



# 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, MAY 9 7:30 PM**

**The Lives of Owls  
Intermediate Level**

With Joe Mueller



Photo courtesy of Joe Mueller

**Great Horned Owl**

Ever hear a talk on owls and feel yourself wanting more? Then this is the talk for you. Join Joe as he shares the features of owl life that go beyond the beginners level. We'll begin with a quick review of owl biology including food, predators, reproduction, behavior and ecology. Then it's time to expand on the different types of calls and what they mean, get into mating strategies and explore the lives of some other owl species outside of California. We'll conclude with a little on the latest in owl research. Not to worry if you're a beginner ... this will be fun for you too.

**Joe Mueller** has been teaching biology at the College of Marin for 24 years. Of the 15 different courses he has taught, subjects of particular interest include ecology, marine biology, ornithology and environmental science. Taking a holistic approach to science, Joe emphasizes the interconnective approach to understanding biology. He is always fun and light-hearted; you're sure to enjoy your time while learning. Joe is the recipient of the 2008 Terwilliger Environmental Award, and he has developed and directs the Natural History Program at College of Marin.

Please join us at 7:15 PM for cookies and conversation.

## MAS Annual Meeting, May 9

Please join Marin Audubon Society at our Annual Meeting on Thursday, May 9 at 7:30 pm. The agenda includes election of board members and a brief presentation highlighting our accomplishments and activities of the last year, followed by Joe Mueller presenting a program on owls (see adjacent information on Speaker Series).

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate for the Board of Directors. Nominations may also be made from the floor with the permission of the nominee.

Standing for re-election:

- **Martha Jarocki** Martha serves as our Publicity Chair and oversees our Web site.
- **Flinn Moore Rauck** Flinn currently serves as our Fundraising Chair.
- **Jude Stalker** Jude currently serves on the Board as our Special Projects Chair which includes Stewardship Days at Bahia.
- **Vicky Van Meter** Vicky currently serves as our Field Trip Chair.

We greatly appreciate these Directors who have agreed to return for another term on Marin Audubon's Board. They are an important part of our organization and make possible the many activities and services we provide.

Nominated for the board for the first time is Shele Jessee. Shele lives in West Marin, is a participant in a permaculture program and enjoys birds. She looks forward to helping with habitat restoration.

We look forward to working with our new board members and appreciate the willingness of both our prospective and our previous Board members to serve. As an all-volunteer organization, we depend on our Board to make possible the many activities and services we provide.

Because MAS is a non-profit membership organization, participating in the election of our Board of Directors is a right of all or our members. We hope you will join us for this important event.

## The Restoration of Triangle Marsh

By Jude Stalker

The Marin Audubon Society's (MAS) 31-acre Triangle Marsh property along Paradise Drive in the Town of Corte Madera was historically just a fraction of the vast tidal marsh system of Corte Madera and San Clemente Creeks. Like much of the larger Corte Madera Marsh, Triangle Marsh has had its share of man-made alterations: two-thirds of the tidal marsh on the western end was left intact while the eastern end had been filled in with sediment and debris following the construction of Paradise Drive and various dumping events, rendering it too high in elevation to allow tidal inundation. It became a clumpy field infested with invasive plants and it remained in this condition for many years.

Marin Audubon's commitment to this marsh dates back almost 40 years when MAS tried to

purchase the property in partnership with the Town of Corte Madera. MAS was outbid by a local developer who during the intervening 25 or so years, tried to develop the property. He submitted several plans for residences but fortunately, the applications were rejected by Corte Madera. In 1999, MAS made an offer to purchase the property and the owner eventually agreed to sell it.

MAS had recently made a shift in focus from restoring wetland properties owned by others to actually acquiring historical wetland properties and restoration  
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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.

President	Barbara Salzman 924-6057
Vice President	Lowell Sykes 388-2821
Secretary	Mariah Baird 456-3355
Treasurer	Josephine Kreider 533-7370
Finance Chair	Greg Block 479-8254
Conservation	Phil Peterson 828-4780 Barbara Salzman 924-6057
Earthshare	Jude Stalker 668-1242
Field Trips	Vicky Van Meter 299-2514
Membership	Ruth Pratt 453-2989
Fundraising	Flinn Moore Rauck 892-7554
Programs	Helen Lindqvist 789-0703
Special Projects	Jude Stalker 668-1242
Nominating	Phil Peterson 828-4780
Editor, <i>The Clapper Rail</i>	Bob Hinz, 383-8688
Volunteer Coordinator	Bob Hinz, 383-8688
Property Management	Ed Nute 457-9241
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  
(Provided by Golden Gate AS)

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

I can hardly believe that June is approaching and MAS's fiscal year is almost over. Where does the time go?

