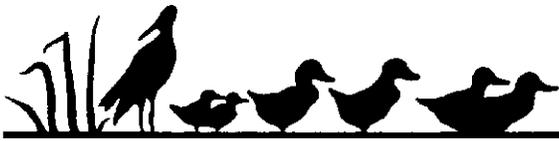


FRIENDS of FAMOSA SLOUGH



A California Non-Profit Corporation



Box 87280, San Diego, CA 92138-7280

SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER

In Memory of David Kimball (1937-2021)



A longtime friend, volunteer, and Board member, David Kimball, passed away on October 30th, 2021. David had been on the Board of the Friends of Famosa Slough (FFS) since November 2000. He was also on the Board of San Diego Audubon Society and was its President for three years. He made significant contributions to the habitats throughout San Diego County and mentored many environmental leaders. David found joy in the many friendships and mentoring relationships throughout the years, and he was dedicated to supporting the people that he worked alongside.

David was especially skilled at habitat restoration. He led many restoration tasks around the Slough, helped to turn what was a large field of ice plant along the Silver Strand into a now thriving coastal strand habitat, and led the planting and maintenance of a very large restoration project south of Ladera Street in Sunset Cliffs Natural Park. David also managed the San Diego Bird Festival for ten years, which brought large numbers of visitors to our region.

David was a gifted leader that made a huge difference for the wildlife and the environmental organizations in San Diego. From overseeing groups of volunteers, to carrying out important logistical work and presenting information about native plants to the public, he always left a positive impression. The photo above shows David taking a break from restoring wetland vegetation as part of a restoration project on the east side of the Slough. He is missed very much by his friends and family, and the legacy of his work to protect our region's wildlife will continue far into the future.

iNaturalist – Tracking Observations in Nature

by Cindy Pencek

iNaturalist is an app that people around the world use to make observations of wild plants or animals, that scientists can use for research. It's open to anyone, as a community science platform, all you do is upload a photo or audio file (birdsongs), and then other people and experts will help you identify what you've seen. A project called "**Famosa Slough Biodiversity**" compiles all observations seen at the Slough. There were 500 species identified as of April 2021, and since then, many great observations have been made bringing us to about 600 now! Over 350 people have made more than 5,600 observations at the Slough since 2014.

Here are a couple of the butterflies that have been seen at Famosa Slough and posted to iNaturalist:

Marine Blue

(*Leptotes marina*)



Western Pygmy-Blue

(*Brephidium exilis*)



To see what's been found, use this link: www.iNaturalist.org/observations?project_id=2952, and then you can scroll through recent observations, or search for different types of observations or species. For example, you can search for bees and see photos of the 20 different species that have been photographed at the Slough. There are also 20 species of butterflies, 13 species of fungi and lichens, and over 200 species of plants. The app will show you a pink exclamation point if the observation is non-native (example: nasturtium), and a brown bubble if it's threatened or endangered (example: wandering skipper).
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iNaturalist – Tracking Observations in Nature

(continued from Page 1)

iNaturalist can be used as an app on your phone or on a computer at iNaturalist.org. Start by taking a photo (either within the app or outside of it), add it to an observation, and assign an ID if you know it. You can make a general ID, such as plant or insect, and others will look at the photo later on and add more detailed identification. It helps to take clear photos, and from several angles if possible. For plants, adding perspective is good to show relative size; putting your hand or foot in the photo is an easy way to accomplish that. And remember to only add photos of wild things; don't include pets or plants that are "cultivated" or planted in a garden. Here are some tutorials with more info on how to use iNaturalist: www.inaturalist.org/pages/video+tutorials.

Why use iNaturalist? Having a more complete list of animals, plants, marine life, etc. helps us strategize management. Knowing about endangered or threatened species is quite valuable so we can advocate for specific habitat management, by preserving and enhancing conditions favorable for those species. Researchers can use the data to look for trends in population growth or decline. But also, it's fun to use iNaturalist. You can track what species you've seen, and it can keep track of your life list. How many species of butterflies have you seen? If you add photos of them to iNaturalist, it will keep track for you!

April 29th to May 2nd is the **iNaturalist City Nature Challenge** where cities compete against each other to have the most species and most observations. We'd love to have you come to the Famosa Slough, take photos, and submit them at <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2022-san-diego-county>.

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

City's contact is **Mission Bay Senior Park Ranger, Karolynn Estrada-Sparlin**, phone 858/581-7602.

To contact Friends of Famosa Slough, phone 619/224-4591 or email info@famosaslough.org.

www.FamosaSlough.org
Instagram: @famosaslough
www.facebook.com/FamosaSlough

The 2022 King Tides at Famosa Slough

King Tides are the highest tides of the calendar year. The 2022 King Tides were January 1-3. At over +7 feet the tide was surprisingly high. These extreme high tides give us a look at what might happen to the marsh areas in coming years as sea level rises.

The top photograph below shows the Slough at the extremely high King Tide, showing that almost all of the marsh vegetation is completely under water. In contrast, the second photo shows the extremely low tide that followed several hours later.

7.3-foot
High Tide
from bench
below
Famosa Blvd.



-2.0-foot
Low Tide
from bench
below
Famosa Blvd.



For our first public event since COVID, we invited people to see the King Tide at Famosa Slough the morning of January 2nd. On January 3rd, the Friends sponsored a presentation at the **Point Loma/Hervey Library**. **Leland Foerster** displayed his collection of King Tide photographs from the **California Coastal Commission's California King Tides Project**, and **Paul Jacob**, a City of San Diego engineer, spoke about the physics of sea level rise and its impacts on the San Diego coastline and the Slough.

