



THE Clapper Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

SPEAKER SERIES

Free and Open to the public

Richardson Bay Audubon Center
376 Greenwood Beach Road
Tiburon, California 94920
Information: 415/789-0703

THURSDAY, MARCH 14 7:30 PM

Trans-Pacific Migrations

With Peter Pyle



Photo courtesy of Peter Pyle

Black-footed Albatross

Discover the amazing movement patterns of albatross, sharks and other open ocean creatures as Peter Pyle, Institute for Bird Populations wildlife biologist, presents his research on Transpacific Migration. Find out how Pacific Ocean migrants overcome the hardships and risks of long-distance travel through and over inhospitable and food-deprived central Pacific Ocean. The great flights of Black-footed Albatrosses, which come 4000 miles to California to get food for their chicks, will be a primary focus. In addition, he will discuss the fasting of turtles, tuna, Great White Sharks and other marine animals, as well as the surprising over-water journeys of various shorebirds, land birds, insects and bats, and he will put all of this information into conservation contexts. Peter worked as a Farallon Island Biologist for 24 years, studying bird, bat, and butterfly migration as well as the habits of the Great White Shark. Peter currently works for the Institute for Bird Populations where he conducts research on changes in the abundance, distribution, and ecology of North and Latin American bird populations. In addition, he is a Research Associate for the California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, and B.P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu. He has also published or co-authored over 120 papers in the scientific literature including *Identification Guide to North American Birds, Parts 1 and 2* and is an expert on molt of birds.

Bahia Restoration Phase Two



Photo courtesy of Ed Niere

Completing the Bahia Tidal Marsh Restoration Project Phase 2 seemed a distant goal in 2008, when we finished Phase 1. But time has passed and the tides have eroded Black John Slough – which we were waiting for – signaling time to start Phase 2. And so we did just that during last few weeks in January.

The project's purpose was to open West Bahia to tidal action to convert it from a large pond to tidal marsh. The project was originally designed to have five breaches in the old berm surrounding the basin we call West Bahia. During the last five years, culverts were installed and several of the areas breached naturally, so the number of breaches we excavated was reduced to two.

To effectively direct tidal water into the site, we also needed to cut channels through the high marsh connecting the new breaches to Black John

Slough. The breaches and channels are along a low berm that is about a mile from the western end of the Bahia trail. The easternmost channel is 350 feet long and the western channel is 50 feet long. The excavated material was placed inside the site, adjacent to the levee breaches.

MAS appreciates the work of all of our contractors, particularly Hanford ARC. Their crew worked tirelessly during the last few weeks in January to finish the job before the Clapper Rail breeding season. They could work only during low tides because the berm they were using is low and inundated during high tides.

In accord with the Biological Opinion for the entire project, a biologist from Avocet Research Associates checked out the site each day prior to construction. Some days this was pretty early in the morning.

The project was designed by ESA/PWA. Special thanks to the State Coastal Conservancy for funding to complete the project. Our thanks also to Marin County Parks and the Valley Memorial Cemetery for allowing access through their properties.

BAHIA WETLANDS AT THREE YEARS OF RESTORATION

See our Web site, www.marinaudubon.org, for a film on resident wildlife and Marin Audubon's habitat restoration work underway at Bahia Marsh, on the Petaluma River in Novato, California. It was produced by Jeffrey Martin as a gift to Marin Audubon.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

All phone numbers are in the 415 area code unless otherwise noted. Questions? Please contact the appropriate Board member.

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Publicity	Martha Jarocki 461-3592
BAAC Reps	Lowell Sykes 388-2821 Barbara Salzman 924-6057

DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Meetings open to members. If you wish to attend please call 924-6057.

7:30 PM, First Tuesday of the month
Richardson Bay Audubon Center
376 Greenwood Beach Road
Tiburon, California 94920

MAS telephone: 721-4271 (for messages only)

Marin Audubon Society is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. All memberships and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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Web site: www.marinaudubon.org
Northern Calif. Bird Box: 681-7422
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Members can receive *The Clapper Rail* electronically instead of a hard copy by e-mailing joandbijou@sbcglobal.net

DONATIONS APPRECIATED!

