

EVENT ADVISORY
June 23, 2021

For immediate release

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www.sfbayospreydays.org

9th Annual San Francisco Bay Osprey Days
Free public event highlights osprey nesting on San Francisco Bay with
Guided Hikes, Car Caravans and Presentations
Headquartered on Mare Island, Vallejo, California

[VALLEJO], CA – Friday, June 25, Saturday, June 26 and Sunday, June 27, 2021 the 9th Annual San Francisco Bay Osprey Days will take place at the Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve and other locations throughout Mare Island in Vallejo. There is no cost or preregistration required to attend the field trips and presentations. Two-hour guided boat trips are \$45 per person and do require advanced registration. The free event features numerous car caravan and walking tours scheduled all three days led by field guides from the local Napa-Solano Audubon Society and the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory and other naturalists. Osprey have not been documented to have nested in San Francisco Bay in the 20th or 21st centuries. Interest in these newcomers grows. The latest tool for public access to osprey nesting in San Francisco Bay is the high-definition, dual camera webcam perched above the osprey nest on the whirly crane at the Richmond CA harbor. Installed just about 4 years ago, it can be viewed 24/7 at www.sfbayospreys.org It's hoped that the "SF Bay osprey cam" website will not be confused with the website for the "San Francisco Bay Osprey Days" event, www.sfbayospreydays.org . Organizers wish to give special thanks to this year's sponsors, including: Southern Land Company, Dolphin Charters and Belinda Seidemann.

Following a hybrid/Virtual Osprey Days in July 2020, Saturday, June 26, 11:30am-12:30pm a lunchtime "citizen science" presentation will once again be given "In-person" this year, but, outdoors. Without access to the Preserve's visitor center, it will be improvised under a tent at the Mare Island Preserve entrance. Tony Brake, Volunteer Golden Gate Raptor Observatory Bay Osprey Monitoring Project Director, will give the presentation which will be viewable via Zoom and Facebook Live in keeping with the new hybridization of events, during and post pandemic. Tony's presentation will be repeated via Zoom and Facebook Live the following day, Sunday, June 27, 11:30am-12:30pm. Tony's Osprey talk is packed with info. about the nesting osprey population in San Francisco Bay which has grow and expanded southward over the last decade, with a documented 56 active nests between Vallejo and the South Bay, in the 2021 season. Since almost all of the nests are on human-made structures, there have been numerous cases of nest removal and disturbance. Tony notes that "such conflicts are readily remedied by providing alternative nest platforms to divert osprey." This has been accomplished for about ten nesting pairs, so far. Continued education of wildlife agencies, biology consulting firms and property managers about this approach will allow this iconic species to continue to expand and thrive in San Francisco Bay. And, Dr. Brake observes that while this has been an "approach adopted elsewhere, since Osprey nesting is new to this region, it is now needed in the Bay Area."

Guided hikes will be given Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings, June 25, 26 and 27 along the first half mile of the Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve Trail leaving from the parking lot at the closed visitor center, 167 O'Hara Ct. @ the deadened of Azuar Dr. on Mare Island in Vallejo. Starting Friday morning, at 8:00am, Bill George, former Mare Island Shipyard worker and avid "unofficial" photographer of the Mare Island Preserve, will guide a free walk in the Preserve on the lookout for osprey and other wildlife to photograph in the one hour 1/2 mile walk. Saturday morning 9:30am-11:00am Wally NeVille and Robin Leong, Napa Solano Audubon Society birding guides, former shipyard workers, experts in Ospreys, natural history specialists, and Mare Island Preserve volunteers, will guide a birdwatching trek along the same 1/2 mile route. We really want people taking the tours to understand how critical it is to permanently protect the wildlife and cultural history of this part of Mare Island", said Myrna Hayes, Osprey Days Co-founder and Co-founder and volunteer Mare Island Preserve manager from 2007-2019. Marcia Grefsrud, a naturalist and avid Mare Island Preserve volunteer

will guide Sunday morning's outing in the Preserve along the same route beginning at 9:30am and wrapping up by 11:00am.

Four, 2-hour boat cruises are scheduled by Dolphin Charters on both Saturday and Sunday. "Although due to the pandemic, we are restricting the number of passengers, we still hope to accommodate everyone who wishes to view osprey easily visible along the Mare Island and Napa River/Mare Island Strait shoreline", said Barbara Fitzgerald, of Dolphin Charters. Limited seating is still available for all tours. Departure times from the Vallejo Marina for the 2-hour osprey viewing boat trips are, Saturday and Sunday, 9:00am-11:00am and 1:00pm-3:00pm. The cost is \$45 per person. Pre-registration is required. For Reservations: call 510-527-9622 or 800-472-9942 or visit [Dolphincharters.com](https://www.dolphincharters.com)

A gathering scheduled Saturday evening June 26 from 6:00-8:00pm at the Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve Entrance Gate Park, Correa Ct at Azuar Dr. on Mare Island in Vallejo will include a light BBQ and refreshments for a requested donation. It is likely that osprey will soar and call overhead the small park area outside the gates of the Preserve. Park Users and Osprey enthusiasts have taken to parking and gathering outside the Preserve gate due to the 5:00pm closure of the main Preserve by the City of Vallejo public works department. Osprey and other wildlife take advantage of the "hunting hour" till dusk, making it an ideal time of day to view wildlife.

