



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, NOVEMBER 13 7:30 PM

Tambopata (Peru) Macaw Project

With George Eade



Photo courtesy of George Eade

Blue-crowned Trogon

The Tambopata Research Center (TRC) lies near a riverbank deep inside an eastern Peruvian primary rainforest. It shares its space with a tourist lodge that is famous for its access to abundant wildlife, especially birds. With its location deep within a national park, it provides opportunities to experience a relatively undisturbed Neotropical environment.

In July 2013 Marin resident George Eade spent a month at the TRC as a volunteer research assistant for the Tambopata Macaw Project, gathering data on macaws, parrots, and other wildlife. During his spare time there were many opportunities to explore the forest and enjoy some special Neotropical forest encounters.

George will present images from Tambopata, and discuss some of the habitat changes that are occurring in the Madre de Dios region of Peru.

Come at 7:15 PM for refreshments. The meeting begins at 7:30 PM.

Birds at Risk in Changing Climate

Half of the common bird species on the continental U.S. and Canada are threatened with extinction by global warming if decisive action is not taken to protect habitat and reduce the impact of global warming.” This is the alarming conclusion reached by Audubon scientists after a seven-year study of the impact of climate change on bird populations

The study analyzed more than 40 years of historic climate data and millions of historical bird records from the U.S. Geological Survey, Audubon Christmas Counts, and North America Breeding Bird Surveys to understand the links between where birds live and the climatic conditions necessary to support these habitats. Understanding those links allows scientists to project where birds are likely to be able to survive and not to survive in the future.

Of the 588 species examined in the study, 314 are at risk. Of those, 126 species are at risk of severe declines by 2050, and an additional 188 face the same fate by 2080. Numerous

extinctions are possible if global warming is allowed to erase habitats birds need.

Species were classified according to Climate Sensitivity using data from Christmas Bird Counts and Breeding Bird Atlas surveys as follows: Climate Sensitive Endangered 2 species are at risk at both during nesting and overwintering seasons (see box on page 5 for a list of the Marin species being evaluated); Climate Sensitive Endangered 1 species are at risk during one season; Threatened 2 species are considered climate threatened during both seasons, and Threatened 1 species are climate threatened during just one season. Birds classified as endangered or threatened will lose at least 50% of their current range by the end of the century without aggressive action to reduce the severity of climate change. The difference between threatened and endangered is that threatened species have a chance to make up some of that loss in new areas, but only if they can adapt to those new locations. While some

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Close the Gap Campaign: Purchase Corte Madera Property



Photos courtesy of Gerry Jarocki

An ancient marsh channel that will be connected to the restored acquisition.

We are midway through our campaign to purchase the 5.2-acre parcel at the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. We have secured one-quarter of the needed funds and have a good likelihood of receiving several grants that will bring us to

more than half of the \$1,075,000 needed to purchase the property. So we still have a way to go. We need your support.

MAS has been working for more than 20 years to purchase this parcel. Saving it is critical because of its location and potential for restoration. The property is surrounded on the north, east and south by the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve’s ancient Heerdt Marsh, and it can be restored to tidal marsh habitat connected to historic channels and creating high tide habitat in which the endangered Ridgway’s Rail could hide from predators.

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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
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Nominating	Phil Peterson 828-4780
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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.

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Website: 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.

MAS Volunteer Needs

- Chair for Backyard Bird Program
- Monitors for MAS properties
- Coordinator for volunteers
- Folks with computer skills

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Barbara Salzman

I am thrilled to announce that I have been chosen for the *Pacific Sun's* Heroes of Marin award in the environment category. Thank you to Kathy Lowrey who submitted a nomination for me. The awards dinner will be on Thursday, November 13.

Our Board finished up our planning for next year. We identified as our #1 goal completing the purchase of the Corte Madera parcel, and as other goals increasing the number of field trips we offer and successfully completing the two Supplemental Environmental Projects—see a progress report under Stewardship: Simmons Slough and Bahia on page 6. We will be submitting our Annual Report to National Audubon as required for certification as a chapter which also qualifies us to receive fixed funding that chapters receive in lieu of a split of NAS membership dues.

We are looking forward to a busy coming year. As an organization with no paid staff, MAS relies on the work of our volunteers and the support of members to keep our organization going, to carry out our mission, and to offer you, our members, the opportunities to learn about and enjoy birds and our wonderful natural world.

We have a vacant one-year position on the Board. Contact me by phone (415/924-6057) or through our website if you would like more information about us and the Board position. Our best Board members have an interest and commitment to birds and the natural world.

But you need not be a Board member to help wildlife and native habitats.