Marin Audubon Society welcomes gifts of funds, stock, or property, and bequests in general, or in honor or memory of someone. Gifts may be directed to any MAS project. Unspecified gifts of more than \$100 will be placed in the Endowment Fund for conservation, the protection of wildlife species and the preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats. Since MAS is an all-volunteer organization, 100% of your donation goes to its projects. All gifts are tax-deductible and will be acknowledged in *The Clapper Rail*, as well as personally on behalf of the Society. Checks should be made out and mailed to: Marin Audubon Society, P.O. Box 599, Mill Valley, CA 94942.

MISSION STATEMENT

To conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Barbara Salzman

If you love birds, wildlife, natural habitats and the outdoors, you can help support and protect these resources by volunteering with Marin Audubon Society. One way you can help is to join us as a Board member. MAS has several open seats on its Board at this time. MAS needs you to help support our work for wildlife. Contact members of our Nominating Committee, Phil Peterson, Helen Lindqvist and Bob Hinz, for more information. Our work is rewarding, challenging and fun.

Spring is not far away. One of the less pleasant aspects for me is being visited by a large flock of non-native turkey hens followed by a strutting male. All of this has been taking place in my yard on a fairly regular basis recently. While the turkey displays may be interesting to see, I cannot disregard the damage they do to the habitat provided by my yard. I am forced to resort to yelling and throwing pieces of tree debris and rocks to make the turkeys leave. Of course they just go to someone else's yard and do the same thing – dig up the ground covering and soil for insects and other edible things – all food that is taken away from our native birds, squirrels and

other wildlife. This is a close to home example of the harm that is done to native wildlife by introduced species. Turkeys have no native predators here. They were introduced by the Department of Fish and Game for hunting. Very frustrating!

Hummingbirds are early nesters and their nesting season has already begun. To protect their nests, do not do any maintenance, particularly trimming branches of low trees and shrubs. Hummingbirds build tiny nests often on low branches.

We are pleased again to be offering a Spring Bird Class in May. This popular class, taught by naturalist Meryl Sundove and wildlife biologist Roger Harris, fills up early so sign up right away. See page 5 for instructions on registering.

We are already preparing for another MAS special event, the Mother's Day Barbecue. See the flyer accompanying the newsletter for details.

I am happy to report that I am recovering well after my bilateral hip surgery performed on February 7. I am learning to walk and climb stairs, and hope to be back to my old routine very soon.

Happy Spring.

JANUARY 14 FIELD TRIP

Bodega Bay with David Wimpfheimer

By Vicky Van Meter

Our day began with sunshine and calm weather at the Tides Restaurant in Bodega Bay where we coffeed up and then watched several **Black Turnstones** and a **Ruddy Turnstone** on the rocks along the shore. We then went to the marina where we enjoyed watching three or four river otters, as well as **Willetts**, **Marbled Godwits** and **Common Loons**. On the way to Bodega Head we saw **Surf Scoter**, **Sanderlings**, **Black Oystercatcher** and a flotilla of **Western Grebe**. At the Head we had good views of a Surfbird and David explained how to distinguish them from turnstones. Several whales spouted offshore. We then stopped at "Hole in the Head" – the 120 ft. deep pit now filled with water that was to be part of a nuclear power plant before the project was stopped in 1964. **Yellow-rumped Warblers** flitted in the trees around the pond. Along the bay we saw a **Red-throated Loon**, **Bonaparte's Gull**, and more Surf Scoters, among many others. Also of interest were two female **Common Goldeneye**. A leopard shark and a close-in harbor seal added interest. We then left



Sanderling

the water to walk along Whaleship Road where we saw a **Spotted Towhee** and an interesting **Fox Sparrow** that David said was referred to as a "sooty." The day ended with finding the elusive **Palm Warbler** along the beach. Our total for the day was 68 species and all of us enjoyed the beautiful weather and great birding with David.

