



## Field Trip Opportunities -- Wednesday, July 22, 2009

### Yellow Tour: Upper Newport Bay + Bolsa Chica (Tour is limited to 50 people)

#### Itinerary:

11:30am	Depart Westin Bonaventure Hotel
11:30am-12:45pm	Travel to Upper Newport Bay and eat box lunch on bus
12:45pm-2:15pm	Tour Upper Newport Bay and Muth Interpretive Center
2:15pm-2:45pm	Travel to Bolsa Chica Ecological Preserve
2:45pm-5:00pm	Tour Bolsa Chica
5:00pm-5:15pm	Travel to Downtown Huntington Beach
5:15pm-7:00pm	Dinner on your own
7:00pm-8:30pm	Travel back to hotel

#### Description:

The **Bolsa Chica** wetland restoration was the largest coastal wetland restorations ever undertaken in Southern California. It includes over 1200 acres of undeveloped wetlands, lowlands and lower mesa. The area is rich with history beginning with the Native Americans who lived atop the mesas, to the oil production in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Wetland restoration of nearly 600 acres of Bolsa Chica began in 2004, and in the summer of 2006 seawater flowed into the restored wetland for the first time in over 100 years. The restoration plan called for the construction of a tidal inlet across the Pacific Coast Highway (PCH), a complex tide control structure at the mouth to mute and lower the tidal range, a new PCH Bridge over the inlet, and modifications to the highway.



Bolsa Chica is an important stop for migratory birds along the Pacific Flyway, including some endangered species and threatened species. More than 200 species of birds have been sighted at Bolsa Chica. A 1.5 mile walking trail circles Inner Bolsa Bay and provides good views of the local wildlife. Tours are organized by docents of the Amigos de Bolsa Chica. In the summer months, visitors can observe up-close endangered species such as the California Least Tern and Belding's Savannah Sparrow; watch stilts and avocets raising their chicks around the parking lot and loop trail; and look at stingrays and sea hares in the waters below the walkbridge.

#### Upper Newport Bay (UNB) in

**Newport Beach** is the home of nearly 200 species of birds, including several endangered species, as well as numerous species of mammals, fish, other critters and native plants. The Bay is an important stopover for migrating birds on the Pacific Flyway and up to 30,000 birds can be seen here on any day during the winter months.



The Upper Newport Bay Ecosystem Restoration Project (UNB ERP) is a multi-year, \$38 million project led by the US Army Corps of Engineers to bring the Upper Bay back to a more optimal ecosystem. The Project involves extensive dredging of sediment, to maintain two major in-Bay sediment retention basins. Bay sedimentation has significantly increased in the last several decades due to rapid urbanization of the watershed. As a result, open water areas are disappearing in the bay, tidal circulation has diminished and shoaling is occurring. Currently, these basins are at their capacity and are no longer functional. Once they are dredged, their life will last approximately 20 years, and will result in reducing the sedimentation rate in the Lower Bay. The restoration project will allow for a reduced frequency of maintenance dredging; improve estuarine habitats; sustain a mix of open water, mudflat and marsh habitat; increase tidal circulation for water quality; and improve public use and recreational access.

#### What to Wear & Bring:

Bring comfortable shoes for walking, light clothing, and a hat. Huntington Beach weather link: [www.wunderground.com/US/CA/Huntington\\_Beach.html](http://www.wunderground.com/US/CA/Huntington_Beach.html)

#### Food Offered:

Water and lunch will be provided. Dinner is on own. Downtown Huntington Beach dining options: [www.hb-rest.notlong.com](http://www.hb-rest.notlong.com)

#### Driving Distance:

Distance is approximately 32 miles from downtown Los Angeles. [www.mapquest.com/mq/2-GISXaleaTU8e](http://www.mapquest.com/mq/2-GISXaleaTU8e)

#### Cost of Tour:

**\$50.00 per person**

*(Fee includes lunch and transportation.)*

#### For Questions about the Tour Sites, Contact:

##### Upper Newport Bay

**Rita McCoy**, Newport Bay Naturalists and Friends  
Phone: (949) 923-2290

##### Bolsa Chica

**Kelly M. O'Reilly**, Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve,  
Phone: 714-840-1959 | Email: [koreilly@dfg.ca.gov](mailto:koreilly@dfg.ca.gov)  
**Jack Fancher**, US Fish & Wildlife Service  
Phone: (760) 431-9440 x215

#### For Questions about Tour Logistics, Contact:

##### Sharon Borneman

UF/IFAS Office of Conferences & Institutes  
Phone : (352) 392-5930 | Email: [spb@ufl.edu](mailto:spb@ufl.edu)

#### Tour Guides:

Upper Newport: **Phillip Thompson**, Corps-biologist,  
(213) 452-3444; [phillip.g.thompson@usace.army.mil](mailto:phillip.g.thompson@usace.army.mil)

Bolsa Chica: **Erin Hardison**, Corps-biologist, (213) 452-3864