

2025 Annual Report

JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2025





OUR MISSION

To inspire people to protect Bay Area birds and our shared natural environment.

OUR VISION

A world where birds, wildlife, and all people flourish together.



From the Board President

What a tremendously productive year! Thanks to a few generous bequests, we were able to hire a Director of Conservation. Whitney Grover has brought coherence and a broader scope to our conservation work, which among other things, allowed us to secure a grant for the San Francisco section of the Regionally Advancing Shoreline Project. This grant allows us to continue bringing nature-based solutions to address sea level rise in San Francisco, particularly at Pier 94. One of the most important things we can do for birds is to conserve their habitat, and by creating this position, we are able to do just that.

We continue our efforts to diversify birding in the Bay Area. Bird Curious field trips and other programs directed at first-time birders are bringing a younger demographic into birding. Our Birding for Everyone Fellowship continues to offer 10 BIPOC birders a year-long cohort experience and access to our classes at no cost. Our wonderful EcoEd classes continue at Title I schools, now including middle and elementary schools.

We have worked hard to solidify our financial stability. We have been greatly supported by bequests. Hiring a new Director of Development, George Marschall, has also helped us better reach our membership. Our classes, field trips, and travel program fulfill the needs of our members and help sustain our operations.

Lastly, I'd like to thank the rest of our staff – Executive Director Glenn Phillips, Director of Communications Ryan Nakano, Digital Communications Assistant Jeni Schmedding, Youth Education and Outreach Manager Clay Anderson, Volunteer and Conservation Advocacy Manager Janet Carpinelli, and Office Manager Makayla Pearce.

There is so much to be done in support of birds, and we thank you for helping us take on this work!

Chris Tarr

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"Ensuring that GGBA's birding community has support when registering and attending our Field Trips, Classes, International Trips, and other birding activities allows others to witness the beauty and abundance of the Bay's birds."

Makayla Pearce



Education

Birding is booming in the United States. 16% of the population actively travels at least a mile from home to observe birds.¹ From 2020 to 2023, active Merlin users increased five-fold (1.5 million) and eBird checklist submissions doubled (1.3 million).²

It's no wonder one of GGBA's biggest challenges in terms of programming is the high demand for more free birding trips. That said, we are proud of the work coming out of our Bird Curious trips that allow new birders to fledge and quickly step into their own leadership roles! In addition to drawing in more diverse participants, the Bird Curious Team supported and mentored 35 new field trip organizers and co-leaders.



(Above) Avocet and Dunlin at Coyote Point Marina. (From left) Field trip to Sbrante Ridge Botanic Regional Preserve; Brown Pelican.

Alison Weber; Xiao Wan; Rick Lewis



BY THE NUMBERS

269
Field trips

973
Unique participants

415
First-time field trip
participants
(42%)

114
First-time field trip
participants
with Bird Curious
(27%)



"Watching people light up when they recognize a species for the first time—or when they start to see the bigger story of habitat and conservation—reminds me why this work matters."

Patrick Meeker

"I love how all of the trips are free—I think it encourages people who are curious about birding to come and experience the magic!"

Maya Sarin

"Without my initial Bird Curious trips, I think I may have been too overwhelmed or intimidated to pursue birding further. As it turns out, it's become my primary obsession!"

Claire

¹ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Birding in the United States a Demographic and Economic Analysis 2022. fws.gov/media/2022-birding-united-states-demographic-and-economic-analysis

² Cornell Lab, Living Bird Winter 2024. allaboutbirds.org/news/a-third-of-american-adults-are-birdwatchers-according-to-nationwide-survey

Birding for Everyone

Interview with BFE Fellowship Mentor
Analia Hawkins

What impact if any did the fellowship have on your personal and professional life?

I started birding in 2018. When I applied for the fellowship and got involved with GGBA I had been searching and yearning for a space that involved more people who look like me or were in my community. Finding BFE and cultivating these relationships helped me build confidence in my leadership abilities enough to found my own birding group (QTPOC Birders).

How do you see your role as the Birding for Everyone Fellowship Mentor? Why did you decide to continue serving in this role?

I see my role as a guide, helping fellows have the most fulfilling and enriching year possible within the cohort. This program contributed a lot to my life, and I want more people to have that same opportunity. I want people to feel the tangible support to pursue things they're passionate about, things that they can bring back to their own communities.

