

## GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT 2013 – 2014

Our San Francisco Bay region offers some of the most remarkable and accessible wildlife on the Pacific Coast. The mosaic of ecosystems—stretching from the Pacific Ocean shoreline across San Francisco Bay and its wetlands, and into our inland hills and forests—spans an extraordinary landscape and includes great biodiversity, especially of bird life. For 97 years, Golden Gate Audubon has been protecting the birds of our region and inspiring people to accept our responsibility as perpetual students and stewards of the natural world.

During the 2013-14 fiscal year, more than 1,250 people volunteered through our advocacy, conservation, and educational programs. While we have a very small staff, we are blessed with a skilled and dedicated cadre of volunteers who are crucial to our successes.

### CONSERVATION

GGAS has three active conservation committees that advocate for wildlife across the three counties of our chapter's territory. It's all too rare to see a conservation battle pay off without years of legal wrangling. Yet we were proud to secure some rapid "wins" during 2013-14:

- GGAS volunteers monitored and demanded protection for threatened Western Snowy Plovers wintering in Alameda. We won temporary signage and a pledge to install crucial symbolic fencing for the plovers' roost for the next overwintering season.
- Our East Bay Conservation Committee convinced the City of Berkeley to abandon a plan to exterminate ground squirrels at Cesar Chavez Park, where wintering Burrowing Owls—a Species of Special Concern in California - depend on squirrel tunnels for shelter. The city will instead use non-lethal methods to manage the squirrel population.
- Through joint legal action with other wildlife organizations, we prevailed on CalTrans to employ non-lethal methods of excluding Cliff Swallows from nesting on two highway bridge construction projects in Petaluma.
- As a founding member of the Bay Area Osprey Coalition, GGAS helped secure new safe nesting platforms for Osprey, which are beginning to nest on the shores of San Francisco Bay for the first time. We co-sponsored the second annual Osprey Days festival at Mare Island in Vallejo.



Tony Brake

Ospreys on nest platform

Golden Gate Audubon also maintained our advocacy leadership on several long-running issues. We produced original research documenting the impact of off-leash dogs on birds within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and published an op-ed on the topic in the San Francisco Chronicle.

We advised the S.F. Recreation & Parks Department on a draft long-term management plan for conserving San Francisco's natural areas, and advised the University of California at San Francisco on best practices for managing the Sutro Forest.

We maintained and enhanced safe nesting habitat for endangered California Least Terns in Alameda and increased participation in our Tern Watch citizen science monitoring program, in close cooperation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. We continued holding wind power companies accountable for lowering raptor mortality

significantly at the Altamont Pass.

We were encouraged when Oakland became the second city in the nation, after San Francisco, to adopt bird-safe building guidelines. Our work on the San Francisco and Oakland guidelines established GGAS as a leader within the national Audubon network on improving survival odds for birds in urban environments. We continued our Lights Out for Birds partnership with the City of San Francisco during spring and fall migration, and helped the city prepare for a new program to reduce residential bird-window collisions.

## ADULT EDUCATION

GGAS's docent programs educate the general public about wildlife they can view from popular shoreline trails. Forty GGAS volunteer docents used spotting scopes to introduce passersby to the lively birds at Lake Merritt in Oakland and along the S.F. Bay Trail in Richmond. Enthusiastic docents also shared information on the overwintering Burrowing Owls of Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley.

Our birding classes enrolled over 330 students. Volunteer field trip leaders led over 120 free bird walks for an estimated 1,800 people. Nearly a thousand people attended our monthly Speaker Series lectures to learn from renowned scientists, authors, artists, and naturalists. Over 40 people participated in multi-day educational trips in other states and countries through our Travel with Golden Gate Audubon program. We also sponsored our second year-long Master Birder class in partnership with California Academy of Sciences, increasing the ornithological knowledge and leadership skills of 19 birders, each of whose class commitment included 100 hours of volunteer work in local conservation groups.

