



# 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, SEPTEMBER 11 7:30 PM**

**Condors and People: How We Live (or Die) Together**

With Nicole Sault, Ph.D.



Photo courtesy of Nicole Sault, Ph.D.

**Condor mask**

While condors are once again flying over the California countryside, they are still endangered in both North and South America. Throughout the Americas they are threatened by habitat loss, hunting and poisoning. Although condors are revered by many, even admiration can become a threat, as seen in the growing feather trade and capture of condors for ceremonies in Peru. This presentation will provide an anthropological perspective on how a wide variety of people in the Andes view condors: biologists and hunters, conservationists and ranchers, archeologists and herders, historians and village leaders. The goal is to understand their different positions so that we can figure out how best to protect condors for future generations.

**Dr. Nicole Sault** earned her Ph.D. in anthropology from UCLA. She began doing fieldwork in Mexico in 1977, then worked in Costa Rica, and since 2011 has been in the field in Peru where Andean condors have been the focus of her most recent research. She has long been active in conservation and environmental protection, and is a member of Audubon and Green Peace.

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

## Close the Gap in Corte Madera Ecological Reserve – Donate Now



Photos courtesy of Robert Hinz (left) and Barbara Salzman (right)



**LEFT: Existing conditions of non-native grass invasion at the Corte Madera property**  
**RIGHT: What it could become – Triangle Marsh 10 years after restoration**

**H**elp us reach our goal of purchasing this keystone property that is surrounded on the north, south and east by the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve, restoring it to marsh and permanently protecting it as part of the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve.

We've raised one quarter of the funds needed to complete the purchase.

This is the last privately owned parcel east of the levee trail between San Clemente Creek and the Greenbrae Boardwalk. Town of Corte Madera zoning would allow development of office uses. We need your help to save it from that fate.

The parcel is former tidal marsh, first filled in the 1950s and then again in 1984 for a 660,000-square-foot office development. Several plans for housing were also prepared but no applications were submitted. MAS will own the property, restore it to marsh and then transfer title to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for permanent protection as part of the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. The restored marsh and high tide refugia will benefit endangered Ridgway's Rail (formerly California Clapper Rail), Salt Marsh Harvest Mice, and many other species.

We are fortunate to have the support of local organizations. Both the Corte Madera Community Foundation and Marin Conservation League are supporting the acquisition with donations and by mailing to their members asking for support. So please excuse us if you receive multiple  
*continued on page 2*

**Celebrate Our Opportunity to Expand the Ecological Reserve**  
**JOIN US FOR AN ON-SITE PARTY!**  
September 14, 2 to 4 PM  
Meet many of our supporters! Tour the property! See what we have planned for it.  
**Donate Generously Now!**  
There is limited parking at the end of Industrial Way. Another parking lot is nearly as close behind Cost Plus Plaza. Drive to the right around Cost Plus.

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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 Reps	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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**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.

## 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

It's been a very busy summer, especially with our purchase of the property at the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. We've tried for 20 years to purchase this property; now we have the opportunity. Raising the needed \$1,075,000 is a huge job and we appreciate all of the help from Baylands Advocates and donations from supporters. We have a long way to go—we still need about \$600,000. So please be generous.

Can you believe it, the American Ornithologists' Union, the keeper of bird classification, has changed the scientific name of the Clapper Rails found on the West Coast, based on genetic testing done by James Manley of the Moore Lab at Occidental College. The tests found that the western former Clapper Rails are neither Clapper nor King Rails, but three sub-species of a new species, *Rallus obsoletus*. The announcement came at the end of July that the official new name is Ridgway's Rail. Now all the field guides will have to be updated. And what should we call our newsletter? Any ideas?

We are very pleased to announce that we have received another land donation. This

time it is a small seasonal wetland parcel in the Cal Park section of San Rafael. We thank the former owners, Gary, Larry and Francine Hanson for their donation. This brings the number of our properties to 30.

Congratulations to our Volunteer of the Year, Martha Jarocki, for all she does for us. We are so pleased to have her on our Board.

As we begin a new fiscal year, we would like to invite each of our members to give some of your time to working with us to protect our wildlife and habitats. Would you like to join our Board? We have one Board position open for a shorter than usual term that we are interested in filling with someone who can help us attract volunteers. Can you help on one of our properties, perhaps one near your house? How about joining our Conservation Committee? Is there a property near you that needs protecting? We'd love to have you. You may call me (415/924-6057) or e-mail me through our website about your interest. We hope to hear from you soon.