In support and furtherance of our mission and Audubon's new Climate Change Campaign, we would like to offer members additional opportunities to help birds survive. We want to initiate a Backyard Habitat Program and are seeking one or more volunteers to develop and implement such a program. We would provide information to help members improve backyard bird habitats in the different Marin County climates.

In addition, we need members to assist us in improving and maintaining the many habitats we own. We want to hear from members interested in working on or adopting one of our properties. Your commitment could be as simple as observing the site and reporting problems or to working with us to improve habitat.

Let me know if you are interested in getting more involved with MAS either as a Board member or off-board volunteer. See the box on the left for other Board needs and opportunities to volunteer to help wildlife.

Fall is always an exciting time when the migratory waterfowl return and shorebirds are all back. We have three Christmas Bird Counts coming up in December; plan ahead to participate in the Southern Marin Count, Pt. Reyes Count or the Cheep Thrills Count in North Marin, or all three.

Corte Madera Ecological Reserve

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Expanding their habitat and removing disturbances and degrading uses will enable the rail population to increase.

The ecological importance of the property is reflected by its inclusion within the boundaries of the Audubon California's "Corte Madera Marshes" Important Bird Area (IBA) (see story on page 4). The Corte Madera Marshes IBA includes all of the lands east of the former RR right-of-way including and extending south from the Heerdt Marsh to San Clemente Creek, and also including MAS's Triangle Marsh.

Campaign Update: Last month the Close the Gap Campaign was highlighted with a successful party given by an all volunteer crew from Marin Baylands Advocates. More than 70 people attended to hear guest speakers Corte Madera Mayor Michael Lappert and Supervisor Steve Kinsey, and many went along on a field trip that was offered to show current conditions and restoration options for the property. MAS

volunteer Jude Stalker created display panels showing the historic and current conditions, threats and our vision for the parcel. We thank food and beverage donors: Whole Foods, Rustic Bakery, Molly Stone's, and Trader Joe's. And a special thank you to major donors at the event: Michael Lappert, Jude Stalker, John and Flinn Rauck, Phyllis Glanis, Larry Gelb, and Diane Furst.

We are also pleased to have received major donations from the Town of Corte Madera and the HRE Foundation during the past month. Thank you also to everyone who either sent a check or donated through PayPal to the Marin Baylands Fund at the Marin Community Foundation during the last month, and to the Marin Conservation League which sent an appeal to its members.

HELP US "CLOSE THE GAP" TODAY

If you have not donated yet, or wish to increase your donation, send a check to MAS, P.O. Box 599, Mill Valley 94942 or donate through PayPal on Marin Audubon's website.

**LAS GALLINAS STORAGE PONDS
SAN RAFAEL**

Thursday, November 6, December 4, 2014
9 AM to 12 PM

With Susan Kelly, Len Blumin and friends

Birders of all levels are welcome on this first Thursday walk. Each month the avian cast of characters will change, 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.

DIRECTIONS: *From Highway 101 take the Smith Ranch Road exit. Go east on Smith Ranch Rd. toward the McInnis Park entrance. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks, staying on Smith Ranch Rd. and go about .5 mi to the end of the road at the Las Gallinas Ponds parking lot. Meet the group by the bridge just past the parking lot. There are rest room facilities only at the parking area.*

**LIMANTOUR BEACH AND ESTERO
POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE**

No. 7, Birding In Marin Series

Saturday, November 15, 2014

8:30 AM to mid-afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Join us for the 7th trip in Jim and Bob's year-long Marin series. We will meet at the Limantour parking lot in the Point Reyes National Seashore where there are restrooms and ample parking. We intend to hike up the beach until we find Snowy Plovers, Brant and the declining White-winged Scoters. We will walk back on the Estero side expecting to see more shorebirds and ducks. After lunch (bring your own) we intend to walk a ways up the Sky Trail to look for fir forest birds.

DIRECTIONS: *Take Sir Frances Drake to Bear Valley Road south of Inverness Park, then take Limantour Road South/West to its end at the parking lot, about 8 miles.*

**LEFT OF THE FAULT: POINT REYES BIG
DAY BLAST**

POINT REYES STATION

Monday, November 17, 2014

7:30 AM to 4 or 5 PM

With Keith Hansen

Join renowned bird artist Keith Hansen for a full, fine-feathered day of late fall birding at Point Reyes. Sometimes thought of as "too late" for fall migrants, November is often an underappreciated time for finding rare birds. We will attempt to see at least 100 species "West of the San Andreas Fault"! We will meet at the Bovine Bakery on A Street in the town of Point Reyes Station at

7:30 AM, where folks can get coffee and a pastry and find rest rooms. From there, we'll carpool to the Outer Point hitting as many of the migrant traps as is possible. Time permitting, we'll increase the list by hitting the Teal Ponds, Heart's Desire Beach, and maybe Bear Valley and Five Brooks.

