

# QUEST

## Hudeman Slough

### To begin your Quest...

Written on each page,  
Is information that will guide you through each stage.

*The words in italics & verse will direct you to,  
Some special features of Hudeman Slough.*

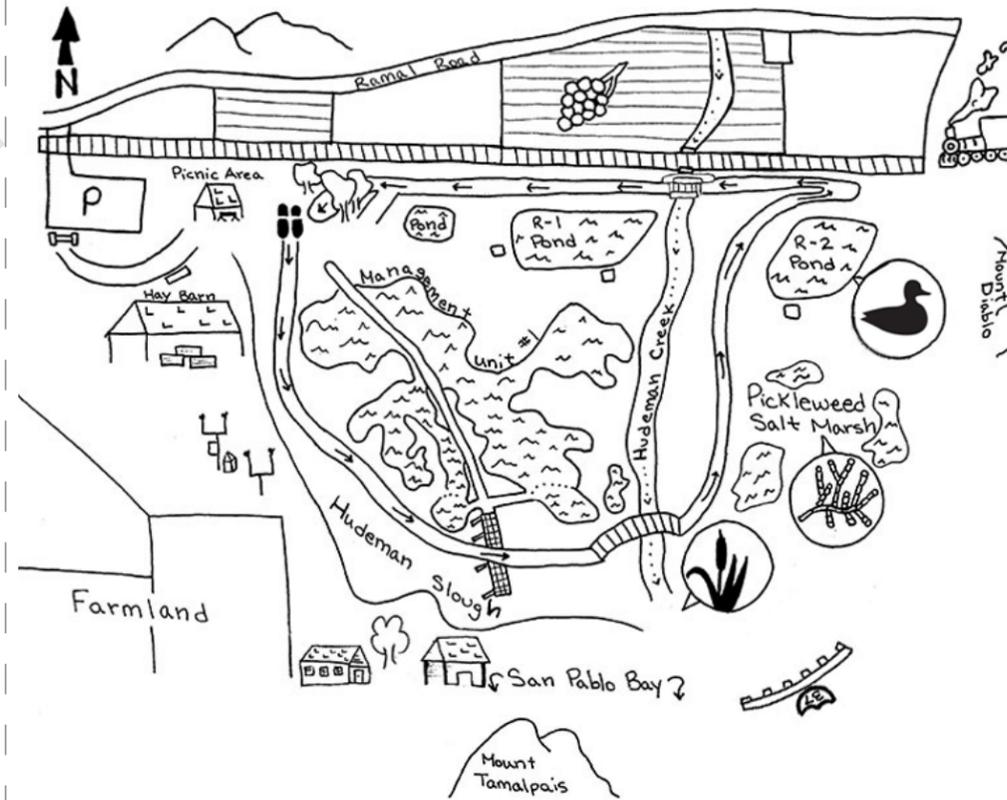
The prose in plain font provide details & fun facts,  
For your stay we hope that excitement does not lack.

**Lines you read in bold,  
Are challenges for you to unfold.**

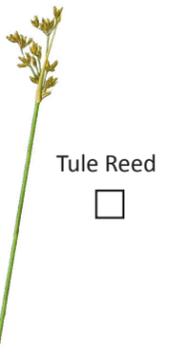
This quest will allow you to explore at your own pace,  
To create a sense of wonder for this unique place.



## Hudeman Slough



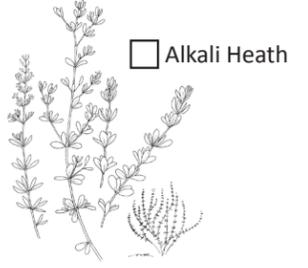
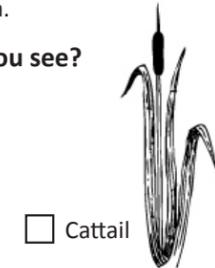
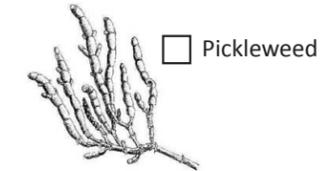
- Continue a minute or two down the path, do not stray  
We have a lot of fun planned for you today.  
Stop. Take 20 steps forward, now turn facing right.  
Notice the plants that are in sight.  
Take 10 side steps and turn once more.  
Facing backwards, you are on the valley floor.  
Be safe to stay on track,  
And take 10 more steps back.  
Turn to face where the land is low & flat,  
Does it look full & wet or dry and cracked?



