

### School Field Trips

We enjoyed lovely weather for our Fall field trips to the San Francisco Botanical Garden. Our school program resumes in January 2008 with classroom visits and field trips to Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park to observe nesting Great Blue Herons and chicks.



On a nature expedition



Focused birders

### SFNE Joins Endangered Species Big Year Project

The Golden Gate National Parks contain more endangered species than any other unit of the National Park System in continental North America: more than Yosemite, Yellowstone, Kings Canyon, and Sequoia National Parks combined.

In 2008, San Francisco Nature Education and other partner organizations will embark on an exciting campaign to reconnect people with the superlative resources and values of the Park: the Endangered Species Big Year. Like traditional listing competitions, the Endangered Species Big Year provides Park visitors with opportunities to see each of the 33 listed species found in the Park, both through individual exploration and guided expeditions.

The Endangered Species Big Year also empowers individual competitors to take 33 conservation action items that aid species recovery, reconnecting people with the preservationist values of this urban national park experiment.

#### How You Can Help

Sign-up for the Endangered Species Big Year at [www.ggnrbigyear.org](http://www.ggnrbigyear.org).

Come to the free Big Year kick-off on January 6, 1 p.m., at the San Francisco Zoo, 1 Zoo Road, San Francisco. For directions and a map, go to [www.sfzoo.org](http://www.sfzoo.org).

Please go straight to the Great Hall in the Education Building, which is right by the main entrance. Admission is free.

After a short presentation and some snacks, we'll take participants on their first guided expedition of the Big Year. SFNE will host an information table and our volunteers will assist on family walks on Ocean Beach to see the threatened Western Snowy Plover.

Watch upcoming issues of SFNE's Blue Heron Newsletter for announcements of Big Year field trips and events sponsored by San Francisco Nature Education and other sponsors.

## Support San Francisco Nature Education, Your Donations Make a Difference!

Since our inception in 2000, SFNE has served more than 10,000 children and adults.

With your help, we look forward to doing even more in 2008. A few of the things we have planned:

- Expanding our School Program—combining classroom and field-based science, language arts, and art education to deliver engaging lessons that align with the California Department of Education's school curriculum standards. In addition to serving kindergarten through third grade, we will be adding fourth- and fifth-grade students in 2008.
- Training middle- and high-school interns to be interpreters at our 18 Saturday Program sessions
- Presenting an exciting series of public lectures about San Francisco's natural history

Your support makes all the difference:

- \$100 provides 10 copies of *Birds of San Francisco* for classroom use.
- \$250 covers the cost of one classroom visit for 20 underserved students.
- \$500 covers the cost of two classroom visits for underserved students.
- \$1,000 covers the cost of two field trips for underserved students.
- \$1,500 covers the full program for a class of 20 underserved third-graders.

As 2007 draws to a close, you can help the youngest members of our community explore their connection to the natural world, awaken their curiosity, and encourage their concern for the environment. Thank you so much.

Warmest regards,

Nancy DeStefanis, Executive Director

Please visit our website to view a calendar of our 2008 public program.

**Our engaging public and school programs couldn't exist without generous contributions from people like you.**

**Would you please send in a contribution today?**

Please mail contributions to:  
San Francisco Nature Education  
3450 Geary Blvd. Suite 208  
San Francisco, CA, 94118

**Or Donate online** at our website!



Yellow Rumped Warbler -- photo courtesy Alan Hopkins

## Birding for Everyone Family Nature Walk

Join us for our guided nature walks, 1st Saturday of every month at the San Francisco Botanical Garden, 10 a.m. until Noon. Visit our website for more details.

<http://www.sfnature.org/programs/bfe.html>

Upcoming Dates: Jan 5 and Feb 2 (Rain cancels.)

### Trip Leader Angie Geiger's Report

Saturday, Dec. 1, was clear and crisp, a perfect day for the "Birding for Everyone" walk at Strybing Arboretum. An enthusiastic group of beginning and intermediate birders gathered at the bookstore at 10:00 a.m. Our first birds of the day were a covey of California Quail in the Demonstration Garden. They were in the underbrush, but one or the other would make an appearance so that they whole group had a chance to observe our State bird. A female lookout was easiest to see, but in total there were about 10 Quail. Next we moved on to the Fragrance Garden, where we were afforded great views of Golden-crowned and White-crowned sparrows in various plumages. The difference in bill color between these species was clearly visible. A Yellow-rumped Warbler made a brief appearance, flashing his namesake rump for all to see.

We moved on to the Wildfowl Pond where a large group of American Coots was on the lawn allowing us a good view of their odd lobed feet. There were a number of Gulls on the pond, including Western, Mew and Glaucous-winged. As always, Mallards were also present. Hiding on the island was a Great-Blue Heron. We checked the various Sapsucker trees, but this Winter resident was nowhere to be found. Instead, we were treated to a foraging Hermit Thrush at eye level, giving us all a good look at the faintly spotted breast and brown back. Near the John Muir Pond, an observant birdwatcher discovered a Northern Flicker in the bare branches of a Eucalyptus tree.



## Farewell to 2007 - Photos from Our Natural World

Featuring the photographs of nature photographer and SFNE volunteer Jim Sullivan.



Bufflehead



Snowy Egret



Adult Black-crowned Night Heron



Belted Kingfisher



Brown Pelican



Immature Black-crowned Night Heron



Red-tail Hawk



Male and female Hooded Merganser



Sand Hill Cranes



Green Heron



Great Blue Heron



Candy Cane Great Egret

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Please forward this newsletter to your friends!

[www.sfnature.org](http://www.sfnature.org)