I hope you're all having a wonderful summer.

## Volunteer of the Year – Martha Jarocki



Photo courtesy of Jude Stalker

**Martha Jarocki**

We are pleased to acknowledge Martha Jarocki as our 2013-14 Volunteer of the Year. Martha has been our Publicity Chair for five years now. Her responsibilities include managing our website and taking care of our

other publicity needs. In addition to those responsibilities, she chairs our Annual Mother's Day Picnic at Audubon Canyon Ranch managing all of the many tasks necessary for that successful event. She is always a willing volunteer for many other activities needed to keep our organization running smoothly, such as maintaining habitats, stuffing envelopes and raising funds for habitat acquisitions. And she manages even the most complex tasks with a calm, thoughtful easy-going manner. Martha is truly a valuable member of our Marin Audubon family and we thank her for her contribution.

## Corte Madera Ecological Reserve

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requests for donations. As of our newsletter deadline, we have received grants from seven local foundations and many individual donors.

Contributions can be made in multiple ways:

- Send a check to Marin Audubon Society, P.O. Box 599, Mill Valley CA 94942 or use PayPal through [www.marinaudubon.org/donations.donate\\_now](http://www.marinaudubon.org/donations.donate_now);
- Send a check made out to **Marin Baylands Fund** to: Marin Baylands Advocates, P.O. Box 2598, Mill Valley CA 94942. It will be deposited in the Baylands Fund at the Marin Community Foundation (MCF);

- Through the MCF secure website at [www.marincf.org/giving-ways-to-give-now](http://www.marincf.org/giving-ways-to-give-now); scroll to the Online Donations section at the bottom of the page, open the donation form and type "Marin Baylands Fund" on the first line.

Your donation made in any of these ways will help raise the \$600,000 we need to purchase this special property. The valuation of the property is now \$1,075,000, up as a result an update of the appraisal required by the state for funding.

MAS and Marin Baylands Advocates have been partners in virtually all of our property acquisitions over the last 25 years. MBA maintains the donor fund (Marin Baylands Fund) at the Marin Community Foundation specifically for acquisition of bayland properties.

## 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, September 4 and  
October 2, 2014

9 AM to 12 PM

With Susan Kelly, Len Blumin  
and friends

Susan and Len have graciously agreed to lead our Thursday walks again this year, continuing a tradition started years ago by Bruce Bajema. Birders of all levels are welcome. 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, then go east on Smith Ranch Rd. toward the McInnis Park entrance. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks, stay on Smith Ranch Rd. and go about .5 mile 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.

### CORTE MADERA CREEK

Saturday, September 13, 2014

9 AM to 12 PM

With Rich Cimino and Janet Bodle

Join Rich and Janet for a walk along Corte Madera Creek. Rich has been birding in California for over 40 years and leads tours throughout the west and Alaska. Rich and Janet live on Corte Madera Creek and bird the area daily. The trip is planned to take advantage of the tides in the creek, and we will look for ducks, waders, peeps, sparrows and fall visitors.

**DIRECTIONS:** We will meet at 300 Drakes Landing Rd. in Greenbrae. From Hwy 101 take Sir Francis Drake Blvd. going west and take the first left onto Barry Way (just before the Bon Air Shopping Center). Then go left again onto Drakes Landing Rd. From the parking lot walk under the arch of the 300 building onto the deck by the water. We will walk west from here.

### DRAKES BEACH AND THE FISH DOCKS POINT REYES

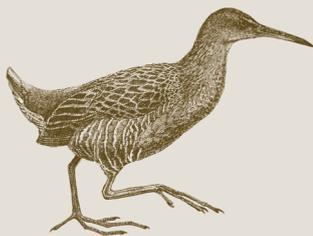
Saturday, September 20, 2014

8:30 AM to mid-afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

September is the most surprising month of birding here as many juvenile birds make their first migration south and west without the aid of Google. Some western migrants such as Nashville, Hermit and Black-throated Gray Warblers may be in the Point Reyes tree islands, and we sometimes see more unusual Eastern species. Drakes Bay also begins to harbor wintering species like Red-necked Grebes, Marbled Murrelets and Loons. We will picnic early and then head over to the Fish Docks and/or the Point Reyes Light House. This is the fifth in Jim and Bob's series of Marin field trips.

