



# THE Clapper Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

## SPEAKER SERIES

Free and Open to the public

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

**THURSDAY, MAY 8 7:30 PM**

### Birds of Enchantment: Birding Puerto Rico

With Jaan Lepson



Photo courtesy of Jaan Lepson

#### Bananaquit

Puerto Rico is the smallest and easternmost of the Greater Antilles islands. The island blends traditional Latino-Caribbean and North American culture and, with its good infrastructure and widespread understanding of English, makes for an excellent introduction to birding in the Caribbean. Puerto Rico's avifauna combines the familiar and the exotic, with wintering North American migrants mingling with such specialties as lizard-cuckoos and the vibrant todies.

Jaan visited Puerto Rico several times and had the pleasure of working at the Río Piedras campus of the University of Puerto Rico during the spring of 2012. During that time he was able to bird over most of the island and found all but one of the endemic species. His presentation will concentrate on birding in different habitats in Puerto Rico, along with a dash of the local flavor.

Jaan grew up in Hawai'i where he developed the love for birds that led to a BA in Biology from Princeton and a Ph.D. in Zoology from the University of Hawai'i where he studied the endangered Hawai'i island 'Akepa. He now works in laboratory astrophysics at UC Berkeley.

Come at 7:15 PM for refreshments. Meeting begins at 7:30 PM.

## MAS Annual Meeting, May 8

**D**o join us for Marin Audubon's Annual Meeting on Thursday, May 8 at 7:30 pm. This is the time we elect Board members for the coming year. Board members are elected by the membership, so we invite you to participate in the election. The election will take place prior to our Speaker's program (see adjacent information on Speaker Series). We will also have a brief review of our accomplishments and activities last year.

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate for the Board of Directors. Our nominees this year are returning Board members and will be elected for three-year terms. As a completely volunteer organization with no paid staff, we rely on our dedicated and knowledgeable volunteers to carry out our programs. We need to hold onto our dedicated and hard working Board members to ensure we can continue the many activities and services we

provide to you. We appreciate the willingness of Board members to continue to serve.

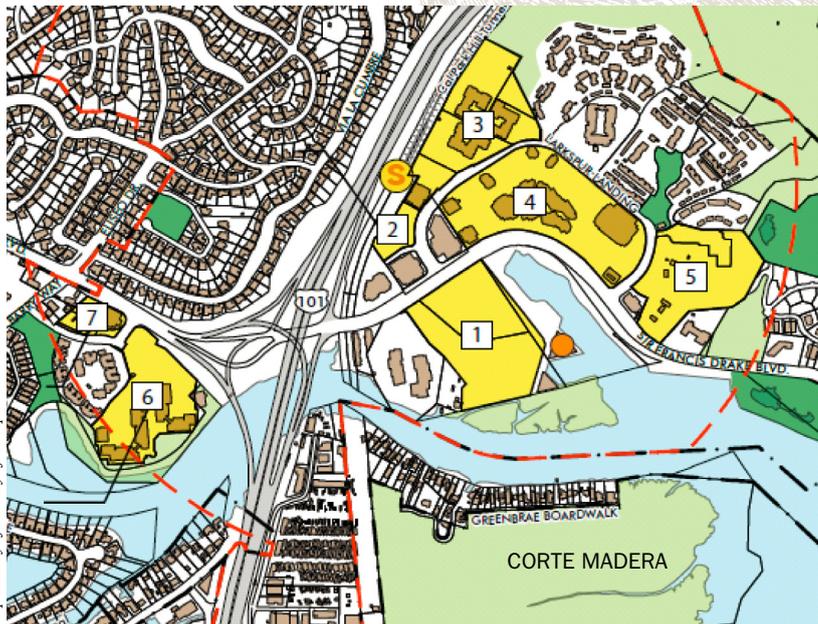
The nominees are:

- **Jo Kreider** who is our Treasurer.
- **Mariah Baird** who serves as our Secretary.
- **Greg Block** who is our Finance Chair.
- **Lowell Sykes** who is our Vice President and diligently cares for our properties.
- **Bob Hinz** who is the editor of *The Clapper Rail* and Co-compiler of the Southern Marin Christmas Bird Count.

Nominations may also be made from the floor with the permission of the nominee.