Until recently, osprey have been described as occasional visitors to San Francisco Bay by wildlife management agencies. Yet, the number of nesting pairs on the Bay and in particular at the confluence of the Napa River/Mare Island Strait and the Carquinez Strait on and near Mare Island have captured the attention of the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory and local Audubon Societies, particularly the Napa-Solano Audubon Society and the Golden Gate Audubon Society, as well as National Wildlife Refuge personnel. Osprey have been nesting in very small numbers for more than a decade in the Bay, flourishing in San Francisco Bay since the early 2000's when the first successful nesting pair took up residence at the southernmost tip of Pier 34 at the mouth of the Napa River in the Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve. The number has grown each nesting season, with 56 documented nests Baywide, in this 2021 season.

Because of this significant increase and a growing interest in the story by the public, the Mare Island Heritage Trust which founded and for 12 years, managed the Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve where many of the nests are located, is hosting this 9th annual event that features San Francisco Bay's osprey phenomenon. The public is invited to join in free guided car caravan tours of nests on Mare Island, as well as the guided morning walking tours in the Mare Island Preserve. Car caravan tours are scheduled Friday, 11:00am-1:00pm and 1:30pm-3:00pm. Saturday and Sunday, car caravan tours of the Island's active osprey nest sites will take place from 1:30-3:30pm. On all of the outings, the public will see nest sites up close with field guides from the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory, the Audubon Society, the Mare Island Heritage Trust and other local wildlife specialists. All car caravan tours will meet at and depart from the Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve Entrance Park, Correa Ct @ Azuar Dr. at the South end of Mare Island in Vallejo.

Even after the Osprey Days event, the public can continue to view osprey into late August, anytime the Preserve is open, every Friday through Sunday 8:00am-5:00pm using markers and directional arrows pointing to nest sites visible along the first one-half mile from the parking lot at the closed visitor center along the main paved trail. Osprey enthusiasts can also drive on their own near the Mare Island shipyard shoreline area where there is limited public access, to view osprey perched on cranes and other structures and soaring above the Napa River. There are also nest sites on the Vallejo side of the Mare Island Strait/Napa River which participants will learn how to view on their own, from local guides during the weekend event. One most northerly nest on the Island is located near the offramp to Mare Island from Hwy 37.

"We held our first osprey day with very short notice in July 2013. In talks together with our volunteers and Tony Brake and Harv Wilson from the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory, we felt like it was really important to get an event together so that we would have a jumpstart on what we needed in place for the annual nesting season. For the second year, osprey were observed migrating from their southern range in February, even earlier than the previous March and April timeframes. We timed this year's event at the peak of nesting and fledging activity in late June", said Myrna Hayes, Co-founder of Osprey Days, President of the Mare Island Heritage Trust and volunteer Preserve Manager 2007-2019. "We have been seeing the

numbers of nests and chicks remain stable in our Preserve where osprey are using former Navy shipbuilding cranes, now idle and abandoned lightpoles, rooftops and other structures including the most amazing one of all, a palm tree, upon which to build their nests. It is so exciting when Preserve users return from the mile roundtrip walk and report their observations of nests with adults and young.

"Beginning in the 2019 timeframe, as really a bonus, we have 10 pairs of nesting great egrets, some just a few feet off the main trail and a number of great blue herons nesting within easy view of the trail, as well. It's all quite spectacular and very noisy!", said, Ms. Hayes. An added bonus for bird viewing in the Preserve is the many trees close to the river for the young to perch on as they learn to fly and an abundance of lightning rods throughout the former Naval Ammunition Depot on which the Preserve is located, which are also used as perches by young and adult birds.

In addition to the ongoing impacts of the Pandemic for public gatherings, this year continues to be a daunting challenge for the entire team of dedicated scientists, researchers, guides, volunteers and board of the Mare Island Heritage Trust. After a series of fires in September 2019, and after 12 years of trusted and protective care of the Preserve, the nonprofit founder, funder and manager of the Preserve, was dismissed by the Vallejo City Manager as operating managers of the Mare Island Preserve, for no clear reason. Left to the heavy-handed management of the Public Works Dept, the Preserve has been downgraded in the last 18 months to little more than a jogging trail with the closure of the visitor center, destruction of all informational, rattlesnake warning and wayfinding signs and removal of the land trust team who founded and operated it with skilled and gentle care and at no cost to the City of Vallejo. In response to what is perceived as an unfair and unproductive move by the City, more than 8,100 Preserve Users have signed an online petition found on the Preserve website, requesting that the Preserve be returned to the founding non-profit organization's care. Another 1,000 signatures were collected on paper, prior to the pandemic.