**DIRECTIONS:** Meet at the Drakes Beach parking lot near the monument. Take Sir Francis Drake west to Highway 1 in Olema, then take Highway 1 north and turn left onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd. (just after the Marin Sun Farms shop and just before you get to Point Reyes Station). Alternatively, take Novato Blvd. or Lucas Valley Road and Nicasio Valley Road west to Point Reyes-Petaluma Road and follow it to Highway 1. Turn left on Highway 1, head through downtown Point Reyes Station, then turn right after the bridge onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd. through Inverness out to Point Reyes National Seashore. Keep going until you get to the Drakes Beach Road where you'll bear left. Expect about a 35-minute drive from Point Reyes Station to Drakes Beach.



### FARALLON ISLANDS BOAT TRIP DEPART FROM CLIPPER YACHT HARBOR, SAUSALITO

Sunday, September 21, 2014

7:30 AM to 4 PM

With David Wimpfheimer

Check with Vicky Van Meter at Vicky.vanmeter@gmail.com or 415/299-2514 to see if space is still available. An e-mail with trip details will be sent to those who have signed up prior to the trip.

### MONTEREY BAY PELAGIC BIRDING WEEKEND

October 11 – 12, 2014

With Terry Colborn

Terry is leading a weekend birding trip in the Monterey Bay area, October 11-12, for Marin and Yolo Audubon Societies. This 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 over 30 years' experience. Leaders and spotters include Roger Wolfe, Dan Singer, Blake Matheson and Todd Easterla. All four are seasoned, life-long birders and have exceptional knowledge of the status and distribution of California birds. The whale watching is exceptional, too.

Please contact Terry to sign up for this trip at [TLCBirding@gmail.com](mailto:TLCBirding@gmail.com) or by phone at 530/312-9947. The cost for the two days is \$110. Visit [marinaudubon.org](http://marinaudubon.org) for the full trip description and signup details.

# Annual Report for 2013-2014

Marin Audubon Society Statement  
of Financial Position as of June 30, 2014

## ASSETS

Current Assets – Checking Accounts	
Unrestricted Accounts	49,929
Restricted Accounts	185,104
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>235,033</b>
<b>Fixed Assets – Real Estate</b>	<b>3,400,950</b>
<b>Other Assets – Endowment</b>	<b>1,119,772</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$4,591,745</b>

Marin Audubon Society Statement  
of Financial Income and Expense  
July 2013 through June 2014

## INCOME

Donations (cash)	65,187
Events & Activities	9,944
Interest Earned	125
Marin Baylands Advocates Income	11,755
Membership	34,472
<b>Income for Operations</b>	<b>\$121,483</b>

Grant Income for Restoration	75,705
Endowment Investment Earnings	36,737
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$233,925</b>

## EXPENSE

Copy & Printing Services	24,068
Insurance	8,596
Marin Baylands Advocates Expense	12,738
Miscellaneous	4,211
Office Supplies & Expenses	383
Permits & Fees	1,000
Postage & Shipping	4,800
Professional Services	11,473
Program Expenses	8,124
Property Management Expenses	3,117
Property & Sales Taxes	7,427
Rent	667
Website	972
<b>Expenses for Operations</b>	<b>87,594</b>

Wetlands Restoration Construction	94,173
Endowment Advisory Fees	6,582
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$188,349</b>

<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$45,576</b>
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It has been a busy year, as you will see from our activities and accomplishments listed below. We continue to pursue our mission through acquisition and restoration of wetlands, educational activities and advocacy for the protection of habitats.

### PROTECTING HABITAT/PROPERTY

Our exciting opportunity this year is our agreement with the owners to purchase a filled bayland parcel at the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. We are in the process of raising funds to complete the purchase. MAS owns and manages about 500 acres along the bay from Mill Valley to the Sonoma county line.

### HABITAT RESTORATION/ENHANCEMENT

**Supplemental Environmental Projects** This is the second year of funding from the Novato Sanitary District through a Regional Water Quality Control Board program that allows violators to fund environmental improvements. At our Bahia property, we weeded and replaced DriWater® for vegetation we planted last year. For the south end of our Simmons Slough property along Olive Avenue, we hired Shelterbelt Builders to plant 1500 wetland plants.