Did you know that wetlands are not ALWAYS wet? Many wetlands are covered by water during only part of the year. Soils in a wetland are saturated long enough during the growing season to create a low oxygen condition. This lack of available oxygen limits the types and number of plants that can survive here. Most upland plants take in oxygen through their root systems. Wetland plants use other strategies such as long, oxygen transporting tubes (reeds and cattails) or the ability to float on shallow water (water lilies, duckweed) to obtain oxygen. When you see these water-loving plants know that they usually indicate the presence of a wetland.

Wetland soils also function like a sponge, holding and filtering water. In the rainy season, the spongy soil absorbs excess water, which prevents flooding and holds it until drier times. During the summer and early fall, the soils slowly release essential life-giving water to the plants and wildlife in the area.

### What wetland plants do you see?



- Welcome to Hudeman Slough,  
We hope you are enjoying the views.  
*Stretching from the Sonoma Valley mouth,  
To the tidal waters of San Pablo Bay to the south,  
This place is great; we hope you'll see,  
Our clues will help you notice the biodiversity.  
Pass the picnic area and turn right onto the levee,  
We hope your pack is not too heavy.  
Walk with care, don't be hasty,  
Most important is your safety.*

### While on your quest check off any of these items you may see:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animal Tracks     | <input type="checkbox"/> Feathers                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A Dragonfly       | <input type="checkbox"/> A Bird On The Hunt         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A Seed That Flies | <input type="checkbox"/> Signs of an Animal's Lunch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scat              | <input type="checkbox"/> Three Shades of Green      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird Boxes        | <input type="checkbox"/> Cracked Earth              |

- Down this road of dirt and gravel,  
You will begin your exciting travel.  
Keep an eye out for birds in flight,  
Notice the hay barn to your right.  
*Hints of this area's history,  
Dot the land, unveiling its mystery.  
To many, this land has had significant worth  
Miwoks once harvested from this earth.  
Settlers built embankments to keep water out,  
Drying the land to create hay farms throughout.*

*The wetland has since been restored,  
Recreating this vital habitat that you  
get to explore.*

**Stop between the two poles you see below and draw the landscape that lies in between. Be sure to include natural and manmade features. Notice how both have shaped the landscape in dramatic ways.**



- Look for a curve in the road as you make your way toward the prize,  
At the next stop, an open barn is in the distance, use an observant eye.  
*Look closely at the native plants that surround.  
Cattail & Tule are emergent; they love to be in water as much as the ground.  
Their seeds provide food for marsh birds, songbirds and ducks.  
You may not think so but they thrive in this rich muck.  
Did you know cattails are edible and have been used in many ways?  
Miwok made bedding with the fuzz and lit nights by setting the spikes ablaze.  
Dried shoots were ground into flour; mush and cakes were made.  
Leaves were turned into baskets, mats, and roofs that provided shade.*

**You are standing in the San Pablo Bay Watershed basin. Turn a slow circle, noticing the peaks and ridges in every direction except the bay.**

**Can you imagine how water flows through this area and see why it was once a naturally occurring wetland?**

5. *Keep on down the levee road, the metal bridges are a place to discover.  
Peer over the edges, what types of animal tracks can you uncover?  
On the right, the slough is tidal and flows in & out of San Pablo Bay.  
The other side, where recycled water is managed, all sorts of waterfowl play.  
Up ahead, the wooden footbridge appears,  
It is a place to take rest and heighten your ear.  
Once at the bridge do not proceed,  
Pay close attention to the planks you'll need.  
Walking forward, count 12 posts,  
Stop, overlooking Hudeman Creek, to thank your hosts.*

**Make a Sound Map:**

**Stay where you are, don't make a sound.**

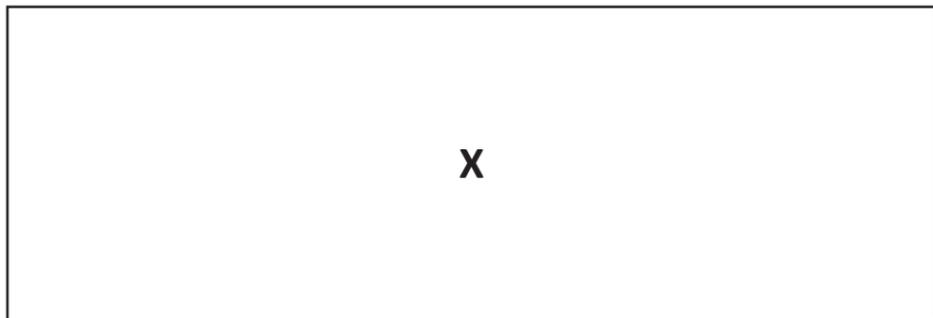
**Perk up your ears just like a hound.**