I hope you will join us to vote on our slate of board members at our May Speaker Series program. See the lead article on page 1 for the names of our nominees this year. Our elections take place at our Annual meeting which occurs at the beginning of our May Speaker meeting. So you will be voting for one-third of next year's MAS board and treated to a great program.

Thank you to our Nominating Committee for their work choosing this year's slate of directors. The Nominating Committee consisted of Phil Peterson, Helen Lindqvist and Bob Hinz.

Spring brings our habitat needs into focus – remove weeds, the need to water and other maintenance work during the coming drier months, ordering plants for planting next year. Although we apply for grants, we cannot do it on grants alone. We depend on donations from

our supporters to maintain and enhance our properties. You should be receiving our Spring solicitation letter in the mail soon.

Hurry and sign up for our Mother's Day BBQ, if you have not done so already. There is a limit on the number that can be accommodated. This event is not only an opportunity to visit the lovely Volunteer Canyon which is usually closed to the public, enjoy good food and fun with family and friends, but it supports programs of Marin Audubon and Audubon Canyon Ranch.

Marin Audubon congratulates our fellow conservation organization the California Alpine Club on celebrating its 100 Anniversary this year. Quite an accomplishment.

We are working on arranging to resume the Marin Birdlog in our newsletter. We also have a slot for a partial term of two years for one board member. Please call me for more information about our work needs for this position.

Have a great May!

## APRIL 7 FIELD TRIP

# Ragle Ranch Regional Park in Sebastopol With Scott Carey

By Rona Weintraub

Most of us had never been to this park and were fortunate to have Scott as our guide. This 157-acre park is practically in his backyard, and he's extremely knowledgeable about the resident and migratory species. It was a foggy overcast temperate start to the day but later the warm sun broke through. Several folks brought their scopes which allowed all of us to get great looks at many of the birds. Most of the time was spent on a loop trail that went through oak and riparian woodlands, grasslands, meadows, and passed by an apple orchard and a vineyard. Due to recent rains, the trail was quite a muddy swamp in many places, which presented a challenge and added to the fun. (Some smart people actually read the trip description carefully and showed up in rubber boots!)

As we left the parking lot, we were greeted by a **Mallard**, the only species of duck for the day. We saw our first of several **Red-shouldered Hawks**, **Anna's Hummingbirds**, one **Hairy Woodpecker**, and then caught a quick glimpse of our only **Northern Flicker** for the day. Overhead there was a nice mixed flock of **Swallows** – **Barn** and **Violet-green** and maybe **Tree**. We were treated to a **White-tailed Kite** hovering close by and later watched two more kites and saw their nest. A **Belted Kingfisher** flew over while we were looking at a few **Cedar Waxwings** above us and a flock of very noisy busy **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** in a tree right in front of us.

Further down the trail we spent time looking at about twenty **Yellow-rumped Warblers** feeding in trees. The most dramatic sight of the day was a **Cooper's Hawk** that swooped down to grab a **California Quail** just in front of



Photo courtesy of Len Blumkin

**Cedar Waxwing** just in front of us on the trail ... it missed! We got great looks at a **Wilson's Warbler**, **Red-winged Blackbirds**, and a **Western Scrub-Jay**. Some of the birds that were heard but not seen by most of us were the **Warbling Vireo**, **Bewick's Wren**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Spotted Towhee**, **Common Yellowthroat**, and **Acorn Woodpecker**. We watched as a **Great Egret**, half hidden by tall grass, ate various squirming slippery critters, one after another. We saw **Wild Turkeys** on a hillside near a vineyard and also **Oak Titmouse**. Our total for the day was around 35 species.

The interesting non-avian species seen were Western Toad tadpoles and one stretched-out bright green Pacific Chorus Frog floating on top of one of the big muddy puddles around which we navigated.