Our grant from the San Francisco and San Pablo Bays Estuary Partnership funded The Watershed Nursery to create and maintain a special program to address problem soils at Bahia. The grant ended in January so MAS now needs to provide the on-going funding to maintain the thicket plants to ensure they survive. We are pleased to report that the plants are doing quite well.

Volunteers maintained habitats on our properties at the Petaluma Marsh, Bahia and Simmons Slough in unincorporated Novato, and Triangle Marsh in Corte Madera. We also removed acacia trees from the banks of the Arroyo Corte Madera in Mill Valley. Board members Bob Hinz and Jude Stalker conducted monthly volunteer work days at Bahia and Triangle Marsh.

With a grant from the Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission, we purchased materials for a fence and contracted to design and make an interpretive sign for Triangle Marsh. The fence was installed by our volunteers and the sign will be installed soon.

**Properties owned by others** With a grant from the RHE Foundation, we purchased and planted native vegetation at the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. To evaluate why upland vegetation is invading the Redwood High School Marsh (one of our first projects), we had ESA look into the condition of the water control structure we installed 20 years ago. The structure appears to be functioning properly.

### EDUCATION/OUTREACH

MAS sponsored 10 speaker programs focused on bird identification and 31 field trips to locations such as the Farallon Islands and the Delta, as well as many local sites. We published ten editions of our newsletter *The Clapper Rail*. We again offered Meryl Sundove and Roger Harris's popular bird song class and sponsored the Junior Bird Watchers program conducted by Wendy Dreskin.

### SCIENCE

MAS sponsored three Christmas Bird Counts: Southern Marin, Pt. Reyes and Cheep Thrills in Northern Marin, renamed the Rich Stallcup Cheep Thrills Count. We thank our compilers Ed Nute and Bob Hinz, Susan Kelly, and John Longstreth and Tom Gaman.

### PARTNERSHIPS/COLLABORATION

MAS continues to serve as fiscal agent for Marin Baylands Advocates (MBA) that was established 25 years ago and has partnered with us on virtually all of our bayland acquisitions. In many ways, our partnership with MBA makes possible our acquisitions.

*Community Marin* – We continue our partnership with other Marin organizations to implement recommendations in *Community Marin 2013: A Vision for Marin County* for protecting environmental resources.

*MAS on Boards* – MAS is represented on the Water Trail, Audubon Canyon Ranch, San Francisco Estuary Institute, San Francisco Estuary Partnership, the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture representing the Bay Area Audubon chapters, Lagunitas Creek Technical Advisory Committee, and Shoreline Advocates.

### CONSERVATION ADVOCACY ACTIONS/ ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**Drakes Estero** We consistently supported the closure of the Drakes Bay Oyster Company, in accord with the lease agreement, and the return of this estuary to wilderness.

**Greenbrae Interchange** We agreed with the rejection of the Caltrans Interchange design, but we continued to oppose proposals for a 16-foot-wide bay trail and bridge for the Greenbrae Interchange area because of the adverse impacts they would have on Corte Madera Creek and the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve marsh and its endangered species populations.

**Swallow Nests on Petaluma River Bridge** The legal effort, initiated by Madrone Audubon Society and joined by MAS and others, resulted in a successful resolution in which Caltrans agreed to implement protective measures during nesting season. Although reduced in number, there were more than 200 nests at the

Petaluma River Bridge this year and some on the Lakeville Bridge; many fledglings were observed.

**Solar Farm at Greenpoint Nursery** MAS joined with several community organizations in opposing the large solar facility proposed for adjacent to our Simmons Slough property because of potential impacts on our wetlands and wildlife that depend on them. The project was denied by the supervisors.

**Local Coastal Plan** MAS supported recommendations by Marin County and Coastal Commission staff, and we suggested some additional changes that would strengthen protection of natural resources in West Marin. The Commission approved most of the Marin County recommended changes.

**SMART Wetland Mitigation** We conveyed our concern to regulatory agencies about mitigation for wetland impacts and continued to object to the bike/multiuse path along the tracks because of its many potential adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat. We supported SMART using the Mira Monte site (which we tried to purchase five years ago) as mitigation for wetland and endangered species impacts. We visited the site to evaluate the mitigation plan and testified at a SMART Board meeting in support of the plan for Mira Monte.