Photo courtesy of Len Blumin

MAS FIELD TRIPS

Open to the public

No need to sign up for one day trips, just join us. Bring lunch, field guide, and binoculars. For information, accessibility and weather check: Vicky Van Meter, 415/299-2514, vicky.vanmeter@gmail.com

CAPAY VALLEY, YOLO COUNTY

Saturday, March 2, 2013

8:30 AM to 3 PM

With Terry Colborn

Join Terry Colborn for a delightful day in picturesque Capay Valley. The almond orchards should be at peak bloom, the valley's harbinger of the coming spring season! Our stops will include historic Capay Cemetery, Cache Creek and several favorite birding spots in idyllic Capay Valley. We'll look for **Yellow-billed Magpie, Lewis's Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Phainopepla, Western Bluebird** as well as any wintering and resident raptors. We also hope to see some early spring arrivals such as **Barn, Rough-winged** and **Violet-green Swallow**, and perhaps a warbler species or two. Past trips have produced **Golden** and **Bald Eagle, Western Kingbird** and **Prairie Falcon**. We also expect to see some early spring wildflowers along with Redbud, that very conspicuous flowering shrub along the roadside. Terry will meet everyone at Community Park in Esparto at 8:30 am. Participants who wish to may want carpool from there.

DIRECTIONS: From Marin County, take Hwy 37 east to Vallejo then go east on I-80; just past the Nut Tree Center take I-505. Travel I-505 north for about 20 miles to the Route 16 exit and turn left (west). Esparto is located about 4 miles west on Route 16; the park is in the center of town. Driving time is about 1½ hours but allow a little extra time, as there may be early morning fog.

Bring lunch and liquids; dress in layers and wear sturdy footwear, as we will do a little walking on flat roads. Heavy rain cancels. For more information contact Terry at: 916/705-8991 or at www.TLCBirding.com.

LAS GALLINAS STORAGE PONDS

SAN RAFAEL

Thursday, March 7 & April 4, 2013

9 AM to 12 noon

With Len Blumin

Beginner birders are especially welcome on the first Thursday of each month for a leisurely walk around the Las Gallinas Storage Ponds at McInnis Park. There is always something interesting to see and over 100 species have been reported over the course of a year. Winter is a busy time at the ponds and provides an opportunity to study ducks and geese. Hawks are frequent and we see the graceful Northern Harrier on virtually every trip. This is great way to start learning the raptors, waterfowl, and other groups, as well as getting tips on optics, birding books, and birding etiquette.

DIRECTIONS: From Highway 101 take the Smith Ranch Road exit; go east toward the McInnis Park entrance. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks and go to the end of the road to the Las Gallinas Storage Ponds parking lot. Meet the group by the bridge just past the parking lot. The walk starts at 9 AM but late arrivals should easily be able to find the group.

WOODPECKER TRAIL

WEST MARIN

BEAR VALLEY VISITOR CENTER

Thursday, March 21, 2013

9 AM to 12 noon

With Rich Cimino

We will join Rich Cimino at the Bear Valley Visitor Center in Point Reyes National Seashore. We will bird Woodpecker Trail. This 0.7-mile trail explores the beautiful local forest and meadow ecosystems of Bear Valley. The dirt path climbs gently into a small stand of fir and tanoak, across an open field, then into the deeper forest. As it enters the mixed evergreen forest dominated by Douglas fir, but shared with old bays and tanoaks, the trail parallels Sky Creek, a narrow and deeply incised arroyo.

Rich has been birding in California for over 40 years and leads tours throughout the west and Alaska. He is also the conservation leader for the Ohlone Audubon Society and participates in many local biological and land planning projects.

Dress in layers, bring a lunch and, of course, your binoculars. Rain cancels.

DIRECTIONS: From Point Reyes Station, continue south on Hwy 1 about 2.5 miles. Look for a brown "Point Reyes National Seashore" sign just beyond the Olema RV Resort & Campground. If you get to a flashing red light, you've gone 100 yards too far. Turn right onto Bear Valley Road and head west about ½ mile. Look for a big red barn on the left and a sign for "Visitor Center" on the right. Meet at the Bear Valley Visitor Center.