## 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

### LAS GALLINAS STORAGE PONDS SAN RAFAEL

Thursday, May 2, 2013

9 AM to 12 noon

With Len Blumin and friends

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

**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 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.

### OLOMPALI STATE PARK FAMILY WALK, NOVATO

Sunday, May 5, 2013

10 AM to 12:30 PM

With Wendy Dreskin

Families and beginning birders are welcome to join Wendy Dreskin as we explore the lovely Olompali State Park in Novato, stopping to look at the plants, birds and other wildlife in meadow and woodland habitats. Wendy has taught nature education for children for many years and has led the popular adult education class "Meandering in Marin" through College of Marin since 1998. Wendy runs the Junior Bird Watcher program and created the Junior Botanist program that reaches over 300 children in the county each year. She was honored with the Terwilliger Environmental Award for her work inspiring both children and adults.

We will meet in the parking area of Olompali. Bring a hat, sunscreen, water, lunch and wear good walking shoes.

**DIRECTIONS:** The park is located three miles north of Novato on U.S. 101. The entrance is accessible only to southbound traffic from Highway 101. Northbound vehicles should continue north past Olompali to exit on Redwood Sanitary Landfill Road. After exiting Hwy. 101, turn left to cross the freeway and take the southbound on-ramp in order to travel southward and enter the park. The park day use fee is currently \$8 per vehicle.

### BIG ROCK/LOMA ALTA

Saturday, May 18, 2013

9 AM to 1 PM

With Len Blumin

The north slope of Loma Alta above Lucas Valley Road is high and dry, with great vistas. This is not the place for a lot of species, but we should see some birds you may have not seen before, such as Grasshopper, Rufus-crowned and Lark Sparrows; Horned Larks; and Lazuli Buntings. Western Meadowlarks should provide the melody. This is also a great place for raptors. All are welcome to join us for a leisurely walk of about a mile on a wide, graded road. Some of this is uphill. Please bring plenty of water.

**DIRECTIONS:** Take Hwy 101 to Smith Ranch/Lucas Valley Rd exit; head west on Lucas Valley Road. Big Rock Trailhead is about 5 miles west of Hwy 101 on Lucas Valley Road. The trailhead is on top of the rise and a large solitary rock - "Big Rock" - is on the right. Park on the south side of the road (turn back by making a safe turn on a driveway a bit further along on the right). The trail heads south from the starting point.

### MARIN HEADLANDS MARIN HEADLANDS VISITOR CENTER

Thursday, June 6, 2013

9 AM to 1 PM

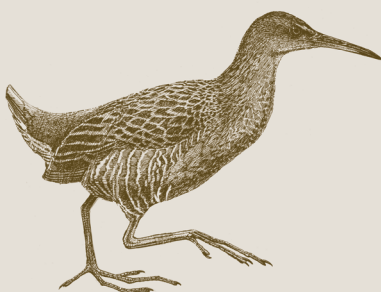
With Dan Singer

Dan Singer is a well-known ornithologist who serves on the Board of Directors of the Western Field Ornithologists, is Vice-Chair of the California Bird Records Committee, and is an eBird editor and reviewer for California. He has been birding since he was nine. We will meet Dan at the Marin Headlands Visitor Center where there are parking and bathrooms. We will then carpool to some of Dan's favorite birding spots in the Headlands, including several of the historic Batteries and tree groves. We will study the local breeding species as well as hunt for late spring migrants. With some luck perhaps we'll even find a vagrant.

Bring water, lunch, hat and sunscreen. Dress in layers because the weather can be unpredictable.

**DIRECTIONS:** From the North Bay - Follow 101 south through the Waldo tunnel. Take the last "Sausalito" exit just before the Golden Gate Bridge. Turn right at the end of the exit ramp. Pass under 101; at the stop sign go straight onto Alexander Avenue. Turn left on Bunker Road - a brown sign saying "Marin Headlands Visitor Center" marks the intersection. Go through the one-way tunnel and drive about 2 miles. Turn left onto Field Road. The visitor center will be on the right side of the road. The address is Fort Barry, Bldg 948, Sausalito.

**Field Trips continued on page 7**



## HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

We hit the radishes and thistles hard in April at both Triangle Marsh and Bahia, but we couldn't get them all. We will continue to interrupt their seed production, and Harding grass will probably enter the picture for May and certainly for June. Watering some new plantings would be difficult but it's a possibility. Join us on a workday. Be a part of restoring San Francisco Bay habitat. You would make a difference. Enjoy the bird songs and flowers, too.