**Marin County Road and Trails Plan** MAS submitted extensive comments (17 pages) on the deficiencies of this Plan including its failure to identify and address impacts of road and trail uses on habitats and wildlife (including Bahia). We recommended an alternative that focused on protecting biological resources.

**Stream Conservation Ordinance** MAS supported adoption of this ordinance that would regulate streams in county jurisdiction that are not covered by other ordinances. The ordinance is on hold, pending settlement of a suit brought by SPAWN.

**Easton Point:** Our letter about the housing development on this 110-acre property along Paradise Drive in Tiburon repeated concerns we have raised many times during the 20-plus year history of this proposal: that the DEIR provides insufficient information and analyses to support its proposed mitigations which would allow for approval of the project. We also supported the campaign of the Tiburon Open Space Committee to permanently protect this property as natural habitat.

**Scoping for Verizon Facility at Point Reyes** We asked that potential habitat impacts be addressed in the environmental document.

**Mill Valley General Plan** MAS submitted comments advocating including stronger

policies to protect wetlands and to ensure adequate buffer zones around them. Our recommendations were not taken.

**Mill Valley Dog Park** MAS supported fencing the entire park to prevent or discourage dogs from going into the Bay.

**Olompali Mitigation Bank** In our comments to the Army Corps of Engineers on this proposal for the mouth of Black John Slough, we stated our long-standing opposition to mitigation banks because they make it easier to fill wetlands, and gave specific reasons for opposing this bank. Our reasons included that a bank is not needed and that its construction and use would impact adjacent wetlands and prevent the restoration of adjacent lands to marsh in the future.

**SCA Larkspur Dog Park** We supported moving the Larkspur dog park to behind the police station and restoring the current dog park area to tidal marsh as mitigation for impacts of nearby bridge reconstruction projects.

**Napa Crystallizer Plant** We submitted a letter objecting to directing public access into remote areas of tidal marsh.

**ABA 711** We supported this bill which was passed and now requires non-lead ammunition for hunting.

**Farallon Mice Eradication Plan** Our comments on the Draft EIS supported removal of the introduced mice because of their significant adverse impacts on the storm petrel population and the ecosystem of the island. We raised questions about proposed methods and asked for clarifying information.

**Marin County Weed Removal Plan** We raised questions about this proposed grant program that would provide funding for removal of weeds on agricultural lands. The plan has not moved forward due to the need for CEQA review.

**Gross Field EIR** Our comments on the Final EIR raised concerns that an expanded runway would lead to use by more and larger planes and about mitigation for wetland losses.

**Marin County Vegetation Management Plan** Our comments identified issues that were inadequately addressed: the impact of bicycle use on vegetative habitat, failure to address wildlife and habitat impacts, questions about management, and control of weeds.

**Tam Junction** We submitted a letter to the supervisors stating that we do not consider the low-lying filled baylands at Tam Junction to be suitable for development and human habitation.

**Marin Valley Property** Our comments to Novato expressed concern that property they are trying to purchase with Priority Conservation Area funds from ABAG, contains important wetlands that should be protected in perpetuity. The purpose of the purchase is to enable Novato to improve certain facilities at Hamilton by protecting this land in a rather complicated trade with the Federal government.

**Muir Woods Access** After attending several public hearings and having a presentation on the proposal, MAS supported the proposed plan to establish a reservation system to limit access.

**Homestead Valley Plan** Our comments to Marin County requested that policies be added to ensure protection of the Spotted Owls that nest in the Plan Area.

**GGNRA Dog Management Plan DEIS and Commercial Dog Walking Permit** MAS commented to GGNRA and County Supervisors in support of establishing restrictions on unleashed and leashed dogs to protect habitats and wildlife, while allowing a limited area at Rodeo Beach as an off-leash area and certain trails be designated for on-leash dog walking. The DEIS cited extensive scientific studies documenting the impact of dogs on wildlife. We also supported the commercial dog walking permit condition.

**Corte Madera Inn Development Proposal** The Corte Madera Inn owners are back again wanting to expand the motel, fill the pond and the pool, and get rid of the restaurant. MAS's scoping comments requested that information on the habitat, flood control, and water quality benefits of the pond be addressed in the Draft EIR that will be prepared.