This is an all-day trip that is not for the faint of heart or those just looking for a leisurely bird walk. Bring a lunch and plenty of liquids. Be dressed for good, to less than good weather. Feel free to bring a scope. Only a big storm will cause us to cancel.

Sign-up is required, as the number of participants is limited. Contact Len Blumin from 9 AM November 1st up to 5 PM on Friday, November 7th if you wish to sign up. E-mail Len at LBlumin@aol.com, or call 415/388-4990. After 5 PM November 7th the trip slots will be filled and the participants notified. Any vacant slots after that will be allotted on a first-come, first-served basis.

ABBOTT'S LAGOON

Saturday, November 22, 2014

9:30 AM to 2 PM

With Carolyn and John Longstreth

Abbott's Lagoon is well-known as a birding hotspot due to the variety of habitats, including coastal scrub, freshwater ponds and wetlands, brackish lagoon, dunes, sandy shoreline and open ocean. We can expect to see waterfowl, herons, raptors, wintering shorebirds, loons, grebes and possibly a few late migrating landbirds. With luck, we might find Virginia Rail, Sora or American Bittern on the upper pond, River Otters on the lower lagoon or alcids beyond the surf. If the adjacent farm field is freshly plowed, there could be some interesting species there as well. We'll walk the 1.5 easy miles to the lower lagoon and another 0.3 mile to the ocean beach.

John and Carolyn have been birding for over 30 years. John, who ran an Audubon Center in Connecticut, is the co-compiler of the Point Reyes Christmas Bird Count and a skilled nature photographer. Carolyn helped organize the Point Reyes Birding & Nature Festival and created two CDs on local birdsong. Carolyn also will tell us about the plants of the area.

Dress in layers; bring hat, sunscreen, lunch and water. Bathrooms are available at the Abbott's Lagoon parking lot.

DIRECTIONS: *Allowing about an hour and a half travel time, from San Rafael follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd (SFDB) to Olema. From Stinson Beach go north on Hwy 1 to Olema. From Olema continue north on Hwy 1 (SFDB), take the second left turn (SFDB West), continue through Inverness, turn right (north) onto Pierce Point Road and keep driving until you come to the Abbott's Lagoon parking lot on the left (west) where our group will gather.*

**CORTE MADERA ECOLOGICAL RESERVE
MAS "CLOSE THE GAP" ACQUISITION
SITE TOUR**

Sunday, November 23, 2014

2 to 5 PM

With Roger Harris and Meryl Sundove

Join Roger, Meryl, and myriads of wintering shorebirds and waterfowl. Here we will see salt marsh that has never been diked and supports three endangered species: Ridgway's (a.k.a. Clapper) Rail, Black Rail, and Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse. Next door is marsh that the Marin Audubon Society restored and—the focus of this visit—the (currently upland) 5.2-acre parcel to be acquired and restored. A level, but perhaps muddy, 3/4-mile walk on levees will take us to the Corte Madera Shorebird Marsh and then the open San Francisco Bay. Environmental educator Meryl and certified wildlife biologist Roger have lived nearly 30 years near this marsh, and Roger is the lead author of its management plan. Bring binoculars and, if you have one, a spotting scope to share. Rain cancels.

DIRECTIONS: *From the north on Hwy 101 in Larkspur, take the Lucky Drive Exit 450A east, pass the Cost Plus Shopping Center, and turn right on Industrial Way, which dead ends in less than 1000 feet at the dirt California Fish and Wildlife Department parking lot, where we will meet. From the south take the Lucky Drive exit and turn left at the frontage road toward Industrial Way.*

**BAHIA, RUSH CREEK AND ROWLAND
AVENUE WETLANDS, NOVATO**

No. 8, Birding In Marin Series

Saturday, December 6, 2014

(**Note:** this is the 1st Saturday in December, not the 3rd because of Christmas Bird Counts)
8:30 to mid-afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Please meet at the foot (east end) of Bugeia Lane (Bahia Drive) in Novato where Marin Audubon is continuing a large restoration project. Shorebirds, ducks, herons, swallows and rails will be reaping the benefits here for years to come. After viewing the birds and the restoration area we intend to walk the trail along the edge of the mixed oak woodland. Next we plan to drive around to the end of Topaz Drive to view the Horseshoe Pond where some diving ducks, including a few Barrow's Goldeneyes, like to winter. During the day we will practice some bird counting to help prepare for the upcoming Christmas Bird Count season. After lunch we will take a look at two nearby areas—Rush Creek and the Rowland Ave wetlands.