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 but then we dance!

## VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP DAYS

### Triangle Marsh, Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: May 4, June 1

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

### Bahia, Novato:

Second Saturday: No work day on May 11; next time is June 8.

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 rbthnz@comcast.net or 415/383-8688.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Greger Anderson, Linda J. Antonio, Ed Clock, Anne D. Cook, Barbara Corrigan, Susan Cremin, Kevin Day, Carl & Roberta Duda, Paul T. Eaton, Jules Evens, Avery Fischbach, Robert Fong, Arlene Goldfarb, Michele A. Hamilton, Veronica Hand, Carol Hanning, Alan R. Hayakawa, William Holmes, Kenneth Koppes, Angelina Lazzareschi, Colin Lind, Richard Lipfield, Gary M. Masada, Robert May, Susan Naber, Rezo & Anstse Nedaf, Redwood Psychological Assn, Patty Smith, Ms. Eivor E. Taylor, Terri L. Thomas, Lori Thomas, Thomas A. Verrill, Nancy Worcester

## THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR DONATIONS:

Patricia Compton, Daniel & Lee Drake, Donna Williams

## THANKS TO OUR MAS VOLUNTEERS:

Debbie Ablin, Deandre Hill-Wright, Bob Hinz, Ryan Kendall, Charles Lewis, Mike Linvill, Chelsea Lyons, Sharon McCloskey, Susan Mooney, Linda Nicoletto, Flinn, Demetrius & Genevieve Rauck, Jude Stalker, Idalia Sullivan, Lowell Sykes

## HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

This past month our volunteers, Lowell Sykes, Jude Stalker and others, finished up planting and mulching new rhizomes in the propagation beds that the Conservation Corps had dug up, lined with hardware cloth and refilled with soil. The beds had suffered from invasion of gophers and from dry weather. We have plans for improving our watering of the beds.

Spring brings weeds followed by dry weather in summer. Looking ahead to the summer watering needs for the hundreds of plants we planted this winter, we have met with Chris deGabrielle, the manager of the North Marin Water District. We have options to obtain recycled water from purple tanks or potable water from regular hydrants that may be closer to some of our habitats. On a one time basis, we

can get overflow water used to flush a section of their pipe system. For all options except the overflow water, we need to hire a tank and truck to pull it so it is always expensive and a time-consuming task. North Marin Water District has a non-profit rate for water and we greatly appreciate their cooperation in working with us.

The highly invasive radish is again a spring-time problem. Although there is less than last year, it is again proliferating particularly at Bahia. Volunteers seem to have it under control at Triangle and we are expecting volunteers for four days this month at Bahia. We had to supplement with a crew from the Conservation Corps North Bay and may have to do that for one more day.

We hope to see you out for a volunteer day.

## Triangle Marsh Restoration

*continued from page 1*

ing their wetland habitats. Marin Baylands Advocates, our partner in bayland acquisitions, and MAS Board members worked diligently to secure the \$750,000 needed to make this, the first of the now long list of MAS bayland property acquisitions.

MAS then proceeded to work to restore the site. The goal was to reopen the filled portion of the marsh to tidal action and allow it, once again, to function as a healthy natural system connected to the waters of the Bay. To accomplish this, the fill was removed, the area was graded to an elevation suitable for the tidal marsh to restore naturally, and a channel was excavated through the center of the marsh to ensure that tidal waters reached the far end.

Tidal marsh was restored through the natural process of sediment and seeds being carried in with the tide and deposited on the graded lands. The marsh vegetation became established

fairly quickly, and the marsh is now beautifully lush with pickleweed and cordgrass along with a variety of other native marsh plant species.

Several species of shorebirds and waterfowl now use the marsh and adjacent bay waters and mudflats including Northern Shovelers, Canvasback, Scaup, Ruddy Ducks, Great and Snowy Egrets, Killdeer, Black-bellied Plovers, Black-necked Stilts, and hundreds of Willets. In 2011 a single Clapper Rail was spotted roaming the newly constructed channel under the cover of the native cordgrass. Hopefully, when the conditions are right, Clapper Rails will once again nest in this new marsh.

