular work parties on the 2nd Saturday of odd-numbered months. See schedule on back page.

‘giveBIG’ – Better Giving Match Day 2011

The Friends of Famosa Slough will be participating in The San Diego Foundation’s first-ever **giveBIG San Diego Match Day** between 7 AM, December 14, and 7 PM, December 15. Through their web site, donations to participating nonprofits will be matched by the San Diego Foundation in a pro-rated amount (expectation of 15-30 cents on the dollar).

For 36 hours, the public will have an opportunity to make online donations (starting at \$25). Each gift is 100% tax-deductible. You can visit the giveBIG web site, www.giveBIGsandiego.org, for all of the details. Information about The San Diego Foundation’s BetterGiving program is at their web site, www.bettergivingsd.org.

We hope you’ll consider the Friends of Famosa Slough for a donation. Thank you!

MEMBERSHIP IN FRIENDS OF FAMOSA SLOUGH

_____ FULL MEMBERSHIP. Yes! I/We support the goals of FFS and submit \$10.00 annual dues. \$ _____
_____ ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP. Yes! I/We support the goals of FFS and wish to be counted. _____
(Contributions are tax deductible to a 501(c)(3) organization.) ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION: \$ _____
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

NAME(S) _____ PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____ E-MAIL _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

I/We volunteer to: ___ assist with administrative tasks, ___ clean up around Slough, ___ help with educational activities, ___ distribute flyers, ___ assist in park planning, ___ collect environmental data/do research, ___ assist in special events, ___ anything.

Other pertinent skills:



PO Box 87280, San Diego, CA 92138-7280

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, December 7th, 7:00 PM — FFS General Meeting

" Three Restoration Success Stories "

Loma Riviera Condominium Clubhouse (see page 1 and below)

WORK PARTIES

2nd Saturday of odd-numbered months — January 14, March 10, May 12, July 14, etc.

Meet at 9:00 AM at the intersection of West Point Loma and Famosa Boulevards - **Volunteers needed!**

BIRD WALKS

3rd Saturday of every month — December 21, January 21, February 18, March 17, etc.

Meet at 1:00 PM near the kiosk on Famosa Blvd., south of West Point Loma Blvd. - **Beginners welcome!**

FFS Web Site: www.FamosaSlough.org



Northern Waterthrush at Famosa Slough
photo by Richard Seignious

FFS General Meeting and Program
Wednesday, December 7th, 7:00 PM

"Three Restoration Success Stories"

Mel Hinton, David Kimball and Jim Peugh

will show progress at San Diego Audubon Society's Anstine-Audubon Nature Preserve near Vista, the Sunset Cliffs Natural Park in Point Loma, and the Famosa Slough, respectively.

Loma Riviera Condominium Clubhouse
3115 Loma Riviera Drive • San Diego 92110

Directions: From West Point Loma Boulevard, one long block west of Midway Drive and Sports Arena Drive, turn north at Loma Riviera Drive (at the Riviera Liquor House), and proceed a couple short blocks to the clubhouse on the right.