RAGLE RANCH REGIONAL PARK

SEBASTOPOL

Sunday, April 7, 2013

9 AM to 12 noon

With Scott Carey



Scott Carey has birded and 'herped' in Marin and Sonoma Counties for over 30 years. Scott lives in Sebastopol and knows the Ragle Park area well. This 157-acre park features oak and riparian woodlands, grasslands, meadows and 2 miles of easy trails. Part of the trail follows Atascadero Creek. The riparian area is a migratory corridor for spring migrants, as well as lingering wintering species. Expected birds for this time of year include: **Band-tailed Pigeon, Cedar Waxwing, Violet-green, Tree** and **Barn Swallows, Warbling Vireo, Wilson's, Orange-crowned** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers, Pacific-slope Flycatcher** and **Bullock's Oriole**. Resident birds include **Bewick's Wren, Western Bluebird, Bushtit, Acorn Woodpecker, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Wild Turkey** and many others. We should hear a good variety of songs and have a chance to watch nesting behavior if we are lucky. Dress in layers; bring lunch and boots as the park trails can be muddy after rains.

DIRECTIONS: Take Hwy 101 north to Exit 481B - Rohnert Park/Sebastopol. Turn left onto Hwy 116 for about 8 miles, then left onto Bodega Ave and finally right on Ragle Rd. The address is 500 Ragle Road. Meet in the parking area near the dog park. There is limited free parking just across from the entrance to the park, but it may be filled by 9. The parking fee in the park is \$6.

CONSERVATION

Marin Audubon Conservation Committee reviews critical issues related to wildlife habitats and comments to cities, agencies, and other jurisdictions. To attend, phone Barbara Salzman at 415/924-6057.



RAMSAR RECOGNITION FOR SAN FRANCISCO BAY/ESTUARY

On February 2, the International Convention on Wetlands (RAMSAR) officially designated San Francisco Bay and Estuary a “Wetland of International Importance.” We knew it was that important all the time.

Several Marin Audubon properties, including San Rafael tidelands, Triangle Marsh, and Bahia; ten National Audubon Important Bird Areas and other Marin wetlands have been included in the designation; Bel Marin Keys, China Camp, Richardson Bay, and the Marin Islands are all part of the RAMSAR designation, which is named for the city in Iran where the first meeting was held.

San Francisco Bay is home to more than 1,000 species of birds, mammals and invertebrates, in addition to over 130 species of fish. The RAMSAR designation is awarded based on science. The application, and data supporting it, was developed and compiled over the last four years by conservation organizations and agencies including the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, US Geological Survey, Audubon California, PRBO Conservation Science, and the SF Bay Bird Observatory.

In Marin the City of San Rafael was particularly cooperative allowing its properties to be included.

The RAMSAR Convention is an intergovernmental treaty adopted in 1973 that provides a voluntary framework for international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The US signed the treaty in 1987.

UPDATES

DRAKE'S ESTERO

By now you have all undoubtedly heard that U.S. District Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers denied the request by Kevin Lunny to continue in operation until the hearing on his suit to continue in operation. In Judge Rogers’ long ruling she said that she did not have jurisdiction on the matter, and the oyster company could not demonstrate that their law suit would likely be successful. In this ruling she indicated her support of Secretary Salazar’s decision.

Subsequently, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals granted an emergency injunction that will enable the oyster farm to continue in operation until Lunny’s appeal can be heard. Had the injunction not been granted, Drakes Bay Oyster Company would have had to halt operations by

February 28. The Court anticipates scheduling a hearing on the appeal in mid-May. We are hopeful that the appeals court will ultimately uphold Secretary Salazar's determination.

GREENBRAE INTERCHANGE

More than 100 people attended the public meeting on January 29 to hear and comment on the plan to rebuild and expand the Greenbrae Interchange. Every speaker except one expressed opposition to the project. The person who supported the project was on the Larkspur City Council at the time this project was originally conceived. She spoke about the regional need for the project to facilitate people moving to and from the upper Ross Valley.

The long list of objections included increased flooding, visual blight, unsafe bus stops, inconvenient pedestrian and bike routes, too much concrete, inaccurate safety information, increased urbanization, and exorbitant cost. MAS was the only commenter addressing endangered species impacts. Many speakers offered suggestions for improvements that would not require such a massive project while others suggested dumping the project altogether.

Apparently the joint meeting before the councils of both Corte Madera and Larkspur was similar. At that meeting there were more than 200 people most of whom objected to the Project. The councils are considering establishing a committee to review the issue. That is often a way used by elected officials to take the heat off of them.