Some of the excavated fill and sediment was used to create a berm adjacent to the marsh to provide upland refuge habitat as well as a buffer between Paradise Drive and the marsh. The new berm was planted with native plant species that were recommended and grown by The Watershed Nursery (TWN), a local native plant nursery. TWN staff along with several local volunteers, including students



**Triangle Marsh in 2004 looking toward the east**

Both photos courtesy of Jude Stalker

RESERVE TODAY

# MAS/ACR Mother's Day Barbecue

**Sunday, May 12, 2013**

**Gates open: 11 am; Lunch: 12 noon – 2 pm**

**Volunteer Canyon, 4800 Highway 1, Stinson Beach**

We sold out again last year so don't wait. Now buy your tickets the easy way – on the MAS Web site: [www.marinaudubon.org](http://www.marinaudubon.org). You can also order them by sending a check payable to MAS to:

Mary Anne Cowperthwaite  
141 Oak Avenue  
San Anselmo, CA 94960

\$25 for adults, \$12 for kids 12 and under

Indicate your choice of quiche or chicken for each person for whom you are paying.

*Remember to bring utensils, cups, bowls and plates. Non-disposable preferred.*

For more information call Mary Anne, 453-2216.

*Hope to see you there!*

from neighboring Marin Country Day School, planted hundreds of native upland plants along the berm.

In the nine years since these initial plantings, MAS volunteers have helped to plant and maintain many more native plants and to remove the various invasive non-native plants that show up each year. The native vegetation along the berm is now quite dense with diverse plant species that provide habitat for many species of birds and other wildlife.

Triangle Marsh is a shining example of what the persistence and dedication of a handful of people can accomplish in transforming a seemingly useless space into a vibrant and healthy tidal marsh-upland habitat area. MAS, with the help of the community, is committed to continue to do whatever it takes to manage this and other historic bayland properties and to allow them to thrive.

Funding to acquire the property came from a variety of sources including the State Coastal Conservancy, Marin County Open

Space District, North American Wetlands Conservation Council, The J. M. Long Foundation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's San Francisco Bay Program, Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission, the San Francisco Bay Keeper, an anonymous-major donor and many other private donors to the Marin Baylands Fund that is maintained by Marin Baylands Advocates, at the Marin Community Foundation. Donations to the fund are committed to being used to purchase bayland and related habitats.

Funding for the restoration was provided by the Marin Community Foundation, San Quentin Prison as mitigation for impacts of the shoreline stabilization project at the prison, and Caltrans as mitigation for impacts to Corte Madera Creek for the HOV lane.

The consulting firm, Wetlands and Water Resources, designed the project and the construction contractor was Cooper Crane and Rigging.



**Triangle Marsh in 2012 looking toward the east**

## OPPOSE KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

A recent State Department draft environmental review of the Keystone XL pipeline project is seriously flawed, according to a National Audubon review. The report finds that building the pipeline would have little impact on climate change – even though the pipeline would increase emissions so much that it would be like adding 4.6 million cars to roads in addition to threatening habitats. Urge the President to make good on the pro-climate position stated at both his Inauguration and State of the Union addresses and reject this environmentally damaging project. Write President Barack Obama, White House, Washington DC or go to [www.whitehouse.gov/contact](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact).

## 100+ CLIFF SWALLOWS KILLED

C.C. Meyers, the Caltrans contractor working on the Novato Narrows project, has installed exclusionary netting to block nesting by Cliff Swallows incorrectly. Swallows are still being trapped and are dying in the netting. During the last three weeks, more than 100 swallows have been killed. Neither Caltrans or the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) are doing much about the tragedy. Since Caltrans work is being performed many feet below the nesting, the nets could be removed altogether.

**HOW YOU CAN HELP:** contact Assemblyman Marc Levine at 479-4920 and State Senator Noreen Evans at 707/648-5312. Urge them to pressure Caltrans and CDFW to take effective action to stop this killing. Contact Charlton Bonham, Director, CDFW, 9th St., Sacramento, CA and Bijan Sartipi, Director, Caltrans District 4, 111 Grand Ave., Oakland, CA 94612

## WEST NILE VIRUS SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM NOTICE

The California Department of Public Health, Vector-Borne Disease Section's Surveillance Program is a key component in their early warning system because birds, especially, scrub-jays, crows, ravens, Steller's jays and magpies, are very susceptible to west Nile virus (WNV). Other species such as robins, finches, sparrows, raptors and squirrels can also carry the virus. The public is encouraged to report dead birds by calling the toll-free hotline: 1-877-WNV-BIRD. A bird must be dead for no longer than 24 hours. If the CDPH is unable to test a bird or tree squirrel, the carcass should be double bagged and put in the trash.