DIRECTIONS: *From Hwy 101 in north Novato take the Atherton Avenue exit east about 2 miles, then turn left onto Bugeia Lane, which becomes Bahia Drive, and follow it to the end where there is some street parking. No restrooms available here.*

CONSERVATION

AUDUBON IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

The Important Bird Area (IBA) program was launched by BirdLife International in the 1980s as a way of recognizing hotspots for bird diversity around the world. The program was taken over by Audubon and in 2000 California's IBA program was expanded to better represent the state's biological diversity, and criteria were standardized to ensure the areas identified were truly stand-out locales.

Originally, site selection was based on nominations by local volunteers but eventually California's program consulted local bird experts from agencies, conservation groups and scientific organizations. Dave Shuford, Lynn Stenzel and Gary Page, all then of PRBO, were instrumental in having Marin IBAs designated. For identification as an IBA an area must have more than 10% of California's or 1% of the world's population (breeding or wintering) of one or more sensitive taxa; more than 9% of the population of a sensitive species; 10,000 birds possible on a 1-day count; or more than 5000 waterfowl possible on a 1-day count.

There are six IBAs in Marin County: the waters of **Bolinas Lagoon**, **Outer Pt. Reyes** that includes Outer Point Reyes Peninsula, Drake's Estero, North Beach and Limantour Spit; and **Tomales Bay** in West Marin; and **San Pablo Bay Wetlands**, which encompasses the low-lying areas of north San Rafael and extending east taking in marshes along the Petaluma River east to Mare Island, White's and Dutchman's Sloughs; **Corte Madera Marshes** and **Richardson Bay** in Southern Marin.

Marin Audubon owns properties in each of the three IBA's in East Marin. Our Petaluma Marsh, Bahia and Black Point Properties are all part of the San Pablo Bay Wetlands IBA; Triangle Marsh, adjacent tidelands, a small parcel at the end of Harbor Drive as well as the Ecological Reserve Expansion Parcel we are now working to purchase, are within the Corte Madera Marshes IBA and our parcel at the mouth of Arroyo Corte Madera in Mill Valley is in the Richardson Bay IBA. The only parcels Marin Audubon owns that are not in an IBA are our San Rafael properties: Tiscornia Marsh at the mouth of San Rafael Canal and the recently acquired parcel at Cal Park.

While some IBAs offer excellent opportunities for birding, IBAs are identified because of their importance to birds not to birders. The intent of the IBA program has been described as "to identify special places around California known to be important for birds and to mobilize other like-minded citizens to act in their conservation." Marin Audubon has been doing just that, and we invite you to join us.

WATER BOND MEASURE 1 ON NOVEMBER BALLOT

Proposition 1, the Water Bond Measure on the November ballot, provides for spending \$7,120,000,000 to achieve reliable water supplies, restoration of important species and habitat, and more resilient and sustainably managed water supply projects.

MAS has not had time to thoroughly analyze the measure ourselves, but it is supported by Audubon California, and it appears it would have many environmental benefits. Some other environmental organizations have chosen to remain neutral.

The proposition relies largely on grant programs to accomplish its purposes, and these include projects that would improve water quality and reliability, purchase water rights for fish, provide watershed fishery and ecosystem benefits, and increase water reuse, conservation and recycling projects. It is silent on the twin tunnels, but allows for water conveyance facilities and new below and surface ground storage which could mean new dams and reservoirs. It recognizes that many of the projects will adversely affect natural resources by providing that funds only be used for fishery and ecosystem benefits that are greater than required mitigation measures or compliance obligations. An important environmental benefit is that it provides for funding to purchase water rights for fish. Funding is specifically allocated to the State Coastal Conservancy and other conservancies in the state.