**Stop and listen, shut your eyes,**

**Open your ears to what may arise.**

**In the blank space below, you are at the center.**

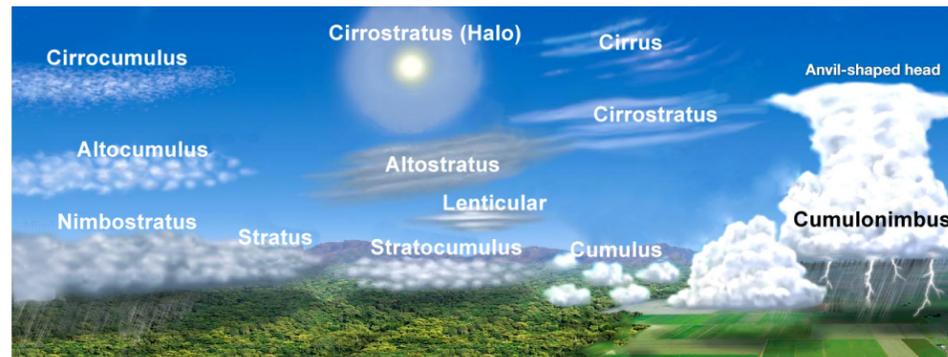
**Using your pencil, mark what you hear from all of nature's presenters.**



7. *From where you came, turn and head back,  
Make your way downhill towards the railroad track.  
Step over purple covers to your next stop.  
A wooden bridge with a purple pipe overlooking vintage crops.  
Recycled water is released into the ponds, you may already know,  
It passes through the purple pipes and helps the grapes grow.  
The seasonal ponds have treated wastewater as the foundation,  
Released and held here to create this unique wetland restoration.  
Whenever you are out and about and see purple pipes,  
Know that they are repurposing water to irrigate plants of all types.*

Recycled water is wastewater that has been cleaned so that it can be used again. In 1990, the Sonoma Valley Sanitation District began to enhance this area by using recycled water from the wastewater treatment plant. A seasonal wetland and fresh water marsh ponds were formed thereby enhancing habitat and increasing migrating wildlife populations by the thousands.

**Can you identify any clouds in the sky today?**



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8. *Take the middle road up the hill to the second pond,  
Another place where you can observe and respond.  
Pause to watch these fascinating creatures,  
Take note of their amazing features.  
This area is on a path that migratory birds trace,  
They will fly from place to place.  
Staying long enough to take a rest,  
A few will pause to build a nest.  
They travel to areas that are much warmer,  
And that have more food than their former.  
Wetlands are a vital resting ground,  
Where food and shelter can be found.  
Without safe habitats like this,  
Many birds will fall into abyss.  
What is this special route?  
It's the Pacific Flyway without a doubt!*

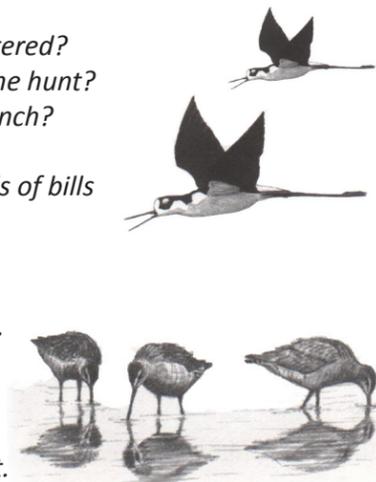


Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

The Pacific Flyway is a north-south route of travel for migratory birds that extends from Alaska to Patagonia. Every year these travelling birds follow food sources as they head to breeding grounds or to overwintering sites.

Certain bird species travel the same route, at almost the same time, every year. Often times, scientists are able to predict the day when a species will show up in their area.

