

San Francisco Nature Education 2009 Interpretive Programs Information for Prospective Youth Interns

San Francisco Nature Education (SFNE)

SFNE is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to providing interactive environmental education programs that develop leadership and stewardship in youth and adults.

The Birding for Everyone Program

Nancy H. DeStefanis, Executive Director, founded this program in 2003. These naturalist led public walks through the micro-habitats of the San Francisco Botanical Garden in Golden Gate Park bring the public close to California Quail and other birds.

The first Saturday of each Month, approximately 30 adults and children attend.

The Heron Watch Program

Nancy H. DeStefanis, founded this program in 2000. Great Blue Herons have been nesting at the colony since 1994, when Nancy discovered the first recorded nesting.

Since 1994, the great blue herons have produced 110 fledglings. It is very unusual for great blue herons to nest in the city, and particularly on an island so close to the public path and boats.

The herons court, build nests, mate and lay eggs between January and March.

By April, at least one or more nests have chicks in them.

We start our interpretive program in April so that the interns and the public can experience the excitement of these four foot tall birds with six foot wingspans flying in and out of the nests- brooding the chicks, feeding the chicks, and the chicks learning to fly in their 10th week.

It is truly a wonderful experience for all that come to Stow Lake.

The program was conceived to offer interns and the public the opportunity to observe these charismatic birds up close and learn more about the wild birds in our own parks. We emphasize conservation and preservation.

The program has been very successful in training interns to be interpreters and conservationists. Since 2000, approximately 5,000 visitors have come to Stow Lake to see the herons.

Publicity to date: see www.sfnature.org

Partial list:

Bay Nature on the Air short film on our Heron Watch program will begin airing on Northern California Public Television Stations in late 2007.

San Francisco Chronicle April 30, 2005 –Jefferson Award for Public Service, California Wild Magazine, summer 2000 and April 2004, San Francisco Chronicle, March 27, 2002

Training and Mentorship

	<i>Heron Watch</i>	<i>Birding for Everyone</i>
<i>Training Overview</i>	During March we have a group training at the school. For our second training session, we visit the Stow Lake colony.	A group training session will be held at SFNE's office or a local school
<i>Training Session 1</i>	Great Blue Heron and naturalist introduction	Introduction to the birds and natural history of Golden Gate Park and being a naturalist.
<i>Length</i>	2.0 hours	1.5 hours
<i>Topics</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Blue Herons and the nesting cycle • Interpretive skills • Observation and data logging • Nature journaling • Communication skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission • History of SFNE • Natural History of Golden Gate Park • Local birds of Golden Gate Park, slide show
<i>Test</i>	There will be a brief test at the conclusion of the training. Each applicant must pass the test to become an SFNE intern.	There will be a brief test at the conclusion of the training. Each applicant must pass the test to become an SFNE intern.
<i>Training Session 2</i>	Orientation at Stow Lake	N/A
<i>Length</i>	1.0 hour	
	Total training 2.0 hours	
<i>Continuing Education</i>	At each session in April and May.	At each session
<i>Mentorship</i>	Each intern will be mentored by a senior naturalist.	Each intern will be mentored by a senior naturalist.

2009 Intern Program Details

	<i>Heron Watch</i>	<i>Birding For Everyone</i>
<i>Intern Responsibilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and study handouts about the great blue herons. • Educate the public on the activities of the Great Blue Herons, birds in their nests at the Observation site,- using spotting scopes and binoculars. • Assist on Nature Walks, using spotting scopes to show the public nesting birds at Stow Lake. • Start a Nature Journal of their sightings and observations during the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and study handouts about the birds of Golden Gate Park. • Assist on Nature Walks, educating the public on birds and natural history, and using spotting scopes and binoculars. • Start a Nature Journal of their sightings and observations during the program.
<i>Required Commitment</i>	Each student must complete an application, undergo an interview, and be willing to serve a minimum of five Saturdays if not all six.	Each student must complete an application, undergo an interview, and be willing to serve a minimum of six to eight Saturdays
<i>Program Dates</i>	6 Saturdays in April and May	First Saturday each month, year-round
	April 11, 2009 April 18 April 25 May 2 May 9 May 16 (There will be a picnic for interns)	
<i>Schedule at Observation site</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interns arrive at 9:15 am.. • Interpretive Program for public: 10 am until 1 p.m. • Debriefing/ Questions/Wrap up: 1:00 pm until 1:30 pm. 	Interns 9:45AM – 12:15PM
<i>Community Service Hours</i>	Ask SFNE Naturalist to sign off.	Ask SFNE Naturalist to sign off.
<i>Supervision</i>	An adult Naturalist supervises all interns at the Observation site.	An adult Naturalist supervises all interns at the Observation site.

Outcomes

Each intern will gain proficiency in:

interpretive techniques, communicating effectively, use of equipment-binoculars and spotting scopes, collecting data, identifying at least twenty local birds and developing a working knowledge of the life cycle and behavior of the great blue heron and keeping a field journal with field notes and sketches.

As long as the great blue herons continue to nest at Stow Lake, there will be a need for the Heron Watch Interpretive Program.

For further information and pictures, please visit our website: www.sfnature.org and click on Programs and Events and Libranry/Photos/Resources.

Thank you for your interest in our Youth Naturalist Internship Program.

Sincerely,
Nancy H. DeStefanis,
Executive Director, San Francisco Nature Education