

New Group Formed to Monitor Endangered Species

by Ryder W. Miller

In conjunction with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), local environmentalists, including Brent Plater, and the Center for Biological Diversity have organized an endangered species watch program, called the Big Year, which should help protect endangered plants and animals and counteract a growing "nature deficit" among children and the general public.

The San Francisco Chronicle reported Oct. 22 that children are choosing to explore the virtual world rather than the natural one. One 15 year old even said that he enjoyed visiting the mall more than taking a nature hike.

Those participating in the watch program will attempt to recognize and monitor all of the endangered species found in the areas of the GGNRA.

"The Endangered Species Act is our nation's safety net for fish, wildlife and plants," said Plater, explaining the rationale for the Big Year project. "We owe it to

future generations of San Franciscans to be good neighbors to the endangered species that share this piece of the planet with us. Hopefully, the Big Year will help people do that and we can help these species come back from the brink of extinction."

The GGNRA is home to 33 endangered species, more than any other National Park in the United States. To better appreciate rare plants and animals and to get the public involved in conservation efforts, Plater has organized field trips to acquaint the public with their wild, endangered neighbors.

To be found in San Francisco are the San Francisco Leucis, Presidio Clarkia, Raven's Manzanita, Western Snowy Plover, Brown Pelican, Marin Dwarf Flax, Least Tern, Marbled Murrelet, Stellar Sea Lion and the California Sea Otter.

There are three endangered butterflies at the GGNRA, including the Mission Blue butterfly.

"Every trip is planned with GGNRA natural resource man-

agement staff to ensure the safety of the species and people alike," Plater said. "They retain veto power on all events. We also published ethical wildlife viewing principles that are rules for the Big Year."

A number of local naturalists will be leading field trips.

"We are going to be connecting people who are not in touch with nature," said Liam O'Brien, a member of the Lepidopterist Society.

O'Brien said this should help children with a "nature deficit."

Big Year participants will also be involved in conservation actions, like cleanups and restoration actions.

The Big Year was recently impacted by the Cosco Busan oil spill in the bay.

Matt Zlatunich, of the Audubon Society and National Park Service, said the oil will make it up the food chain through ingestion and preening. Birds higher on the food chain will bio-accumulate the toxins.

The first field trip, planned for Jan. 6, will be to see the Western Snowy Plovers, some of which have been oiled. Zlatunich said the Western Snowy Plover's oiled winter plumage will not be as effective in protecting them from the cold this winter. When the birds preen, they will ingest the oil. The food supply on the beach has also been compromised by oil residue.

"The majority of them have been impacted," said Zlatunich. Some of the birds have site fidelity, so even if they are clean now there is the potential for them to run into globs of oil.

"They are already endangered. Now there is more pressure on them," Zlatunich said. "The public needs to know that the birds are going to have a tough time all year long with health issues."

"What inspires me is the humility, compassion and hope

Two Bar Employees Shot

An unknown assailant shot two male employees of an Outer Sunset District bar Nov. 25.

It was 20 minutes after closing time, at 2:20 a.m., when the assailant tried to enter the Fire Fly Sports Bar at 2457 Noriega St.

Lincoln Mustangs Win Title

The Abraham Lincoln High School football team won the city championship at the city's annual "Turkey Bowl" game, played at Kezar Stadium on Thanksgiving Day.

The Lincoln Mustangs rolled over the Washington Eagles 49-0. The lopsided affair was led by senior running back David Henderson, who rushed for 246 yards and three touchdowns, and

New Identity Theft Scam

A security fraud has recently been reported in 11 states, including California, and the FBI and federal court system have issued nationwide alerts on their Web sites warning consumers.

The gist of the fraud is that someone claiming to be a jury coordinator calls your residence. When you protest that you never received a jury duty summons in

embodied in the urban national park experiment and the Endangered Species Act," Zlatunich continued. "I think they are two of the most beautiful ideas our government has ever had, and it's exciting to share ideas with other folks."

When the man was told the bar was closed, he pulled out a handgun and shot one employee in the lower back and another one in the foot. The two victims were transported to SF General Hospital for medical treatment.

The suspect fled the scene.

Deshaun Marman, a defensive standout who blocked a Washington punt for a touchdown just seconds before half-time in a 7-0 game.

The Mustangs have won three consecutive championships. That feat has only been accomplished four times in the 84-year history of the SF Academic Athletic Association.

the mail, the scammer asks for your Social Security Number and date of birth so he or she can supposedly verify the information and cancel the warrant for your arrest. However, armed with the personal information the scammers can steal your identity.

For more information, visit www.fbi.gov/page2/june06/jury_scams060206.

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