6. *Turn left after the bridge & walk the gravel road.  
It's long and straight, get into observing mode!  
Passing through this wetland center,  
Are there signs of animal homes you have entered?  
Do you see birds hovering and flying low on the hunt?  
What time of day is it? Are they looking for lunch?  
At the junction turn right and march uphill,  
It's time to look at animals with different kinds of bills  
At the top notice birds are everywhere,  
Go ahead, stop and stare.  
Do you see stabbers and grabbers galore?  
Watch these birds spear food along the shore.  
Songbirds, let's hear your sweet tune.  
Divers disappear and then resume.  
Dabbling ducks and crazy coots,  
Dunking in head first, they will make you hoot.  
So much life in this wetland  
This resting spot is in demand!*

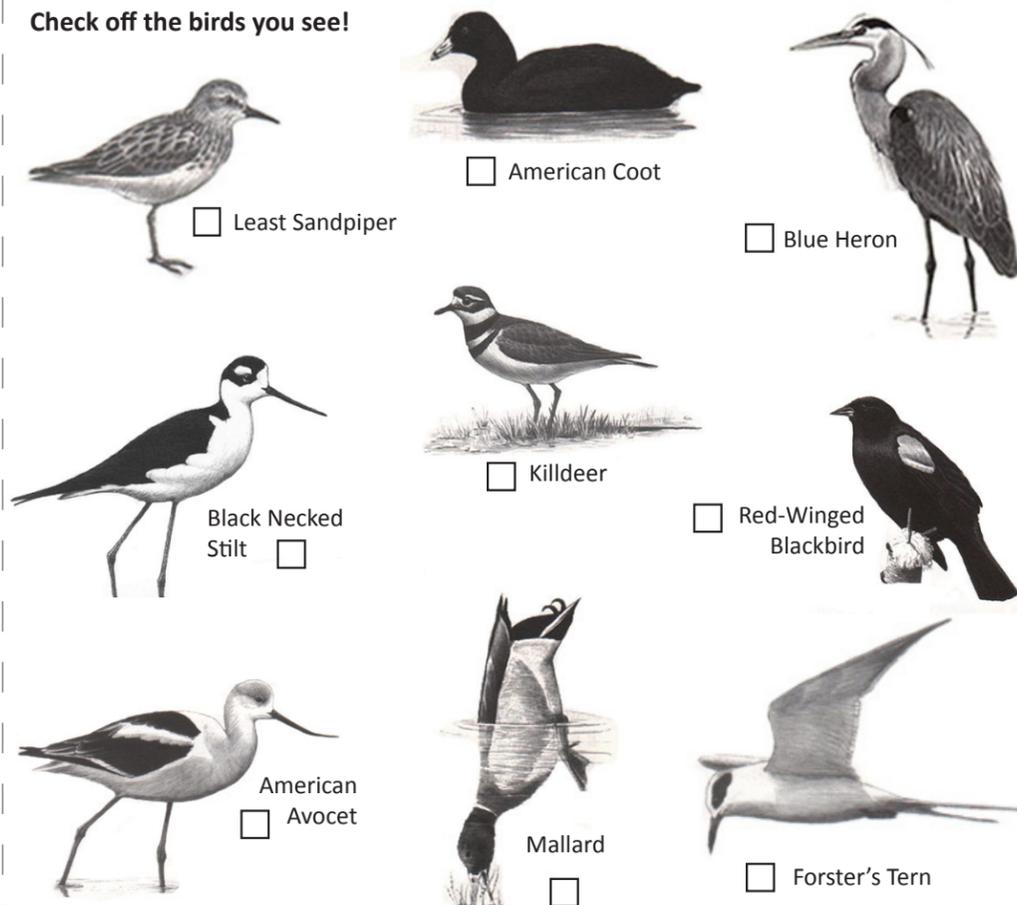


Illustrations by Jonathan Alderfer

**While at the ponds check any birds that you see doing these things:**

- Swimming
- Bathing
- Diving
- Flying in a swarm
- Hunting
- Hovering
- Flying
- Dabbling

**Check off the birds you see!**



Illustrations by Jonathan Alderfer

9. *Walk on along the pond and downhill to the tracks.  
It's the home stretch; the treasure grove ahead marks the end at last!  
The Eucalyptus you see are native to Australia, no animals here will munch,  
Their leaves are long & flammable & pack an aromatic punch.  
This allows mostly larger birds to appeal.  
Is this a home of a hawk, egret or kite?  
Maybe it's the wintering home for butterflies in flight.  
Pause for a moment, breathe in the strong scent.  
Mark the end of your journey with this as your imprint.*

**Veer right at the fork and find a group of six together,  
The prize sits high amidst any weather.  
A little box nestled among leaves,  
The treasure, at last, you have achieved.  
Dust it off and crack it open.  
Mark your accomplishment with our special token.  
Relax, sign in, and write a note.  
Maybe even your favorite quote.  
We hope you leave with a sense of wonder for this special place,  
Carrying all that you brought and a smile on your face.**