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

## Larkspur Station Area Plan and EIR Released for Review



Map courtesy of the City of Larkspur

#### Larkspur Station Areas:

1. Ferry Terminal
  2. Cinema
  3. Office
  4. Country Mart
  5. Sanitary District property
  6. Drake's Landing areas
  7. Drake's Landing areas
- See story on page 4.

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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 707/230-3553
Finance Chair	Greg Block 479-8254
Conservation	Phil Peterson 828-4780 Barbara Salzman 924-6057
Field Trips	Vicky Van Meter 299-2514
Membership	Periann Wood 388-1516
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	
Property Management	Ed Nute 669-7710
Publicity	Martha Jarocki 461-3592
BAAC Repts	Lowell Sykes 388-2821 Barbara Salzman 924-6057

## DIRECTORS MEETINGS

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

6:30 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.

*The Clapper Rail* is published ten times a year by the Marin Audubon Society on 100% recycled paper; edited by Bob Hinz rbrthnz@comcast.net, 383-8688; assisted by other members of MAS; and designed by Studio NaCl (www.studionacl.com). Deadline is the first of each month.

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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

May already – where did the time go?

Join us to vote on the nominees for MAS's 2014-15 Board of Directors. Our nominees this year are returning Board members and will be serving a three-year term ending in 2017. You will be voting on five Board members which will comprise one-third of next year's Board. The names of the nominees are listed in the lead article on page 1. Thank you to our Nominating Committee members, Phil Peterson and Flinn Moore Rauck.

Join us also on Mother's Day for our Annual Mother's Day Picnic at Audubon Canyon Ranch's (ACR) Volunteer Canyon. There was a flyer in last month's newsletter but in case you missed it, we have included the basic information on page 7. This is always a fun event for families and friends in a special place that is not usually open to the public. This year we will not be able to walk over to Griffin Canyon because ACR is removing possible sources of disturbance in an effort to encourage the herons and egrets to return. Instead there will be ranch guides to lead special hikes around Volunteer Canyon.

You have recently received our Spring appeal letter, the proceeds from which are dedicated to supporting maintenance and enhancement of our properties. We also consider it an

opportunity to tell you how your donations from the previous year have been used, how our habitats (which you all own, too) are doing, and the activities we ask you to consider supporting for the coming year. We are very grateful to all who donated and hope you will read the current appeal letter to see how your donation was spent.

Except in unusual circumstances, our policy is to limit our appeals to one in Winter, for our operations, and another in Spring, for our properties. This year may be an exception because we are working on acquiring a property, so we may need to seek your support for that purchase.

The list of field trips being offered by Jim White and Bob Battagin is below. We invite you to join one or more of their trips that are planned to visit sites that will show the seasonal bird use of our habitats. We thank Jim and Bob for donating their time and their birding skills for these trips which are being offered in addition to our regular trips. Of course, birders of all skills from beginner to expert, are welcome and invited to attend our field trips. It is a great way to learn how to identify birds. Although trips are focused on birds, leaders, according to their individual knowledge, will point out plants and other species as well.

Have a wonderful May!

## New Marin Field Trip Series

Jim White and Bob Battagin have graciously offered to lead a trip for Marin Audubon on the third Saturday of every month for 12 months. We are pleased to add these trips to our schedule. Each trip will take us to a seasonal birding hotspot and those who attend all of the trips are likely to see as many as 250 or more species of birds. The birds seen on each of the monthly trips will be tallied and participants will be provided with a list of all species seen during the year.

For those of you who do not know these excellent birders, Bob has birded West Marin and the San Francisco Bay Area for 17 years. He has led field trips for several Bay Area Audubon Societies and has contributed monthly birding articles to the Plumás Audubon Society's newsletter for the past 13 years. Jim has retired from rocket engineering, teaching and general contracting and has been an avid birder for many years. Jim says he was tutored and inspired by the late great Rich Stallcup and the birds.

The trips will begin by 9 AM and last until mid-afternoon. Bring bins, scopes, and lunch,

dress in layers, carpool if possible, and expect to walk 3 miles.