The Transportation Agency of Marin and Caltrans are trying to approve this massive project with just a Negative Declaration. This would short change the public by not providing adequate data and analysis of impacts, and would compromise the purpose of CEQA as a disclosure document. A Negative Declaration, which is what the proponents are trying to use to approve the project, does not require analyses of alternatives and cumulative impacts nor does it provide the opportunity to revise the project.

MAS submitted a lengthy letter with our concerns and also hired the environmental law firm of Shute Mihaley and Weinberger specifically to address the issue of why this massive project needs a full Environmental Impact Report.

Who knows, with such significant opposition, they may decide not to pursue the project.

continued on page 5

MARIN AUDUBON PROPERTIES

1. Petaluma Marsh	180 acres
2. Bahia	60 acres
3. Simmons Slough	162 acres
4. Norton Avenue Pond	4 parcels
5. Black Point Parcels	2 parcels
6. Arroyo San Jose	2 parcels
7. Tidelands at Murphy's Rock	34 acres
8. Corte Madera Marsh	1.8 acres
9. Triangle Marsh	31 acres
10. San Clemente Creek	4.34 acres
11. Tiscornia Marsh	20 acres
12. Arroyo Corte Madera del Presidio	2 acres

Conservation

continued from page 4

SAN RAFAEL AIRPORT RECREATION FACILITY

The community organization Gallinas Defense Council has filed a law suit against the City of San Rafael charging many inadequacies in the Environmental Impact Report adopted by the City to approve the San Rafael Recreation Facility Project at the San Rafael Airport site. The primary causes of action are inadequacies in the environmental analysis of cumulative impacts on the endangered Clapper Rail, noise, air quality and human safety.

Marin Audubon Board considered joining in the suit, but after a lengthy deliberation, we decided not to join in, based on cost and other factors. It was a hard decision as we had partnered with the Defense Council in seeking legal advice earlier. We commend them for taking this action and wish them well.

What You Can Do: Anyone wishing to help the Gallinas Defense Council in their legal effort can go to www.GallinasCreek.org, click on the "Donations" button on the top right corner.

SOLAR FARM ON ATHERTON AVENUE

The owner of the Greenpoint Nursery property at the south corner of Olive and Atherton

Avenues in unincorporated Novato has submitted yet another iteration, the third, of his solar farm plan. This time the number of panels in the lowlands has apparently been reduced and pulled back from the jurisdictional wetlands so that there is now a 100-foot buffer. They are still in the habitat and in the floodplain as far as we can determine. There appear to be more panels on the developed part of the property.

We continue to be concerned about impacts to the grassland habitat and the wildlife that depend on it – to the raptors and swallows that forage for prey, the deer that browse in the fields and the rabbits, mice, voles and snakes that live in the grasses. Then there also are unanswered questions about the project's location in a floodplain. That condition was very clear in December when the extensive rains filled the site almost flooding the roadways. How the seasonal flooding of this county-designated floodplain would affect the solar panels and vice versa, is yet to be addressed.

MAS has submitted three letters expressing our concerns and asking questions about this project. So far there has been no environmental review to provide an independent description of the project and review its impacts.

American Birding Association Principles of Birding Ethics

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

Code of Birding Ethics

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

a. Support the protection of important bird habitat.

b. To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

c. Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance can be minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

d. Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law and the rights of others.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

The complete Code of Birding Ethics is available at www.aba.org/about/ethics.html

Spring Birds and Their Songs – 2013



Join the *Spring Birds and their Songs* class and tune into the varied chorus of birds nesting in the Bay Area. Once you clue into bird songs, the enjoyment of spring will be forever heightened. Sign

up early as this class fills quickly.

Naturalist **Meryl Sundove** and wildlife biologist **Roger Harris** teach the class for beginning and intermediate bird watchers who want to use calls and songs to help find and identify birds.

Class consists of a Thursday evening presentation with slides and bird songs (Thursday, May 2, 2013 from 7-9 pm at the Richardson Bay Audubon Center) and two early morning field trips (Saturday, May 4 and a dawn chorus on Saturday, May 11) designed to get you outdoors practicing

what we learned in class. The dawn chorus field trip starts a few minutes before dawn. If you have never experienced the spring dawn chorus you are in for a treat.

For information, contact Meryl Sundove at 415/927-4115 or msundove@comcast.net.