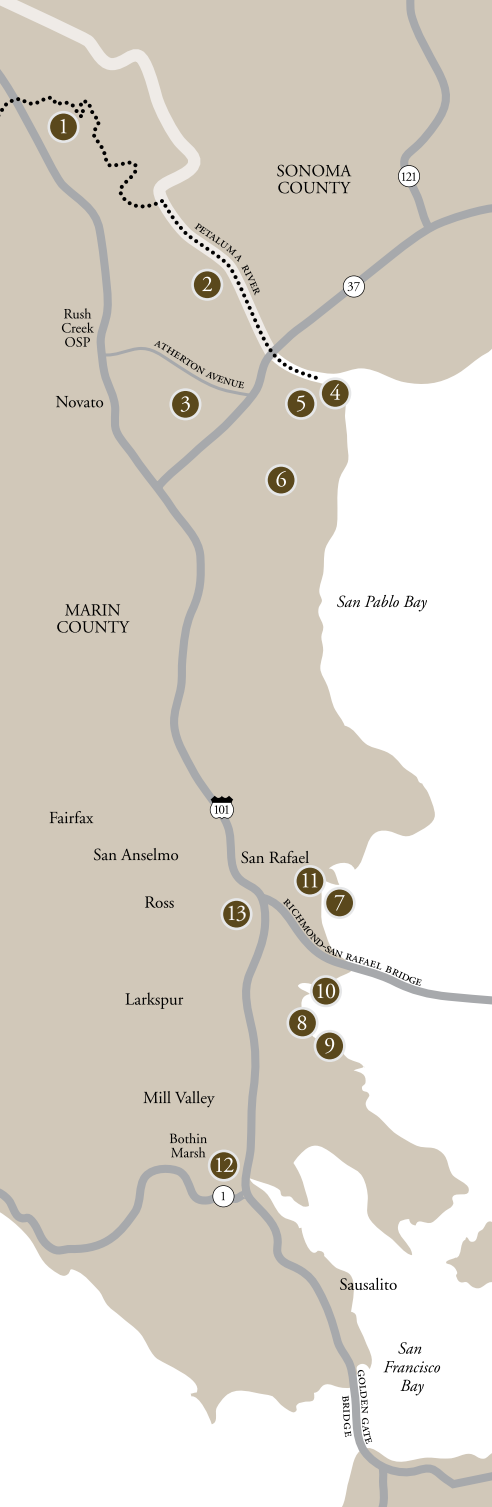
Proposition 1 seems to have something for everybody. There are some areas of concern. Ongoing vigilance would be needed to make sure funds are not spent on environmentally damaging projects.

GOATS DESTROY NATIVE PLANTS

Goats R Us was hired by the city to eat the pampas grass at the Canalways property in San Rafael and were supposed to be confined to where the pampas grass was located, went well beyond the intended area. Either they escaped the fencing that was supposed to confine them or the fencing was moved beyond areas that were approved. They ate gumplant and other wetland vegetation along the drainage channel as well as toyon and coyote bush along the bank beside Home Depot.

MAS supported the plan to use goats based on a map showing the goats would be confined to an area where the highly invasive pampas grass was located. We have advised the city and the fire department of our strong objection to the management of the goats and destruction

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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
13. Cal Park	<1 acre

Birds at Risk

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species will be able to adapt to shifting climates, many of our most iconic and common species will not. For example, species that live on the top of mountains will have nowhere to go.

According to Audubon Chief Scientist Gary Langham "Global warming threatens the basic fabric on which birds—and the rest of us—depend, and we have to act quickly and decisively to avoid catastrophe for them and us." The evidence that our climate is warming is clear. Scientists see it is happening from higher air and ocean temperatures, rising sea levels, and increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Temperatures have risen up to 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit since the 19th Century and they're on track to get worse. Already problems are in evidence. Animals are showing up at different times and different places; some are struggling to find food because insects are hatching and plants are blooming at different times. As climate warms, the spring arrives earlier than it did 30 years ago causing longer growing seasons for some plants and shorter for others, shifting snow melts, and creating mismatches in timing between predator and prey species. Food will not be available at the right time to feed young birds or nourish during migrations.

We won't be able to stop global warming but we can all make personal choices to help birds survive. National Audubon's Climate Initiative recommends steps individuals can take to improve conditions for birds. MAS has been working to save and recreate habitats for most of our 55-year history. Here are some things you can do on your own or with MAS.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Create a bird friendly back yard Healthy birds will be better equipped to face the challenges of a warming world. Make your backyard safe and supportive for birds by converting lawns and landscaping to plants native to your area, not using herbicides and pesticides, letting dead trees stand and keeping cats inside. Native plants provide food and shelter for native wildlife and, once established in the right place, do not need to be watered. So planting native trees, shrubs and grasses not only helps birds survive but also contributes to quality of life for wildlife and people, and saves water.

Speak up for birds and their habitats Talk with your neighbors about the importance of protecting habitats, speak at hearings and write public agencies in support of protecting habitat. Recent opportunities to convey the importance of protecting vegetative habitat to land stewardship agencies include Golden Gate National Recreation Area's Dog Management Plan, Marin County Open Space District's Vegetation Management and Road and Trails Plans, and Marin Municipal Water District Vegetation Management Plan, which will be released in draft for comment soon.

Conserve energy Install energy-efficient appliances, turn off lights in your home, install rooftop solar panels, use less water and drive less.

Work to protect Important Bird Areas and other places that are important for birds Join Marin Audubon in our habitat restoration and enhancement efforts on our properties. We hold volunteer stewardship workdays twice a month, the first Saturday of each month at Triangle Marsh in Corte Madera (contact Bob Hinz) and on the second Saturday at Bahia (contact Jude Stalker). MAS also owns properties at Black Point, Olive and Atherton Avenues in Novato, at the mouth of San Rafael Creek and Arroyo de Corte Madera in Mill Valley. If you would like to work with us to protect or improve bird habitat on one or more of our properties, perhaps one that is near where you live, call Barbara Salzman at 415/924-6057.

