

In February 2023, we spent a week in San Francisco, studying under Dr. Ravinder Sehgal and his graduate students at San Francisco State University. We identified Haemosporidian (avian blood parasites) of Phyla Apicomplexa (Malaria, Leucocytozoon, Plasmodium). Principal Investigator, Eric Atkinson, oversaw the experience. We extracted DNA from blood samples of local birds and utilized Benchling software with protocol specific to Dr. Sehgal's lab. After DNA extraction, we performed a BDNF PCR (Brain Derived Neurotrophic Factor Polymerase Chain Reaction) on the DNA to validate a positive result from extraction. Afterwards, we performed PCR for Leucocytozoons. We also looked at them using the microscopy expertise of Dr. Sehgal. We utilized the book *Avian Malaria Parasites and Other Haemadosporidia* by Gediminas Valkiūnas as a reference. In Golden Gate Park, we mist-netted birds in Speedway Meadows. We caught six birds, including Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*) and Hermit Thrushes (*Catharus guttatus*). With each bird, we collected blood from the Basilic vein for further analysis. We performed blood smears and took measurements of the birds and noted their band numbers. It is our hope that both the lab and field experience will aid Professor Atkinson's study of Avian Haemosporidians and their reflection on human malaria.