# 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.



## PLAN BAY AREA

Plan Bay Area, a proposed regional growth plan by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments, has been released for public review. The plan would bring major changes to Marin.

Plan Bay Area is intended to meet the mandates of SB 375, enacted in 2008, which requires the two regional agencies to plan for housing needs and complementary land use, which is supported by a transportation system that reduces greenhouse gas emissions. It is a blueprint for growth over the next 25 years.

Plan Bay Area is based on two planning concepts, Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Priority Conservation Areas (PCAs). PDAs are intended to locate growth in already developed areas along major transit corridors with a goal of using the existing transit infrastructure more efficiently. The plan proposes to accommodate 100 percent of new growth in the PDAs. In Marin, the Highway 101 corridor is identified as a PDA, with the San Rafael Transit Center and the Civic Center called out as specific locations.

It is unclear where the PCAs will be located, but one thing is certain – there is a major conflict looming because Marin’s PDAs are all located along the Bay where there are endangered species and extensive wetlands. Theoretically, PDAs take pressure off open space and agricultural lands. This theory is unproven.

Another of the plan’s goals is to locate additional housing for all income levels close to job centers and public transportation. Marin’s low- and very low-income housing allocation would be 983 additional units over the next eight years.

SB 375 sets up a process whereby projects consistent with Plan Bay Area may qualify for what is referred to as “relief” from some CEQA requirements – in other words, streamlining the environmental review process, which MAS opposes.

The plan recognizes the Bay Area’s unique network of natural habitats as vital to the region’s ecosystems, health, and quality of life, but devotes little attention to protecting these natural resources. The resource lands map shows “critical habitat” only in the national parks in West Marin. None are identified along San Francisco Bay that we can determine, even where endangered species are present.

The three proposed strategies to “Preserve and Strengthen Open the Space Network” would not effectively protect habitat lands. They address planning for farmland protection and supporting development by mitigating for impacts to natural resources. Notably missing is

a program to protect PCAs through acquisition and restoration of natural resource areas.

In summary, many of the Plan Bay Area’s concepts for accommodating growth sound fine in theory, but they are missing the following: a sound definition of resource lands, the location of public and private resource lands that provide native habitats, and ways to ensure these habitats are protected. Many areas that should be identified as PCAs are not recognized. Perhaps this is because the PCAs have been identified by politicians and not biologists. We agree that PCAs are critical to preserving the vitality of the region’s ecosystem and economy. This plan needs to ensure they are protected.

**What You Can Do:** Submit comments on the Plan Bay Area and the Plan Bay Area Environmental Impact Report by 4 pm, May 16 at <http://onebayarea.org/regional-initiatives/plan-bay-area/plan-elements/environmental-impact-report.html>. Information on the plan can be found at <http://onebayarea.org/regional-initiatives/plan-bay-area.html>.

## SCA UPDATE

Upon further review of the DRAFT Stream Conservation Area (SCA) ordinance, we found more loopholes and deficiencies than reported in the last *Clapper Rail*. We included them in our comment letter to the Marin County Community Development Agency, and would like to pass them on to you.

The Planning Department’s latest draft ordinance contains a number of exemptions to creekside development that we believe need to be better explained and revised, including:

- limiting the definition of “previously disturbed areas” to areas where there has been previous construction. Currently lands that have been cleared of vegetation would also be considered previously disturbed and possibly developed.
- allowing only one 500-square-foot addition to an existing structure. Current language has no restriction on the number of such additions.
- clarifying that all exempt activities demonstrate that they are necessary and cannot be located out of the SCA.
- requiring that native species be used to replace any removed vegetation.
- requiring that mitigation be on-site and permanent.

*continued on page 7*

## MARIN AUDUBON PROPERTIES

1. Petaluma Marsh	180 acres
2. Bahia	60 acres
3. Simmons Slough	144 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 6

We also suggest that the County establish a grant program to provide limited funds to landowners to restore creeks.