### 2014 TRIPS

<b>May 24</b>	Muir Woods, Redwood Creek, and Muir Beach
<b>June 21</b>	Five Brooks and Bear Valley
<b>July 19</b>	Carson Ridge/Pine Mountain, Cascade Dam/Kent Lake
<b>August 16</b>	Abbott's Lagoon
<b>September 20</b>	Drake's Beach and the Fish Docks
<b>October 18</b>	Rodeo Lagoon, Point Bonita, and Hawk Hill
<b>November 15</b>	Limantour and the Sky Trail
<b>December 20</b>	Bahia, Rush Creek, and Rowland Blvd Wetlands

### 2015 TRIPS

<b>January 17</b>	Bolinas Lagoon, Pine Gulch, and Duxbury Reef
<b>February 21</b>	Las Gallinas and Marin Civic Center
<b>March 21</b>	Nicasio Reservoir and environs
<b>April 17</b>	Olmopali State Park

## 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 1

9 AM to 12 PM

With Susan Kelly, Len Blumin and friends

Join us for the last Thursday walk of the season around the Las Gallinas Storage Ponds just north of McInnis Park, continuing a tradition started years ago by Bruce Bajema. Birders of all levels are welcome. Each month the avian cast of characters changes, and we'll try to keep track of newly arriving species. This is great way to start learning the raptors, waterfowl, and other bird families, as well as getting tips on optics, birding books, and birding etiquette. Try to bring a pair of binoculars, as well as some water. We'll be walking about 2 miles on the levees that surround the ponds. This walk will resume September 4th.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Highway 101 take the Smith Ranch Road exit, then go east on Smith Ranch Road toward the McInnis Park entrance. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks, staying on Smith Ranch Road, and go about 0.5 mi to the Las Gallinas Ponds parking lot at the end of the road. Meet the group by the bridge just past the parking lot. There are rest room facilities only at the parking area.

### MOUNT BURDELL

Sunday, May 4, 2014

8 AM to 11 AM, possibly later

With Lisa Hug

Lisa teaches birding classes at College of Marin and the Petaluma Adult School. Join Lisa for a field trip to the gentle slopes of Mt. Burdell where we'll listen to and observe the impressive variety of nesting songbirds that make this area their summertime home. Species we might see include Lark Sparrow, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Bullock's Oriole and Grasshopper Sparrow. This should be a fairly easy walk with some uphill. Bring comfortable walking shoes, layered clothing, water and snacks. We will meet at the end of San Andreas Drive in Novato.

**DIRECTIONS:** Take 101 to the San Marin Drive/Atherton Avenue exit in Novato. At the end of the exit ramp, turn left (west) on San Marin Drive. Go roughly 2 miles down the road and turn right on San Andreas Drive. Drive to nearly the end of the road and park on the street. (No restrooms available).

### GOLDEN GATE PARK

#### SAN FRANCISCO

Saturday, May 17, 2014

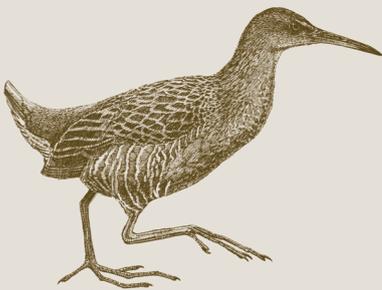
8:30 AM to 12 PM

With Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna Ridley

Join us as we explore the Chain of Lakes area at the western end of Golden Gate Park. The Chain of Lakes is named for three small ponds, North Lake, Middle Lake, and South Lake, and in spring is a great place to look for birds. Our guides will be Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna Ridley, who lead the bird walks at the San Francisco Botanical Garden for Golden Gate Audubon. Allan taught biology and ornithology at the Urban School for many years and was the Chair of the Education Committee of the Golden Gate Audubon. Helen is a long time docent and trustee at the San Francisco Botanical Garden.

We will meet at Middle Lake, where there is parking, and bird the area for about two hours. For those who wish to continue on our own, we will caravan to the Land's End Visitor Center above Sutro Baths where we can bird the restored habitats and also visit Sutro Heights Park. Bring water, snacks and sunscreen; dress in layers.

**DIRECTIONS:** Cross the Golden Gate Bridge, exit on 19th Avenue and continue south on Park Presidio. Turn right on Fulton Street. After about 1 mile, turn left at 36th Avenue. Turn slightly right onto John F. Kennedy Drive and finally go left onto Chain of Lakes Drive East. Middle Lake will be on the left. Parking is limited so carpooling is suggested.



