Twenty-four Marin Audubon folks made the early morning trip to Bouverie Preserve in Sonoma to go birding and to experience this wonderful preserve that can only be visited by reservation. We divided into two groups, the easy hike and the more challenging one to the waterfall. Each group was led by two Bouverie docents knowledgeable about the birds, flowers, habitats, and history of the property. The partly cloudy, cool day changed to bright sunshine as the day progressed.

Bouverie is a 500 acre nature preserve with open oak woodland, mixed hardwood forest, riparian habitats, a cathedral of redwood trees, rolling hills, fields of fresh tall grasses, and views of the Mayacamas range. Due to recent rains, our walk along the creek was accompanied by the peaceful sound of running water. We saw many wildflowers, including white baby eyes, woodland star, and delphinium. One meadow was filled with lupine and another with tidy tips.

We saw about 40 species of birds. The first bird of the day was a very cooperative Chipping Sparrow, then a pair of White-breasted Nuthatches with nesting material, and later we got long looks at a gorgeous female Redtailed Hawk perched at the top of a close-by tree. Other good birds were Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Cassin’s Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Peregrine Falcon, Orange-crowned Warbler, and Wilson’s Warbler. The guides also pointed out spots where rattlesnakes were resting but unseen. Many thanks to Hugh Helm, the docent at Bouverie who arranged our outing.

By Rona Weintraub
Photos of Meadow Foam and Red-Tailed Hawk & by Rick Sabbag