After a misguided tree trimming in Oakland destroyed Black-crowned Night-Heron nests and made national news, we promptly developed educational materials on protecting birds and nests during tree care. With support from partners in the arborist community, we presented on this important topic at a professional arborists' forum with over 100 attendees.



Burrowing Owl

## YOUTH EDUCATION

Our award-winning Eco-Education program enriched curriculum and engaged 750 elementary pupils from more than a dozen Title I (federally subsidized, low-income) schools in East Oakland, North Richmond, and San Francisco's Bayview/Hunter's Point. These schoolchildren all received a suite of at least four in-school lessons aimed at fostering eco-literacy and environmental stewardship, plus three exciting field trips to nearby wetlands, creeks, and the ocean during which children and their families studied ecology and wildlife and actively restored local habitats.



Peter Maiden

Eco-Ed field trip to Muir Beach

At three Richmond schools, we piloted a new Bird-Friendly Schools curriculum in which students learned to scientifically assess how welcoming or hazardous their facility was to birds. Among other hands-on activities, they planted native plants to attract hummingbird species, built and installed nest boxes for Western Bluebirds, and decorated windows to prevent bird collisions.

We also sponsored a series of family-focused birding and citizen science events for the general public, including a Great Backyard Bird Count for Kids at Lake Merritt and a quarterly series of PB&J Family Bird walks. At the March 2014 BioBlitz in the Presidio sponsored by the GGNRA, youth and adults folded 2,411 origami Passenger Pigeons for a national exhibit at the Smithsonian while learning about how to protect our local birds. It was a poignant lesson as 2014 marked the 100th year anniversary of the extinction of that species.

## HABITAT RESTORATION

At Pier 94—our signature habitat restoration site in San Francisco—we began grading, planting and weeding in the uplands area, following on our great success in restoring the wetland portion. Seeding work had to be postponed due to the drought but will take place in 2014-15. We marshaled GGAS members and hundreds of volunteers from corporate, community, scout, and educational groups to clean and restore habitat not only at Pier 94, but also at San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, Crissy Field, and Land's End, at Oakland's MLK Jr. Regional Shoreline, at the Point Pinole Regional Shoreline in Richmond, and at the Least Tern colony site at Alameda Point.



Crissy Field habitat clean-up

## GGAS ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The organization's financial condition has improved since the challenging post-recession years. Under the guidance of new Board Chair Laura Gobbi, we implemented a smooth leadership transition with longtime GGAS volunteer Cindy Margulis succeeding Mike Lynes as Executive Director.

## BIRDATHON

Our fifth annual Birdathon fundraiser was our most successful to date, raising \$57,000 through special birding trips offered in April. At the Birdathon Awards Celebration, Lisa Owens Viani was recognized with the 2014 Elsie Roemer Conservation Award for her work to ban anti-coagulant rodenticides, which cause severe harm to many non-target wildlife species. Denise Wight was honored with our Paul Covel Environmental Education Award for her acclaimed birding-by-ear classes.

## CITIZEN SCIENCE

Our 2013 Christmas Bird Count broke participation records on both sides of the Bay. With over 270 participants, the Oakland count circle was the fourth largest in all of North America! We also recorded an impressive level of biodiversity: 184 species observed in San Francisco and 182 in the Oakland area on this one-day snapshot census.

Staff and volunteers worked hard collecting valuable data to inform our science-based policy recommendations for land managers and public agencies, including the GGNRA, East Bay Regional Park District, and various San Francisco agencies.

Many thanks to the volunteers, donors, partners, and staff who helped us achieve so much this year! We look forward to working with you to accomplish even more for Bay Area birds in 2014-15.