### MUIR WOODS, REDWOOD CREEK AND MUIR BEACH

Saturday, May 24, 2014

8:30 AM to mid-afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

May is the height of the breeding season in Marin. Join Jim and Bob as we visit Muir Woods, Redwood Creek and Muir Beach. We will start the morning in Muir Woods where we will bird along Redwood Creek and hear the beautiful songs of Swainson's Thrush, Black-headed Grosbeaks and Pacific Wrens, along with Warbling Vireos, Wilson's and Orange-crowned (perhaps MacGillivray's) Warblers. We may or may not go into the Park but bring your Golden Age Pass if you have one. Entrance fee is \$7. We will then check out the restored riparian area at Muir Beach and picnic there. Scanning the ocean we usually find Pigeon Guillemots, Common Murres, Pelagic and Brandt's Cormorants, grebes, loons and Black Oystercatchers. We plan to walk several miles. Bring bins, scopes, lunch, dress in layers and carpool if possible.

**DIRECTIONS:** Meet in the lower parking lot (sign says 'Additional Parking') at Muir Woods. From Hwy 101 take the Mill Valley/Highway 1/Stinson Beach Exit. Follow the signs to Highway 1 and then to Muir Woods. The address is 1 Muir Woods Road, Mill Valley.

## 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.

### LARKSPUR STATION AREA PLAN AND EIR RELEASED FOR REVIEW

The City of Larkspur has released for public review the Draft Station Area Plan and the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) evaluating the Plan. The city applied for and received a grant of \$415,000 from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to develop the Plan and the Programmatic EIR.

The City is careful to note that the Plan is not an application for development but a “vision” that provides recommendations as to how the City’s General Plan, relevant ordinances and policies “could” be amended to allow for the significant new development and major changes in land use and transportation. This “vision” is intended to support the area designation as a “transit hub” with the SMART train eventually extending there.

The Plan divides the area around the Ferry Terminal into zones and assigns development potential to each: 1) The Ferry Terminal site would have a multi-level parking structure, 300 dwelling units (du) and 2,500 square feet (sf) of retail; 2) the Cinema Area and 3) Offices would have 50,000 sf of office and 35,000 sf of retail; 4) the Marin Country Mart would have 300 du and 40,000 more sf of retail; 5) the Sanitary District site (currently undeveloped) 250 du, 12,500 sf office and 60,000 sf retail; 6 and 7) Drake’s Landing would have 70 du and 22,000 sf of office. Buildings would be three to five stories tall. Corte Madera’s WinCup development is three and four stories.

All of this development would be in addition to what exists already. The proposed 920 units would double the existing 918 units at Larkspur Landing for a total of 1,838 dwelling units, not including the existing residences in Greenbrae, a portion of which is also in the Planning Area and Drake’s Landing Area. The current number of dwelling units at Larkspur Landing already qualifies the site as a station area. With the 125 units already approved by the City but not built on the property owned by the Ross Valley Sanitary District, MTC’s criterion of 920 du for designation as a “station area” is exceeded.

We found many inadequacies in the information provided, the analyses and the mitigation measures proposed by the DEIR. One of the major issues of public concern is traffic. The project would significantly increase traffic levels on Sir Francis Drake, Highway 101 and intersections in the Station Area, and the increase would violate many Larkspur

General Plan policies which aim to keep traffic at traffic levels that do not require much waiting. The EIR deals with this conflict by simply recommending that the general plan policies be changed so that the level of service would no longer conflict with them.

Recommendations for addressing traffic impacts include: widening Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and East Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, changing traffic signalization, and attempting to reduce vehicle use with various programs such as placing a cap on vehicle trips for businesses. The DEIR acknowledges that even with these mitigation programs, traffic impacts would be significant and unavoidable. The projected 10 percent reduced traffic with these programs would also be insufficient to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to acceptable levels.

Air quality impacts are identified as significant, which is curious because reducing greenhouse gases is supposed to be one of the reasons for Station Area planning. The DEIR recommends dealing with air quality impacts by changing the standard the City uses to evaluate the significance of the increased air pollution.