MARIN SPECIES EVALUATED

Marin species evaluated to be in the **endangered 2** category are: American Avocet, Willet, Dunlin, California Gull, Merlin, and Red Crossbill; **endangered 1** category species include Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Cinnamon Teal, Greater Scaup, Ring-necked Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, Hooded Merganser, Brown Pelican, Black-crowned Night-heron, Bufflehead, Common Loon, Western Grebe, Clark's Grebe, Eared Grebe, Horned Grebe, Osprey, Golden Eagle, Northern Harrier, Black Oystercatcher, Ruddy Turnstone, Surfbird, Long-billed Curlew, Ring-billed Gull, Western Gull, Herring Gull, Burrowing Owl, Allen's Hummingbird, Western Wood Pewee, Hutton's Vireo, Pygmy Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Varied Thrush, and Hermit Warbler.

Goats Destroy Native Plants

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of native vegetation.

The goats had been hired by the city to eat the pampas grass after there was a fire at a homeless encampment. The Golden Gate

Bridge District followed San Rafael's lead and hired goats to remove pampas grass at their Corte Madera property where there was also a fire at a homeless encampment. We warned the Bridge District to make sure the goats avoid areas of native wetland plants.

2014 Christmas Bird Counts

This year between December 14 and January 5 will be the 115th year of the National Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Counts. It is the longest-running citizen science program in the world. Its long history and wide scope (there are now over 2,300 individual count circles) provide invaluable information about the long-term status of bird populations across North America. The Marin Audubon Society sponsors three counts in Marin County with hundreds of participants. Each covers a 15-mile diameter circle in which teams of volunteers, from novice to expert, count every bird they encounter during the entire day.

For more information about Christmas Bird Counts go to <http://birds.audubon.org/faq/cbc>.

Everyone is encouraged to participate in one or more of Marin's Christmas Bird Counts. Basic information about our local counts follows.

12/18/14 CHEEP THRILLS

This count is centered on Mount Burdell and includes areas in northern San Rafael, all of Novato, a section of western Marin, and some areas of Petaluma.

To sign up, go to <http://cheepthrillscbc.blogspot.com> or contact compiler Susan Kelly at: cheepthrillscbc@yahoo.com. The deadline is December 16.

12/20/14 POINT REYES

The Point Reyes Christmas Bird Count includes a wide variety of habitats in the Point Reyes National Seashore and other areas of western Marin.

For more information and to sign up online go to <http://tgaman.wix.com/prcbc-0726>.

You can contact the compilers, Tom Gaman and John Longstreth, at ptreyescbc@gmail.com.

12/27/14 SOUTHERN MARIN

This count covers areas from Bolinas Lagoon and Tennessee Valley to Tiburon and San Rafael including Mt. Tam.

Sign up online by December 21
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HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

November might be our last chance to remove some nonnative invasive perennial plants before we replace them with additional native plants. The more permanent solution to the invasives is planting native species that can hold territory against the invaders. Harding grass and fennel will be the most prominent of the invaders at this time of year. The method of removal of both species, digging out the roots, requires some tough work that will be a little easier if there has been significant rain to soften the soil. It's a satisfying workday, though, when Harding grass is upside down! 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: November 1, December 6

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

Bahia, Novato:

Second Saturdays: November 8, December 13

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

If you would like to help on either of the volunteer days, please contact Bob Hinz at rbrthnz@comcast.net or 415/383-8688.

THANK YOU TO OUR STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Cristine Albert, Bob Bundy, Dave Chenoweth, Bob Hinz, Mike Molakides, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, Alsion Montessori High School, Fremont (Jennifer Schriber, Bill DeHart, Abhinav Arora, Ali Ashraf, Mark Emmons, Vivek Hatte, Tanvi Kaur, Sachin Sharma, Alyssa Vessel)

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.

Triangle Marsh

Hooray! MAS Board members Phil Peterson, Lowell Sykes and Bob Hinz installed our new sign at the Triangle Marsh overlook. Thanks to the installers, to Flinn Moore Rauck who did the legwork in getting the sign produced, and to the Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission which provided the grant funding to design and produce the sign. We think it looks quite nice—see adjacent photo.

Bahia

Jude Stalker guided another successful volunteer workday at our property at Bahia. The 11 volunteers replaced Driwater gel inserts for 70 plants, watered other plants and placed mulch around the watered plants at the small pond MAS owns at Bahia. How important our volunteers are! This project is funded, through a State Water Board program called the Supplemental Environmental Project program, by the Novato Sanitary District as the result of a wastewater spill into this pond four years ago. Help from volunteers is enabling us to stretch the funding to plant more plants. We have three native species on order for planting in the wet season.