Leland Foerster has encouraged people to photograph King Tides in many locations to document their evolving impacts. Go to the web page ['The Future is Now: King Tide Photography Project'](#) for some background and to see a large number of these photographs and a great video.

Featured Bird – The Phalaropes!

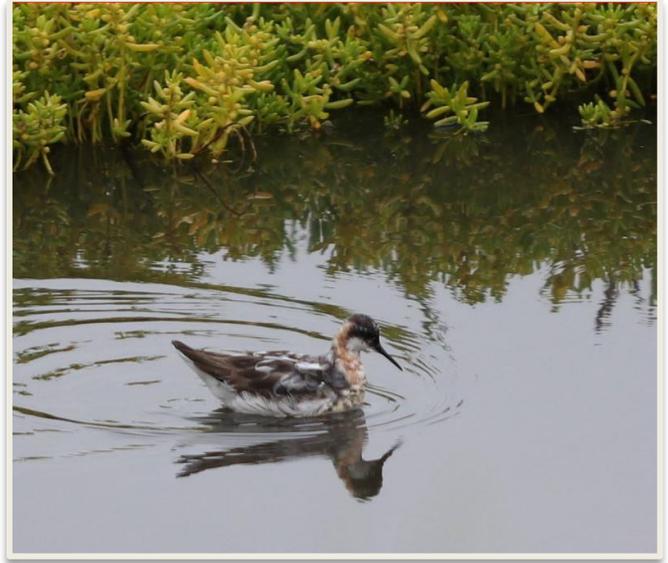
by Lesley Handa

During fall migration in 2021 at Famosa Slough, you may have spotted a Red-necked Phalarope or a Wilson's Phalarope if you were even luckier! Phalaropes are shorebirds that are slim with thin bills and can be identified from other shorebirds in the water by the unusual foraging strategy of spinning in a circle while kicking their legs to stir up food.

There are three species of Phalarope in the world, Red-necked Phalarope, Red Phalarope, and Wilson's Phalarope, and a fun fact is that all three occur in San Diego County. At Famosa Slough, Red-necked Phalarope and Wilson's Phalarope may be seen during migration. While the Red Phalarope has not yet graced us with its presence at Famosa Slough, an individual was seen close by in Mission Bay earlier in 2021 by photographer John Bruin.

All phalaropes are polyandrous, meaning the female may mate with several males. Female phalaropes are more brightly colored than males and will fight other females for the males. During breeding, once eggs are laid, the female will leave the male to incubate the eggs and tend to the precocial young. The Red-necked Phalarope is the smallest of the three species and is most likely to be seen at Famosa Slough. The Red Phalarope can be identified with the chunkiest body and a thick bill and is one of only a few shorebirds that spends time in the ocean. Migratory shorebirds have some of the highest fat loads among birds, with the Wilson's Phalarope as no exception! During migration, the Wilson's Phalarope can double in body weight and is one of two species that molt at resting sites during migration. The Wilson's Phalarope has a commensal foraging relationship with other birds and will follow Chilean Flamingo and American Avocet as these species stir up food.

In terms of conservation, Red-necked Phalarope and Red Phalarope are shorebirds of Moderate Concern on the list of Shorebirds of Conservation Concern. As phalaropes are migrants to San Diego, it is a good reminder that these species depend on areas around the world that require protection. Key areas that are important to phalaropes include Mono Lake in California where Wilson's Phalarope and Red-necked Phalarope congregate in large numbers to feast on alkali fly larvae, marshes in the arctic that are breeding grounds for Red-necked Phalarope and Red Phalarope, and South America where the Wilson's Phalarope winters.



Red-necked Phalarope
photo by Cindy Pencek

COVID-19 Update and 2022 Activities

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Friends were not able to conduct our traditional bi-monthly public work events and monthly nature walks at the Slough since March 2020. Several people have worked as individuals to pick up trash, maintain the trails, pull weeds, and notify the rangers of serious problems, etc. As a result, we were not able to get most of the weeds before they seeded, and we have a lot more weeds in the Slough than in previous years.

We started 2022 with some public outreach events on the 2nd and 3rd of January regarding the King Tides (see article on page 2), and our first work events were on January 8, February 12, and March 12 to try to catch up.

We will have a work party in conjunction with **I Love A Clean San Diego's Creek to Bay** event on April 23. After that we plan to revert to having work events on the second Saturday of each odd-numbered month and hope that will be enough. Please come if you can. The volunteers are enjoyable to work with, there is a lot to learn about the vegetation and wildlife, and the effort of each volunteer increases the wildlife support value of the Slough.

Also, since we discontinued our monthly guided nature walks in March 2020, we have restarted them for the third Saturday of each month at 1 PM. These are great for beginning birders and for anyone interested in nature.

MEMBERSHIP IN FRIENDS OF FAMOSA SLOUGH

NAME(S) _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ E-MAIL _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

___ Please send future newsletters and notices via email only.

___ 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.

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION: \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

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

WORK PARTIES

2nd Saturday of odd-numbered months —

May 14, July 9, September 10, November 12, etc.

Meet at 9:00 AM just east of the intersection of West Point

Loma and Famosa Boulevards - **Volunteers needed!**

RSVP to info@FamosaSlough.org

NATURE WALKS

3rd Saturday of every month —

April 16, May 21, June 18, July 16, August 20, etc.

Meet at 1:00 PM near the kiosk on Famosa Blvd., south of West

Point Loma Blvd. - **Beginners welcome!**



Green-tailed Towhee
reported by Cindy Pencek on eBird.org

**Map Location: W. Pt. Loma Blvd. & Famosa Blvd.,
San Diego, CA 92107**