How do you see the role of the BFE program within the larger Bay Area environmental conservation community?

One of the benefits of the program is just allowing people to feel like their ideas or desires for opportunities aren't isolated. I think about the Spanish language trips that have grown and been happening over the past couple years. It's really powerful for people to be like "Hey, I really want to start leading Spanish language walks for people in this community" and just to be able to make it happen.

Learn more about our fellowship program by visiting goldengatebirdalliance.org/fellowship.



Classes

Creating ever stronger connections between our community and the natural world, GGBA classes continued to be a driving force for deepening our member's and supporter's relationship to birds here in the Bay Area. From entry-level introductory courses on bird ID to topic-specific courses on individual species and habitats, our classes extend the initial educational opportunities found in our free field trips.

BY THE NUMBERS

30

Classes

534

Students

4

New classes:

Bird Photography Workshop
Bird Vocalizations
Breeding Birds of the Bay Area
Creativity and Birds



Esperanza Elementary School students learning, birding, and cleaning Arroyo Viejo Creek at Knowland Park in Oakland.

Jeni Schmedding

EcoEd Youth Program

This year, our award-winning EcoEd program served **406 students** across **8 schools** in the Bay Area, organizing **41 field trips** with the help of 15 new **EcoEd volunteers** for 3rd to 12th graders to experience and learn about nature and our local watershed. Despite financial challenges, this was our **second year partnering with Richmond Outdoor Coalition**, continuing our work with middle and high school students.



"The reason cleaning up trash is important is because the trash goes into the sea, animals think it's food for them so they'll eat it and die."

Esperanza Elementary School student while cleaning up Arroyo Viejo Creek in Oakland

Speaker Series

Two phenomenal Bay Area writers graced our monthly speaker series. Pulitzer Prize-winning author and Guggenheim Fellow Ed Yong spoke about "How Birds Sense the World" at our annual meeting in August. A month later, Amy Tan shared her delight in birds close to home based on her recent book *The Backyard Bird Chronicles*. Chelsea Connor, one of the founders of Black Birders Week and an alumni of our BFE Fellowship, spoke in May on the topic of "Nest Building: Creating lasting (birding) community."



(From left) Ed Yong; Amy Tan; Chelsea Connor.

Courtesy Ed Yong; Amy Tan; Chelsea Connor

Conservation

Over the past 150 years, we've lost over 90 percent of our shoreline wetlands and 40 percent of the aquatic ecosystem in the San Francisco Bay Area. As sea level rise and climate change threaten our remaining patches of critical shoreline bird habitat and our own built infrastructure, it's clear we need more living shorelines as soon as possible to protect both.



Creating Sustainable Shorelines

In May 2025, we formalized our agreement with the State Coastal Conservancy to hire a design team for three new living shorelines sites in San Francisco (Pier 94, Rincon Park, Pier 70) as part of the Regionally Advancing Living Shorelines Project (RALS). By hiring and managing a design team for three out of the ten RALS sites, we are helping develop regional guidance to streamline Bay Area living shoreline projects in the future. These projects use nature-based solutions like plants, oyster reefs, and rocks to not only control shoreline erosion but also enhance habitat for wildlife.



Reviving Our Lights Out Campaign

Turning toward our urban environment, we teamed up with SFGate, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *Bay Nature* in June to amplify our Lights Out For Birds campaign. We know artificial lighting at night increases the rate of bird collisions with glass windows. We also know that an estimated one billion birds are killed by building strikes in the U.S. each year. By securing ads and articles through our local media outlets, we're able to reach more Bay Area residents, building owners and managers with the message of reducing artificial light at night during peak bird migration.



A New Conservation Director

These conservation projects represent a fraction of the work we've engaged in over the past year, none of which would have been possible without the creation and hiring of a dedicated Director of Conservation at Golden Gate Bird Alliance in January. Under Whitney Grover's leadership, GGBA has been able to set project priorities, build strategic partnerships, and follow through on its conservation goals.

(Above) North shoreline view at Pier 94, San Francisco.
(Top) Map of RALS sites; Pier 94. (Middle) Least Sandpiper at Pier 94.
(Bottom) Whimbrel at Pier 94; Whitney Grover.