Also, Diana Benner of The Watershed Nursery monitored the thicket plants that have been the target of a special treatment program for the last three years to address problem soils (hard clay) on this east peninsula. The monitoring Nursery found that most of the plants



Photo courtesy of Bob Hinz

Board members Phil Peterson and Lowell Sykes finish the installation of an interpretive sign at Triangle Marsh's overlook.

were doing fine in spite of the dry weather and lack of rain. They were last watered in May.

Simmons Slough

Also funded by Novato Sanitary District funds through the State Board's Supplemental Environmental Project program, we hired a crew from Shelterbelt Builders to remove cocklebur from our Simmons Slough property adjacent to Deer Island. With the Sanitary District's spill on this property four years ago, there was a proliferation of cocklebur, which we have been trying to remove. We planted wetland plants last year and will be planting more this winter.

SEPTEMBER 21 FIELD TRIP

Gulf of the Farallones Marine Sanctuary

With David Wimpfheimer and Alan Hopkins

By Vicky Van Meter



Photo courtesy of David Wimpfheimer

Pink-footed Shearwater

Seas were calm as our group headed out under the Golden Gate Bridge on Captain Jim Robertson's catamaran, the *Outer Limits*. David Wimpfheimer was our guide with the assistance of Alan Hopkins. Highlights of our day included feeding **Brown Pelicans**, **Brandt's Cormorants**,

Common Murres, **Western Gulls**, and **Sooty** and **Black-vented Shearwaters**; schools of small **Ocean Sunfish**; **Blue Shark**; and two **Humpback Whales** and **California Sea Lions** putting on a show. On Sugarloaf we spotted the **Northern Gannet** that has been hanging around for the last two years. This Atlantic bird likely crossed the open water of the melting Arctic.

Moving beyond the islands we saw **Pigeon Guillemots**, a **Black-footed Albatross**, and **Pink-footed Shearwaters**. Hundreds of **By-the-Wind Sailors**, 2-inch, translucent, blue, jellyfish-like animals floated by. Bird life was more sparse than usual, probably because ocean temperatures were unusually warm and cold upwellings are vital to concentrate food. We did see **Rhinoceros** and **Cassin's Auklets** side-by-side, **Parasitic Jaeger** and of course, many gulls. Thanks to David and Alan for a great day.

MARIN BIRDLOG: SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2014

By Josiah Clark



Glenn Topker, gtopker@pbac.com

Fox Sparrow

more true than on outer Pt. Reyes during the south wind and marine layer conditions of fall. These conditions are the “perfect storm” to get birds lost. Birders were there to find them.

Outer Pt. Reyes Fall 2014, whoa, whoa, whoa ... where to begin. Well, perhaps with the more “common vagrant warblers” that we expect in trickles at this time of year. During the second and third week of September things really heated up with multiples of the following found: **Chestnut-sided Warbler, American Redstart, Blackpoll Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Palm Warbler** and **Tennessee Warbler**.

In the less common vagrant category was a single **Prairie Warbler** that appeared to kick around in the lonely trees there for over a month. Also an apparent trio of different flavored **Cape May Warblers**, in different plumages, with multiple observers, finders and photographs taken. A single **Blackburnian Warbler** in this category of “uncommon vagrants” also made a brief visit during this time.

Non-warbler vagrants during this period at outer Pt. Reyes included **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Baltimore Oriole, Gray Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher** and **White-faced Ibis**. (Among the MANY outer Point Reyes observers: MP, ZB, CA, DM, EC, SA, KF, DW, JM, RM, SH, LK, PP, RB)

One of the very rare on 9/28 was a **Connecticut Warbler** at the Fish Docks, found thanks to Yolo Audubon and seen by a few lucky others (NW, EB).

And how many **Philadelphia Vireos** were at the outer point? At least one. It might have been more if it had not been for the diligence of certain Bird Police, making sure to double check photos and keep folks up to snuff on their vireo identification skills 9/20 (MP, ST). A **White-winged Dove** there then was the only one of its kind for the fall around here (ST). Scoping offshore of the point, **Black-vented Shearwaters** were visible dispersing northward as they followed squid spawns and baitfish (LK).

Single **Magnolia Warblers** were found at Pt. Bonita Lighthouse 9/21 (AM) and Pt. Reyes 10/12 (KH).

On 9/18 the Wildlife Gallery in Bolinas had an **Orchard Oriole** and a **Lark Sparrow**. The Pt. Blue Bird-a-thon team found an **Eastern Phoebe** in the fields by Commonweal (IS, GG).