# FINANCIALS 2013–2014

## Statement of Revenues and Expenses Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2014

### Revenue

Individual Gifts	\$ 191,249
Foundation grants	159,131
Program and events	108,359
Government grants	92,400
Membership fees	79,318
Corporate sources	25,854
Other	60,115

**Total Revenue \$ 716,426**

### Expenses

Education	206,648
Administrative	177,609
Member services	122,058
Conservation	95,938
Fundraising	19,541

**Total Expenses \$ 621,794**

## Statement of Financial Position As of June 30, 2014

### Assets\*

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$ 217,417
Investments	183,976
Accounts Receivable	56,946
Deposits/Pre-Paid Expenses	12,159
Inventory	2,584

**Total Revenue \$ 473,081**

### Liabilities

Accounts payable	1,819
Other Current Liabilities	29,544

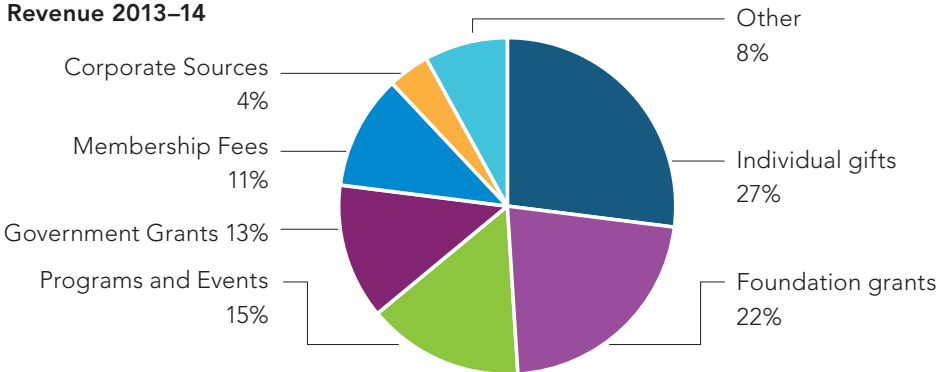
**Total Liabilities \$ 31,363**

Deferred Net Assets	204,848
Unrestricted Net Assets	75,131
Net Income	161,739

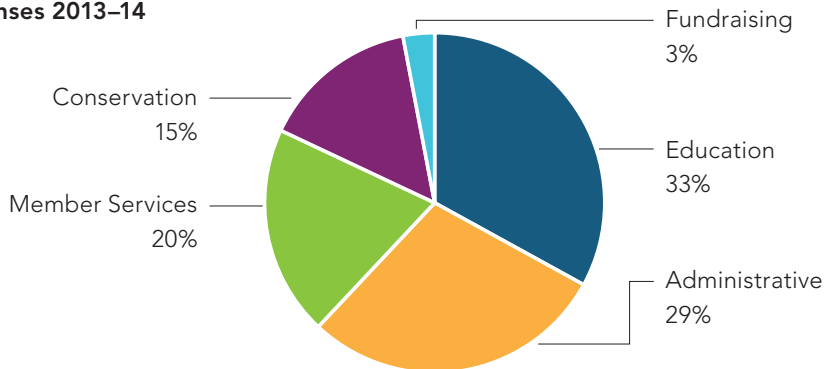
**Total Equity \$ 441,719**

**Total Liabilities & Net Assets \$ 473,081**

### Revenue 2013–14



### Expenses 2013–14



\*Numbers do not add up to the total due to rounding. Please contact GGAS for a complete financial report audited by Kirby and Forbes, Certified Public Accountants.

## Join Today and Protect Bay Area Wildlife!

Golden Gate Audubon owes our success to people like you. If you are not yet a GGAS member, please join us. For as little as \$35, you can become part of our visionary work. Join at [www.goldengateaudubon.org](http://www.goldengateaudubon.org), call 510.843.2222, or mail your check to GGAS, 2530 San Pablo Ave., Suite G, Berkeley CA 94702.

Although we are a National Audubon chapter, we are an independent organization that relies almost entirely on local contributions to support our work. Every dollar goes to support our local Bay Area conservation, education and birding programs. Golden Gate Audubon is a 501c3 nonprofit, and donations are tax-deductible.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013-14

Laura Gobbi, President  
David Anderson, Vice President  
Alan Harper, Vice President and Treasurer  
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Bob Lewis  
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Phil Price  
Diane Ross-Leech

### STAFF 2013-14

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