Biological resource discussions are inadequate. Seven acres of tidal marsh/mudflat, three acres of fresh/brackish marsh and 36 acres of open water would be impacted. The EIR does not discuss or show where these impacts would occur. In our analysis, tidal marshes will likely need to be filled to widen Sir Francis Drake and build dwellings, retail space, replacement parking and a public park proposed on the ferry terminal site.

There is no mention of avoiding impacts, which should be the first mitigation considered, only a promise of a minimal 1:1 replacement of wetlands lost, even though the aquatic habitats support endangered species. Clapper Rails are known to inhabit the adjacent tidal marshes. Corte Madera Creek also supports steelhead trout, a special status species.

Where replacement mitigation would take place is not stated. Worse yet, the DEIR also would allow buying credits in a mitigation bank or moving special status species that may be found.

Remillard Pond (along Sir Francis Drake Blvd.) and Miwok Park, which is in a relatively inaccessible area upslope from Remillard, both provide fresh water pond habitat and both are also proposed for improvements. What these “improvements” might be and their potential impacts on the habitat and wildlife, are not addressed. Western pond turtle, a special status



#### 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

species, inhabits Remillard Pond.

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act, project alternatives are presented: the No Project Alternative, which is the current development; a Reduced Residential project which would not locate housing on the Ferry Terminal site, and so would reduce new du's to 620; and a Reduced Project would reduce the new du's to 560. MAS will be asking to have a "reduced project" alternative prepared that will actually reduce the many significant impacts to less than significant levels, if that is possible. Because much of the information provided and many of the current analyses are insufficient to make an informed decision, MAS will also be asking questions about biological impacts.

The Plan would transform the planning area into a dense urban development, impact many or most residents of the county, and have many significant environmental impacts. The people of Larkspur, Corte Madera and the county need to weigh in. The DEIR comment period is the time to provide your input on the adequacy of the EIR either by asking questions and/or providing information that corrects inaccuracies or deficiencies. The way to express your views on the plan itself is as follows:

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Find the DEIR and the Plan on the city's Web site under "documents." Send comments on the Plan and/or on the DEIR to: Neal Toft, City of Larkspur, 400 Magnolia Avenue, Larkspur, CA 949239 or e-mail comments to lk\_planning@cityoflarkspur.org. Comments on the DEIR must be submitted by 5 PM on June 2.

Attend and speak at public hearings. The first hearing on the Draft Station Area Plan and Draft EIR will be on May 22, 6:30 PM at the Hall School Gymnasium, 200 Doherty Drive, Larkspur, CA 94939.

## 72 ACRES IN CORTE MADERA

We applaud the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (District) for finally removing pampas grass from the 72-acre parcel it owns on the Corte Madera Bayfront. This parcel, and some of the uses that are taking place on it, have been the subject of discussion because of a fire last month which was apparently started in a homeless encampment. The parcel, we emphasize, is not suitable for any building, worthy as the cause may be, for dog walking or any other unregulated human activity. It is historic bayland, is surrounded on three sides by the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve, has bay mud soils, supports seasonal wetlands, is in the path of sea level rise, should and will be restored to tidal marsh.

This 72-acre property is historic tidal marsh that was leveed off from the bay by Mr. Muzzi, a previous owner. It was subsequently purchased by the District which used it to dispose of the material dredged for the navigation channel for the ferry. Regulatory agencies, however, have not allowed additional fill to be placed because much of the property is seasonal wetlands. Funds to purchase the property required that it be used to benefit the District.

The District has held onto the property to use as mitigation, not as a public access feature. In fact, the District has a long-standing obligation to restore tidal marsh to compensate for damage the ferry is causing to the marsh. Unfortunately, the highly invasive pampas grass has grown into a forest and unregulated human uses have increased to the detriment of the wildlife and the public.

Representatives of Marin Audubon Society and Marin Baylands Advocates have been meeting with the District in an effort to encourage them to proceed with the marsh restoration. Recently, the District hired consultants to prepare a restoration plan for the property. We expect they will soon begin work developing the restoration design and then move on to restoring the property to tidal marsh and adjacent upland. The project design should also provide for migration of the tidal marsh as sea level rises.

## DECISIONS PROCESS CHANGED FOR MARIN COUNTY TRAILS

The Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD) has announced additional changes to its Road and Trails Management Plan (Plan). The most recent Plan revisions detail a new process for determining which road and trail projects would be implemented.