Mobility challenged individuals will be accommodated on all outings. It is advised that the public visit the event website www.sfbayospreydays.org or Facebook page for a detailed schedule. Dogs are allowed in the Mare Island Preserve on leash.

Organizers assure that dogs can also be brought along on the car caravans, as long as they can be kept comfortable.

In addition to nesting osprey, key features of the Preserve are spectacular scenic vistas encompassing 7 Bay Area counties, Mt. Diablo, Mt. Tamalpais and Mt. St. Helena, the Carquinez Strait and Sonoma and Napa Valleys and the U.S. Navy's first cemetery in the Pacific, founded in 1858. For info. Text/call 707-249-9633. Visit our website: www.sfbayospreydays.org

Please note: Tours of the Mare Island Preserve and Mare Island are available to any reporter or photographer covering these events. Call Myrna Hayes, 707-249-9633 (cell) to schedule a tour. Attached are the following photos: Two photos by Bill George of Osprey perched on tree in the former Naval Ammunition Depot Worker's Housing Area, Osprey with fish in the Carquinez Strait, Vallejo, CA Rita LeRoy; photo by James E Lewis of an osprey perched on a lightning rod in the Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve located on the former Mare Island Naval Ammunition Depot, Vallejo, CA; Dolphin Charters' boat excursions on the Napa River/Mare Island Strait by Bill George; osprey perched in the "penthouse" of a light pole on the Navy's Pier 34 with great blue herons in the "apartment" below. Osprey fishing in the Carquinez Strait, Lee Ann Tompkins Baker; Two views of Osprey families on the dead palm nest, Mare Island Naval Ammunition Depot Worker's Housing Area, Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve photos by Bill George; Osprey with outstretched wings soaring over Berth 24, near the entrance to Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve by Chris Jerbic. Shared for use with permission of the photographers.

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9TH ANNUAL SAN FRANCISCO BAY OSPREY DAYS



FREE

*** boat trips—2 hrs
\$45 per person**

Nesting Osprey have flourished in San Francisco Bay since the early 2000's when the first successful nesting pair took up residence at the southernmost tip of Pier 34 at the mouth of the Napa River in the Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve. Now, there are 56 documented nests Baywide, this 2021 season.

HOSTED BY

The Bay Area Osprey Coalition
Mare Island Heritage Trust
Golden Gate Raptor Observatory
Napa Solano Audubon Society
Golden Gate Audubon Society

SPONSORED BY

Southern Land Company
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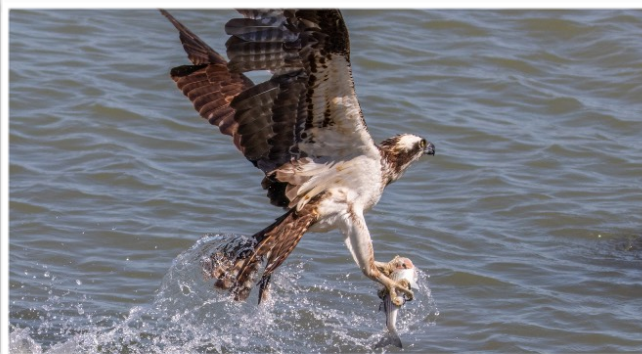


Photo upper: Lee Ann Tompkins Baker, Carquinez Strait, Vallejo, CA
Image left: Kathleen R. Fenton

Even in the most trying times, nature thrives. In our Bay, osprey still soar, dive, fish, nest, feed and fledge their young. . .

We hope you will join them and us, to celebrate their resilience... and ours. This year continues to be a daunting challenge for our entire team of dedicated scientists, researchers, guides, volunteers and board of the Mare Island Heritage Trust. After a series of fires in September 2019, and after 12 years of trusted and protective care of the Preserve, we as a nonprofit founder, funder and manager of the Preserve, were dismissed by the Vallejo City Manager as operating managers of the Mare Island Preserve. Still as confused and troubled as you are, we hold out hope for better times. Imagine, more than 8,100 fellow Preserve Users have signed our online petition to return the Preserve to our care. [Click here](#) to sign and share. And, we're still so excited to share our beloved osprey with you this weekend. A very special thanks to our sponsors this season: **SOUTHERN LAND COMPANY AND DOLPHIN CHARTERS.**

Myrna Hayes, President, Mare Island Heritage Trust