FEE:

\$65 non-Audubon members
\$60 Audubon members
\$110 2 members from same household

TO REGISTER:

Send this form and a check made out to "Marin Audubon Society" to:

Marin Audubon Society
P.O. Box 599
Mill Valley, CA 94942

All proceeds go to the Marin Audubon Society to support their conservation work.

NAME

TELEPHONE

ADDRESS

CITY

ZIP

E-MAIL

Are You an Audubon Member? Yes No

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

This month we will be back to the task of controlling the non-native plants. Far below average rainfall in January and February does not bode well for more planting so late in winter. In fact, our first plantings might benefit from watering; that, though, would be a slow and difficult job. Radishes and thistles are getting large, and we will be on the case. Come to see the sticky monkeyflower turn green again. Join us on a workday. See the progress for yourself. You would make a difference.

We have the tools, gloves and snacks. We generally work until about 1 PM, but even an hour is valuable help. Everyone is welcome. Rain cancels.

VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP DAY

Triangle Marsh, Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: March 2, April 6

Meet at 10 AM on Paradise Drive directly across from the main Ring Mountain trailhead.

Bahia, Novato:

Second Saturday: March 9

Meet at 10 AM at the end of Topaz Dr. near Bolero Court and the tennis courts.

If you would like to help, please contact Bob Hinz at rbrthnz@comcast.net or 415/383-8688.

2013 POINT REYES BIRDING & NATURE FESTIVAL

DON'T MISS IT!

Save the dates of April 26-28th for the Bay Area's best birding and nature extravaganza! Enjoy birding at the height of spring migration with some of the best naturalists around.

For more information, visit: www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org

Tickets go on sale in late February, and all proceeds benefit the habitat conservation work of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin.



Three dead Red-tailed Hawks found at the base of a power pole near Simmons Slough

Photo courtesy of Ed Nite

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

REVEGETATION AT SIMMONS SLOUGH

Over two days in late January, our contractor, Shelterbelt Builders, planted 40 native willow sprigs and 120 coyote bushes at our property along Atherton Avenue. We thank the Natural Resources Conservation Service, which holds an easement on the property, for supervising the work and funding the project. The plants will provide habitat and also serve to buffer impacts from Atherton Avenue.

The flood waters, that we reported in last month's newsletter, covering the site have

receded, but there is still quite a bit of water in the low areas that we excavated last summer. It looks just great.

Planting willow sprigs at Simmons Slough



Photo courtesy of Ed Nite

SEPTEMBER 14-15, 2013

Monterey Bay Pelagic Birding Weekend

With Terry Colborn

Terry Colborn is leading a weekend birding trip to the Monterey Bay area, September 14-15, 2013, for Marin and Mt. Diablo Audubon Societies. This annual two-day trip to the beautiful Monterey Peninsula will feature a pelagic trip on Saturday with Monterey Seabirding (www.montereyseabirding.com) and land birding on Sunday. Monterey Seabirding uses a local skipper with over 30 years experience. Leaders and spotters include Roger Wolfe, Dan Singer, Blake Matheson and Todd Easterla. All four are seasoned, life-long birders and have exceptional knowledge of the status and distribution of California birds.

This two-day trip is planned to coincide with the start of fall seabird migration. Over the years, the Monterey Bay/Elkhorn Slough area has produced some excellent vagrants and a nice array fall of migrants. Possible areas to be visited on Sunday include Point Pinos, Salinas River State WMA, Moss Landing, Moonglow Dairy and Elkhorn Slough. Specific locations will be

determined prior to the weekend, and will be based upon up-to-date information on any rare bird sightings, weather conditions, tides, etc.

This very popular weekend pelagic trip is limited to a maximum of 25 participants. The cost is only \$95 per person. (Note: we're holding the price to last year's rate.) Sign-ups will be taken on a first-come, first-served-basis beginning March 1, 2013. Make your check payable to Terry Colborn and mail to: 1714 Magnolia Place, Davis, CA 95618. Include each participant's full name, address, cell phone number and e-mail. Your payment in full is your reservation. Your space will be confirmed upon receipt of your check. In the event the boat trip is cancelled by Monterey Seabirding, due to weather conditions, etc., participants will receive a full refund. Meeting details and accommodations information will be sent to all participants well in advance of the trip. For questions, contact Terry at tlcgdc@aol.com, or by phone: 530/758-0689

Three Juvenile Red-tailed Hawks Electrocuted

On January 22 three dead juvenile Red-tailed Hawks were found at the base of a power pole on Atherton Ave near Marin Audubon Society's Simmons Slough property. All the power poles along Atherton Avenue have three closely spaced high voltage wires on top.