**What You Can Do:** There is still time to comment. Attend the Board of Supervisors hearing planned for June 18 and speak to protect streams, or submit written comments. The hearings are held at the Marin County Civic Center, Room 308.

### OTHER MAS CONSERVATION ACTIONS

#### SIR FRANCIS DRAKE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

MAS commented to the Regional Water Quality Control Board on the revised plan for Phase 2 of the Sir Francis Drake Boulevard road improvement project along Lagunitas Creek through Samuel P. Taylor State Park. Although better than the first plan, which would have cut down numerous mature redwoods, we still have concerns about this revision.

In our comments we asked that riparian habitats be created to mitigate the loss of jurisdictional wetlands, and that pullouts not be paved in order to provide pervious surfaces. We also asked that monitoring be required to verify that the culverts and riprap placed to stabilize creek banks continue to function effectively. Small rocks can be carried away

from banks by fast-moving water.

#### MARIN GENERAL HOSPITAL FINAL EIR

MAS submitted follow-up comments on the Final EIR for Marin General Hospital Replacement Building Project following on our earlier comments on the Draft EIR. The project would construct four new buildings including two parking structures, Ambulatory Services and Hospital Replacement buildings.

In response to our questions about tree loss and water quality impacts, the final EIR stated that they are removing 143 trees and planting 264 trees, but explained that the newly planted trees would not be mitigation. The information provided about the trees to be planted offers no certainty that existing habitat functions would be replaced. There is no planting plan presented; only an "intent" is stated to supplement with native oaks and grasses to reinforce an oak woodland vegetation mix and adhere to the existing county ordinance. This explanation is too vague to enable the reader to understand what would be planted and where. Nor is there any commitment to monitoring and maintaining any new trees.

Regarding water quality, a new figure is included that shows a design for and proposed location of vegetated swales although the drainage pattern that would direct water to the swales is not presented.

In summary, we find the information presented to be incomplete.

### MAS FIELD TRIPS *Continued from page 3*

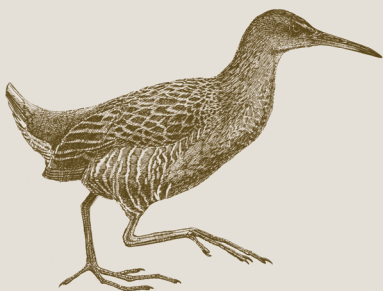
#### MONTEREY BAY PELAGIC BIRDING WEEKEND

September 14-15, 2013  
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 Seabirds ([www.montereyseabirds.com](http://www.montereyseabirds.com)) and land birding on Sunday. Monterey Seabirds uses a local skipper with more than 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 \$95 per person (Note: We're holding the price to last year's rate.). Sign-ups are being taken on a first-come, first-served-basis since 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 Seabirds, 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](mailto:tlcgdc@aol.com), or by phone: 530/758-0689.



## Junior Bird Watchers

By Wendy Dreskin

Junior Bird Watchers is an in-school program designed to teach elementary school children to identify birds in their neighborhoods. The program was developed by National Audubon Society (NAS). When NAS discontinued the program, Marin Audubon assumed sponsorship and Wendy Dreskin continues as the instructor, conducting the program in classrooms at several elementary schools. If you would like more information, please visit "Junior Birdwatchers" under the "Birds" tab on our web site at [marinaudubon.org](http://marinaudubon.org), or contact Wendy Dreskin at 415/457-3949.



**Thomas Challenger** is a home-schooled first-grader from San Anselmo. Thomas says, "I saw a Bald Eagle in Michigan. Now I'd really like to see a Golden Eagle."



**Hudson Lofrano** is a first-grader at St. Rita School and a Junior Bird Watcher for the second year. He has seen a captive injured Peregrine Falcon, but would really love to see one in the wild.



# THE Clapper Rail

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- May 12 **Mother's Day BBQ**  
Audubon Canyon Ranch
- June 4 **Lake Tahoe Bird Festival**  
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[www.tinsweb.org](http://www.tinsweb.org)
- June 6 **Speaker Series**  
*With Harry Fuller*  
**NOTE:** It's a week early
- June 8 **Stewardship Day**  
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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](http://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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