In the revised process, proposals for trail modifications, maintenance needed, relocation or construction of new trails or other changes, would be solicited from within MCOSD and from the public between August and April each year. A running list of acceptable projects that would be implemented would be maintained and updated annually. Initially, proposals would be screened for consistency with MCOSD goals and policies. Projects that are expected to result in a net reduction of, or no net increase in, biophysical impacts and to enhance visitor experience and safety, would be added to the list. Projects that would result in biophysical impacts would be screened out. A revised integrated list would be made public by October of each year.

The MCOSD expects that each year's list will demonstrate a reduction in the biophysical impacts over the previous year's baselines and that the improvements would generally be spread evenly across preserves. The intent is to reduce adverse impacts in the aggregate over time.

The evaluation criteria no longer mention the only previous requirement: that new trails that are built in Sensitive Resource Areas be offset by a 2:1 decommissioning of existing trails/roads. This change is likely to mean that many miles of trails that were built by cyclists and others will remain in place, which is very troublesome.

The process was presented at an MCOSD workshop in March, at which cyclists continued to complain and demand more trail use. Formal comments on the process will be solicited when the MCOSD releases the complete revised draft plan, in late August.

MAS is considering submitting trail projects. If members have ideas where trails are damaging natural resources and need to be improved, let us know. We could consider working together on possible projects to submit. The MCOSD is encouraging grouping projects together.

## GGNRA PROPOSES LIMITS ON COMMERCIAL DOG WALKING

The Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) announced its intent to establish an interim permit requirement for commercial dog walkers. The interim permit would allow walking four or more dogs with a limit of six on GGNRA lands where dog walking is currently permitted in Marin and San Francisco. The interim permit requirements would remain in effect until a final regulation addressing dog walking and commercial dog walking in GGNRA is finalized, a decision that is expected in 2015. Costs would be \$75 for the application fee with a badge fee of \$300 per person.

The interim proposal would allow permit holders to continue to walk dogs off leash under voice control in areas currently open to voice control. In Marin these areas include: Rodeo Beach North and South, Muir Beach, Homestead, Alta and Orchard Fire Roads, portions of Oakwood Valley, and certain portions of the Marin Headlands Coastal Trail.

There was insufficient time between our notification and the comment deadline for us to inform you in *The Clapper Rail* to comment by the April 14 deadline.

*continued on page 6*

## HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

### MARIN SCHOOL WORKS AT BAHIA

A **HUGE THANKS** goes out to the Marin School of San Rafael for sending thirteen of their high school students and three teachers to Bahia last month to help with the Marin Audubon Stewardship activities.

This group far exceeded our expectations by digging out over 200 invasive Harding grass (*Phalaris aquatic*) plants and preventing the future broadcast of hundreds of thousands of new seeds that would generate more seedlings.

Fewer of these invasive plants will also mean more water for the native plants that we planted in the same area this year.



Photo courtesy of Jude Stalker

**Three of the enthusiastic Marin School volunteers who removed Harding grass at Bahia.**

These students were a pleasure to spend the day with. Their enthusiasm for getting the job done was unbridled and contagious. We look forward to working with them again.

### Conservation

*continued from page 5*

MAS's comments objected to off-leash dog walking in all Marin areas except Rodeo Beach North. This is the only area where we did not oppose off leash dogs in our comments on the Management Plan. We decided that our position on interim uses should not be different from our recommendation for final use. In addition, we recommended that adequate enforcement be ensured and that a program to allow the public to report incidents of non-compliance be maintained. Fees should be raised to develop and maintain these programs, if needed. We also raised the question about how many dogs comply with voice control directions.

### SALMON HABITAT IMPROVEMENTS FOR LAGUNITAS CREEK ON THE WAY

The Regional Water Quality Control Board has initiated a process to improve water quality and spawning conditions for Coho Salmon and Steelhead on Lagunitas Creek. The process involves amending the Board's guiding document, the San Francisco Bay Basin Plan, to establish water quality standards (called total maximum daily load or TMDL) for sediment and related goals to improve fish habitat. The proposed amendment and management actions that would be expected to flow from it would have significant benefits for Coho salmon and steelhead and will be considered by the Regional Board on June 11.