With hot days and north winds driving the big ones out and down, by 9/25 up on Hawk Hill, hawk watchers raked in double digits of **Broad-winged Hawks**, several **Black Swifts, Swainson's Hawks** and at least six **Prairie Falcons**. Rarest and most impressively pulled down was at least one juvenile **Northern Goshawk** (BP, AF, HB and GGRO volunteers).

October is more about sparrows than warblers. Mill Valley bird feeders noticed the first southbound **White-crowned Sparrows** arriving on 9/17, with **Golden-crowned** and **Fox Sparrows** already in by that time for some (MS). Dunphy Park in Sausalito is an under-birded vagrant mill, where two **Clay-colored Sparrows** were better than one and a nice surprise to biking Bird-a-thoners (JC, RF). Another one of these and a **Palm Warbler** were found by swift watchers at McNear Brickyard as they counted over 16,000 **Vaux's Swifts** one evening (TG, ES, RS).

During the week of 9/26 **Western Screech Owl** and **Spotted Owl** were heard in the wee hours of the night near Tam Junction. Both are rare here, representing southern-most occurrences for the county (SP).

Out at Las Gallinas 10/3 were a single **Pectoral Sandpiper** and a **Baird's Sandpiper**. **Great-tailed Grackles** continue as well. One **Greater** and one **Lesser Scaup** there represented among the first of fall returns for the county (JC, RF).

Observers and Acronyms **AF:** Allen Fish, **AM:** Alex Merritt, **BP:** Bob Power, **EB:** Eddie Bartley, **EC:** Everett Clark, **ES:** Emilie Strauss, **MP:** Michael Park, **CA:** Carlo Arreglo, **DM:** Dominik Mosur, **HB:** Herb Brandt, **SA:** Stephanie Arthur, **KF:** Katherine Francone, **DW:** David Wimpfheimer, **JC:** Josiah Clark, **JM:** Jeff Miller, **KH:** Keith Hansen, **MS:** Marjorie Siegel, **NW:** Noreen Weeden, **PP:** Peter Pyle, **RF:** Rob Furrow, **RM:** Ron Mallory, **RS:** Rusty Scalf, **SH:** Steve Howell, **SP:** Steve Phillips, **ST:** Steve Tucker, **TG:** Tom Gardali, **LK:** Logan Kahle, **RB:** Robin Blaney, **ZB:** Zack Baer

Christmas Bird Counts

continued from page 5

by completing the registration form at www.marinaudubon.org/cbc_form.php or contact compilers Ed Nute and Bob Hinz at smcbc.marinaudubon@gmail.com.

If you'd like to contribute to the Christmas Bird Count, but will not be participating in the actual count, please consider volunteering for the Christmas Bird Count Compilation Dinner on Saturday, December 27. We need several volunteers afternoon (4:30 pm) through evening to help organize, oversee, set up, check people in, and clean up.

CBC UPDATES

For more information and updates including details of the post-count dinners, see MAS's CBC Web page at www.marinaudubon.org/christmas-bird-count.php.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Marisela Alvarez, Molly Arthur, Don Asker, Thomas A. Belshe, Michael Bilton, Laurence M. Brauer, Scott L. Caldwell, Susan P. Cane, Bergliot Carlsen, Bill Clarke, Diana Dunlap, Barry & Judy Edgehill, Eileen Feigenberg, Denise Filakosky, Mason Flemming, Neill Fogarty, Robert Garb, Gina M. Glacametti, D. M. Gorin, Patricia L. Hedrick, Thomas Hendrickson, Steve Hewett, Robert Howard, Lani Jerman, Sally K. Lindsey, Virginia McCormick, Shawn McMillan, Donna Messic, Clara L. Miller, Rick Misuraca, Donna Moffat, Robin Moller, Kimberly Moon, Tim Morgan, Bill Papendick, Alison Russell, Cynthia Samson, Nancy Scott, Felicia Silva, Robert H. Spaethling, Amy Strachan, Jean Sward, Peter Tarantino, Judy Watts, Harley White, Pamela Witherspoon

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SAVE THE DATE

- Nov. 1 **Stewardship Day**, Triangle Marsh
- Nov. 8 **Stewardship Day**, Bahia
- Nov. 23 **Field Trip: Corte Madera Ecological Reserve, MAS "Close The Gap" Acquisition Site Tour**
With Roger Harris and Meryl Sundove
- Dec. 6 **Field Trip: Bahia, Rush Creek, and Rowland Avenue Wetlands**
With Jim White and Bob Battagin
- Dec. 10 **Field Trip: Cypress Grove**
With John Kelly (details on website)
- Dec. 12 **Field Trip: Sacramento Refuge**
With John Frisk (details on website)

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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 website 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.

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