The pole where the dead hawks were found has additional wires which run down the pole to serve the fire station across the road. This pole is extremely hazardous to raptors with a wide wingspan as evidenced by the electrocution of an entire family of young red-tails.

Upon discovery of this tragedy telephone calls

were made to the PG&E office of Avian Protection and to the PG&E Emergency Reporting System. The emergency system dispatched a line worker who visited the site within several hours to investigate the problem. He committed that PG&E would install a device to separate the wires so that such accidents would be prevented in the future. We are currently trying to determine whether PG&E has followed up with the protective device. Additional poles along Atherton should also be retrofitted with the protective devices.

Amazing Wildlife Sounds For All Ears

World's largest natural sound archive goes digital



Ithaca, N.Y. — “In terms of speed and the breadth of material now accessible to anyone in the world, this is really revolutionary,” says audio curator Greg Budney, describing a major milestone just achieved by the Macaulay Library archive at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. All archived analog recordings in the collection, going back to 1929, have now been digitized and can be heard at www.MacaulayLibrary.org. “This is one of the greatest research and conservation resources at the Cornell Lab,” said Budney, “and through its digitization we’ve swung the doors open on it in a way that wasn’t possible 10 or 20 years ago.”

It took archivists a dozen years to complete the monumental task. The collection contains nearly 150,000 digital audio recordings equaling more than 10 terabytes of data with a total run time of 7,513 hours. About 9,000 species are represented. There’s an emphasis on birds but the collection also includes sounds of whales, elephants, frogs, primates, and more.

“Our audio collection is the largest and the oldest in the world,” explained Macaulay Library director Mike Webster. “Now, it’s also the most accessible. We’re working to improve search functions and create tools people can use to collect recordings and upload them directly to the archive. Our goal is to make the Macaulay Library as useful as possible for the broadest audience possible.”

The recordings are used by researchers studying many questions, as well as by birders trying to fine-tune their sound ID skills. The recordings are also used in museum exhibits, movies, and commercial products such as smartphone apps. For example, a reserve manager in Africa could use the recordings to train staff to conduct an acoustic survey. A teacher could pull out the sounds of ten birds found on the school grounds and create an interactive learning tool for her students. And a sound engineer working on a movie could find just the right sound to create that proper mood.

“Now that we’ve digitized the previously

archived analog recordings, the archival team is focusing on new material from amateur and professional recordists from around the world to really, truly build the collection,” Budney said. “Plus, it’s just plain fun to listen to these sounds. Have you heard the sound of a walrus underwater? It’s an amazing sound!”

SOUND SAMPLES

Sample some fascinating Macaulay Library sounds. Click on the link to listen:

- **One of the earliest recordings:** Cornell Lab founder Arthur Allen was a pioneer in sound recording. On a spring day in 1929 he recorded this Rose-breasted Grosbeak.
- **Youngest bird:** This clip from 1966 records the sounds of an Ostrich chick while it is still inside the egg – and the researchers as they watch.
- **Liveliest wake-up call:** A dawn chorus in tropical Queensland, Australia is bursting at the seams with warbles, squeals, whistles, booms, and hoots.
- **Best candidate to appear on a John Coltrane record:** The indri, a lemur with a voice that is part moan, part jazz clarinet.
- **Most spines tingled:** The incomparable voice of a Common Loon on an Adirondacks lake in 1992.
- **Most likely to be mistaken for aliens arriving:** Birds-of-paradise make some amazing sounds – here’s the UFO-sound of a Curl-crested Manucode in New Guinea.
- **Most likely to be mistaken for your dog:** Three walrus pups bellowing in an uncanny canine cacophony.
- **Most erratic construction project:** the staccato hammering sounds of a walrus under water.