Water Board scientists have determined that the amount of fine grain sediments (clay, sand and silt) and lack of spawning habitat, specifically woody debris, are major limiting factors causing the decline of Coho and Steelhead populations. The proposed Basin Plan amendment

would establish a TMDL for sediments, and numeric targets for sediments and woody debris. An implementation plan presents measures to achieve the TMDL and habitat goals.

Management actions proposed include erosion control projects to reduce sediment and increasing woody debris in the channels through placement of engineered log jams on public lands. Woody debris in streams traps sediments and provides spawning, cover and resting habitat for salmon. Management activities to control sediment focus on reducing sediment from roads.

The project area includes the entire land area and all channels draining into Lagunitas Creek, below Peters and Seeger dams, downstream to the confluence with Olema Creek.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Read the March 2014 Staff Report "Lagunitas Creek Watershed Fine Sediment Reduction and Habitat Enhancement Plan" and the related Environmental review document which can be found on the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board's Web site, [www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay).

Unfortunately, the Water Board deadline for written comments by April 24 was too soon for our newsletter. You may communicate with the Staff contact is: Michael Napolitano, 510/622-2397; [mnapolitano@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:mnapolitano@waterboards.ca.gov)

The Water Board will hold a public hearing on June 11 beginning at approximately 9 AM. Regional Water Quality Control Board, 1515 Clay Street, Oakland, CA 94612

### HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The annuals among the nonnative plants, especially radishes and thistles, are at or near their flowering stage so now is the time to stop their seed production by pulling them or cutting them off. French broom, too, would be forming seeds, but, thanks to our volunteers, there isn't much left at either Bahia or Triangle Marsh. Mulching and weeding our newest plantings would be beneficial. Act locally and join us on a workday. 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.

### VOLUNTEER WORK DAYS

#### Triangle Marsh, Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: May 3, June 7

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

#### Bahia, Novato:

Second Saturdays: May 10, June 14

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

If you would like to help, please contact Bob Hinz at [rbtrhnz@comcast.net](mailto:rbtrhnz@comcast.net) or 415/383-8688.

### THANK YOU TO OUR STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Cristine Albert, Orhan and Can Goksal, Bob Hinz, David and Andy Nakashima, Linda Nicoletto, Flinn Rauck, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, The Marin School

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ned Antell, Janet Arrigotti, Margot Avery, Babine, Peter Bardwick, Linda K. Bell, John Bolton, Diane Castano, Christopher Catchpool, Imok Cha, Karla Clark, Mary A. Cobb, Kathy Anderson & Conrad Knipfel, Wendy Crumrine, Richard Dennes, Richard & Donna Detata, John E. Eichhorst, Jane Fenichel, Ana J. Fernandez, Thomas Friedman, Abe Froman, Ronald R. Funke, Laurence M. Garces, Deborah Koons Garcia, Joanne Gordon, Nancy Gorton, Susan Hanks, Mrs. Gerald Hildebrand, Shirley Holmlund, William Kaul, Iris Kelsch, Marie Lewandowski, Rebecca Maloney, Linda McCann, Barbara McClure, Paula Mierzejewsk, Mia M. Mitchell, Deirdre Moy, Lisa S. Nicholls, Heather A. Nolan, Dolores O'Donoghue, Cynthia Pickett, Richard Plant, Vanessa R. Reed, Eloise Riverra, Mary L. Robinson, Gypsy Spirit, Kelly Starrett, Jacob Stoelting, Dale Thrasher, Janice Tweedy, Cornelia B. Wattle, Monique Winkler, Jane Zich

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS

*In memory of Sophie Caldwell:* Neil & Mimi Burton

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# MARIN BIRDLOG – MARCH - APRIL 2014

By Josiah Clark

The combination of more sun and more rain spurs on spring to new heights. Taller grasses are setting seeds and more wildflowers are in bloom. Ephemeral pools are filled with tadpoles and the ever louder chorus of their fathers. Looking only at Marin, it's hard to tell we are enduring the driest drought in our state's history. Mt. Tam, the rain epicenter of the county, has received some 30-40 inches over the past couple of months alone! Reservoirs and ponds are full, so full that ducks have moved into flooded fields across the county.