Inbal Shalev; San Francisco Estuary Institute; Charles Cris Benton; Bob Gunderson;
Bob Gunderson; Jenni Schmedding

Volunteer Program

Our dedicated volunteers remain enthusiastic about working together for a better environment. Here are some of their achievements.



Volunteers removed weeds and Eucalyptus debris from around native plants on the eastside of North Lake in Golden Gate Park.

Janet Carpinelli

Over 30 volunteers turned out at Meeker Slough and Stege Marsh in Richmond for the Annual Pre-Osprey Nesting Season Clean-up event, clearing out 24 bags worth of trash!

Cathy Bleier



As volunteers removed invasive Field Mustard, Datricia, and Algerian Sea Lavender from Arrowhead Marsh, Ridgway Rails, Sora, and Virginia Rail were heard calling during the king tide, and a Harbor seal was seen catching and eating large Chinook Salmon at the mouth of San Leandro Creek.

Janet Carpinelli

During the annual observation and cleaning of nestboxes along the perimeter of Bison Paddock in Golden Gate Park, volunteers found two successful Western Bluebird nests and 9 out of 12 successfully occupied nests overall.

Xiao Wan



BY THE NUMBERS

94

Habitat restoration events

125

30-Gallon bags full of trash removed

2,460

Volunteer hours restoring critical Bay Area bird habitat

400+

Native plants planted

Donors, FY 2025

Corporations, Foundations, and Government Agencies

\$10,000 AND ABOVE

California Coastal Commission; Joseph and Vera Long Foundation; Justice Outside; The Kimball Foundation; National Audubon; Temper of the Times

\$5,000 – \$9,999

Flora Family Foundation; Maynard P. and Katherine Z. Beuhler Foundation Fund; YES Nature to Neighborhoods

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Birding Ecotours LLC; California Native Plant Society – Santa Clara Valley Chapter; Conservation Society of California (The Oakland Zoo); Peninsula Open Space Trust; SPRAWLDEF

\$500 – \$999

Apple Matching Gifts Program; D & J Hodgson Family Foundation; Give Lively; Google Matching Gifts Program; Midvale Foundation, Piedmont Garden Club; UC Davis Supply Chain Management

\$250 – \$499

Alvaro's Adventures; Bay Nature Institute; Beatrix Bunny Fund; Chevron Matching Gifts Program; The David and Lucile Packard Foundation; Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund; Electronic Arts Matching Gifts Program; Found Image Press; GAP Matching Gifts Program; McDougall Charitable Fund, Safari West Inc.

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Leave a Legacy for Birds!

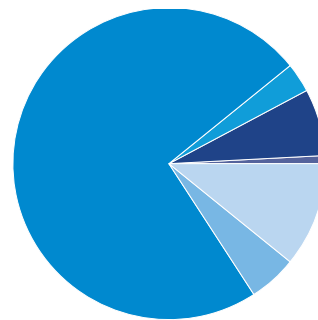
Join our RARA AVIS (Rare Bird) Society by including GGBA in your will.



"After serving on the board and volunteering in the office for years, it became clear how bequests make a huge difference in Golden Gate Bird Alliance's mission to protect the birds and habitat in the Bay Area."

Linda Vallee, Former GGBA Board Member and RARA AVIS Society Member

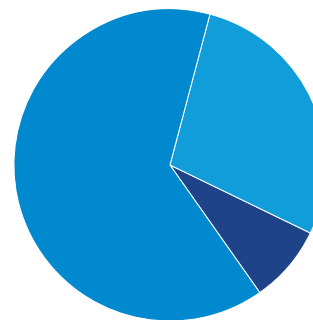
Financials, FY 2025



REVENUE

Individual Contributions	\$	379,531
Grants	\$	183,205
Legacies & Bequests	\$	2,564,317
Memberships	\$	104,193
Programs & Events	\$	239,962
Other	\$	28,429

Total Revenue **\$ 3,499,636**



EXPENSES

Program Services	\$	730,081
General & Administrative	\$	321,300
Fundraising	\$	90,794

Total Expenses **\$ 1,142,175**

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Total Liabilities	\$	139,555
Net Assets	\$	3,245,944

Total Liabilities & Net Assets **\$ 3,385,499**



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goldengatebirdalliance.org

(Above) Caspian Tern.
Alan Krakauer

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