Top images (L-R): Great Horned Owl by Ruth Baker; walrus by Captain Budd Christman, NOAA; African forest elephant by Peter Wrege; recording sounds in the arctic by Mike Anderson

VACANCIES ON THE MAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Nominating Committee is now conducting its search for interested people (new or returning) to fill our Board of Directors and will present a slate of candidates for the consideration of those Marin Audubon members at the Annual Meeting in May.

Quite often our nominees are individuals that are interested in continuing their service on the Board. This year it appears that a few of our long-term Board Members will be retiring, leaving opportunities for others to fill their chairs. We are particularly interested in a volunteer coordinator and a speaker series chair. If you or someone you know has admired the accomplishments of the Marin Audubon Society from afar, and would like to become involved in our all-volunteer Board or would like more information about Board needs, contact Phil Peterson at 828-4780.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Amazing Grace Music, Erika Arnold, Amanda Baird, Amy Brokering, Scotti Clair, Rosie Cohen, Ione N. Conlan, Julie E. Creighton, Katharin & Douglas Dellago, Barbara L. Demeter, Mari Dempsey, Patricia Dillon, Karen M. Ecklund, David Ellis, Branwell Fanning, Mary Fitzpatrick, Betty E. Gandel, Patricia Garfield, Ellen Greenwald, Joan Haukom, Harold Hedelman, Gretchen Hoskins, Patricia K. Joanides, Mary Johnides, Melanie Kramme, Jonathan Leone, Cynthia Lima, Toni Littlejohn, Tina & Gary Loewenthal, Charles Louderback, Freda Massaro, Claudia Norby, Griffin O'Neill, Eileen Perkins, Todd Plummer, Stephanie Prescott, Margaret & Rees Jones, Elizabeth Robinson, Glen Rothell, Troy Rothwell, Judy Schiff, Susan Siegel, Dan Singer, Wilma Smith, Noreen Spanski, Linda A. Swanson, William Wells, Marcie Wright

MARIN AUDUBON THANKS THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR DONATIONS

Jean Z Dakota, Michelle Eaton, Douglas Hanford, Susan Hayes, Robert Hinz, Kathryn Wilson

THANKS TO OUR MAS VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Cristine Albert, Auldon Barker, Bob Bundy, Helen & Brian Darken, Sharon Donovan, Blanca Figueroa, Jean Gilbert, Bob Hinz, Mike Linvill, Andy Markham, Sharon Maxwell, Nia Miller, Flinn Moore-Rauck, Jamie Randolph, Genna Rauck, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, Dalia Sullivan, Francesca Tettananga



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kern.audubon.org/KRVSNF.htm
- April 18-24 **Godwit Days Spring Migration
Bird Festival**
www.godwitdays.org
Arcata, CA
- April 26-28 **Point Reyes Birding &
Nature Festival**
www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.
org/site/

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SUPPORT MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

The success of Marin Audubon Society's (MAS) work depends greatly on its chapter supporting members. We work collaboratively with the National Audubon Society (NAS) on issues of mutual concern, but very little of our funding comes from NAS. MAS relies on local support for our habitat protection efforts, conservation advocacy, birding field trips, educational speakers series, and publication of *The Clapper Rail*, which you will receive as a MAS member. To better ensure we can continue our programs on the local level, MAS offers a separate chapter membership. Your membership in MAS will help us protect local habitats, resident and migratory birds and provide you with educational and enjoyable programs as well.

If you are not already a chapter supporting member, we urge you to join MAS and urge your friends, neighbors, relatives to join us, too.

You can also join or make a donation on our Web site using your credit card or PayPal. Please go to www.marinaudubon.org.

JOINT NAS-MAS MEMBERSHIP

A National Audubon Society Membership is a joint membership with National and the chapter. With this joint membership, you will receive our newsletter and other chapter benefits, however, MAS receives no portion of your National Audubon Membership dues. We receive a fixed amount based on our 2001 membership. We will receive, however, a portion of any new memberships that are generated by MAS, the local chapter. So we request that you send all checks for new National memberships to: Marin Audubon Society, P.O. Box 599, Mill Valley, CA 94942.

For NAS membership renewals, send your check directly to NAS.

Join or Donate to the Marin Audubon Society

Please fill in this form and mail to the address below. If you are paying by check, please make it payable to **Marin Audubon Society**. For more information, please contact Ruth Pratt, Membership Chair at 415/453-2989.

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