Meanwhile many northbound first-of-season songbird migrants are arriving two weeks earlier than most years. Marin's first of season **Hooded Oriole** to be reported arrived on 3/20 in San Rafael (RA). A **Black-throated Gray Warbler** on the Bolinas Fairfax road on 3/27 (DE) was similarly early. Just up the ridge on 3/23 an overwintering **Townsend's Solitaire** continues at Barth's Retreat. Here the Sargent Cypress have hosted single digits of this mountain species for years (JM, SH). After decades of sampling, the nets at Point Blue's Palomarin Field Station captured their first Hooded Oriole this spring, another indication this recent colonist continues to explore.

## Black-throated Gray Warbler

On 4/25 the GGNRA hosted its first ever Bioblitz, charging local birders to throw down some effort in the patches they know better than anyone. Highlights included an immature **Bald Eagle** at Hawk Hill (AF) and a **Swainson's Hawk** at Giacomini Wetlands (TP, RS).

Bolinas Lagoon continues to host **Greater White-fronted Goose**, Eurasian Wigeon by the Webber Fields and west Marin's most reliable pair of **Blue-winged Teal** near Stinson 4/7 (KH). Just offshore from there a pair of **Marbled Murrelets** was coming into breeding plumage on March 15 (KH). **Cinnamon Teal**, usually uncommon on the west side, have been showing up on the coast in larger numbers this spring, but why?

At Las Gallinas the **Great-tailed Grackles** appear to have begun breeding again in the reeds, another recent addition to Marin's changing avifauna. Water levels there are too high for ducks and most appear to have moved north to the shallower waters of Rush Creek.

Observers and Acronyms **AF:** Allen Fish, **DE:** Daniel Edelstein, **JM:** Jeff Miller, **KH:** Keith Hansen, **RA:** Richard Ackley, **RS:** Rusty Scalf, **SH:** Steve Howell, **TP:** Todd Plummer



Photo courtesy of Glenn Tepke, gtepk@pbac.com

## 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 at 415/457-3949.



**Roxanne Grechman** is a second grader at Bacich Elementary School. Roxanne has seen two Bald Eagles in rehab facilities, but she would like to see a healthy Bald Eagle flying free!



**Adrianna Caiazzo** is in kindergarten at St. Rita School. Her favorite bird is the Western Scrub-Jay "because they bury acorns and they're smart to do that."



**Kate Wentzell** is in pre-school at St. Rita School but she passed the kindergarten level Jr. Bird Watcher test by learning 10 birds! She says, "My favorite bird is the American Robin because it has an orange tummy and it comes to my house!"

## Mother's Day Picnic

MAY 11, 2014 ◦ 11 AM TO 3 PM\*

Audubon Canyon Ranch's Volunteer Canyon ◦ 4800 Shoreline Hwy 1, Stinson Beach

### ∞ TICKETS ∞

\$28 for Adults, \$12 for Children 12 and under.

Buy online at [www.marinaudubon.org](http://www.marinaudubon.org)  
or by sending a check payable to MAS to:

**Mary Anne Cowperthwaite**  
141 Oak Avenue  
San Anselmo, CA 94960

\*Volunteer Canyon is open at 11 AM. Lunch is served from 12 to 2 PM.

We encourage all to bring **RE-USABLE PICNIC WARE** and **CARPOOL**. Wheelchair access. Event held rain or shine! To **VOLUNTEER**, please e-mail [volunteercoordinator@marinaudubon.org](mailto:volunteercoordinator@marinaudubon.org).

**DIRECTIONS:** Entrance to ACR's Volunteer Canyon is 2.66 miles north of Stinson Beach. (1/3 mile south of ACR) on Hwy 1.



# THE Clapper Rail

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- May 3      **Stewardship Day**  
Triangle Marsh
- May 4      **Field Trip: Mount Burdell**  
Novato  
*With Lisa Hug*
- May 10     **Stewardship Day**  
Bahia
- May 12     **Mother's Day Picnic**  
Audubon Canyon Ranch
- May 17     **Field Trip: Golden Gate Park**  
San Francisco  
*With Allan Ridley and  
Helen McKenna Ridley*
- May 24     **Field Trip: Muir Woods,  
Redwood Creek and Muir Beach**  
*With Jim White and Bob Battagin*

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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**.

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