**Kayaks Sausalito** We did a site visit and wrote the city of Sausalito objecting to moving the Sea Trek kayak business to a location where the kayak activity, particularly classes, could adversely impact eelgrass. Sea Trek recently announced they are moving to a more environmentally benign location at the Bay Model.

**Lagunitas Creek** We wrote in support of the Regional Water Quality Control Board's proposed limits on, and measures to control, sediments that primarily come from unpaved roads.

**Larkspur Station Area Plan:** Our comments cited many inadequacies in the Draft EIR and opposed this massive plan that would transform the Larkspur Landing Area into a major urban thoroughfare, degrade air quality, increase traffic congestion and have

*continued on page 7*

## HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

There are few upland annual invasive species that are still green in September. Most of them will survive as seeds until winter. Bull thistle and maybe star thistle are two that might not have completed their life cycle. The exceptional exception is *Dittrichia*, aka stinkwort, which is very green and will bloom in September and October. Even Harding grass is looking dry but it is a perennial and, along with fennel, will survive. 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 Saturday: September 6

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

#### Bahia, Novato:

Second Saturday: September 13

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 [rbtrhznz@comcast.net](mailto:rbtrhznz@comcast.net) or 415/383-8688.

### THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Ellen Boesner, Dave Chenoweth, Valerie Chew, Bob Hinz, Sharon McCloskey, Elliott Miller, Lauren Murphy, Linda Nicoletto, Kelly Nguyen, Mygam Nguyen, Ed Nute, Phil Peterson, Flinn, Demetrius & Genevieve Rauck, David Rodriguez, San Rafael Rotary, Anderson Silveira, Jagpal Sran, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, Anton Timms, Maha, Angel & Saltino Ziani

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS

Leslie Ellison (In Memory of Nancy H Helmers), Jane Stevick (In Memory of Sophie Caldwell), Phyllis V. Akers, Thomas & Helen Anawalt, Autodesk Foundation (employee), Robert P Battersby, Katherine Cuneo, Cathy L. Damazio, Donna Detata, Roger Duba, Barbara Dwyer, Tina Edmond, Richard & Joyce Finley, Anice W. Flesh, Mark H. Forney, Keith & Gloria Fraser, Ruth B. Goldstein, Esther Hubbard Buell, Diane Parish & Paul Gelburd, Carl & Donna Gowan, Sallie Griffith, Susan Hamstra, Lillian & Donald Hanahan, John Harrington & Ida Baugh, Margaret Harrington, Elizabeth Huning, Richard Jennings, Mark Lindberg, Helen & William Lindqvist, Virginia & Daniel Mardesich, Robert & Sandra Mauceli, Mrs. E. W. Moews, PG&E Corporation Foundation (matching donation), Ruth & William Pratt, Henry & Barbara Randall, Jordan Rinker, Edith Simonson, Elizabeth B. Small, Pamela & Brewer Stone, Stephen & Britt Thal, United Way of the Bay Area, Ann Williams

### FOR OUR ACQUISITION

Ablin Family Fund, Judith K. Allen, Donald & Renate Bixby, Sarane Bowen, California Alpine Club Foundation, Henry & Glenda Corning, Mary Anne Cowperthwaite, Jim & Drusie Davis, Elaine & Robert Drude, The Endurance Fund, Jane W. Evans, Richard Gale, Lisa Glaser, Joe Lavigne, Dr. James McCurdy, Jean Starkweather, Maria Straatmann & Rick Johnson, Peter & Marie Sullivan, Meryl Sundove, Natu Tuatagaloa, Mary Van Voorhees

## HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

### SIMMONS SLOUGH

This summer we hired Shelterbelt Builders to maintain the area we planted on the south end of our Simmons Slough property. This is the area where the Novato Sanitary District had a spill four years ago. MAS received Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) funding to enhance the affected area under a program of the State Water Resources Control Board. Shelterbelt removed the invasive cocklebur by mowing and by hand weeding around the planted plants to minimize disturbance of the soil. We anticipate that more invasives removal work will have to be done later as cocklebur often resprouts. The wetland plants we planted seem to be doing fine.

At the other SEP site at our Bahia pond, we are using DriWater,<sup>®</sup> a system with tubes



Photo courtesy of Barbara Salzman

### Shelterbelt crew working at Simmons Slough

and packs containing a biodegradable gel that releases moisture as it degrades, to support the plants during the dry summer months. We decided to keep the plants, which were planted two years ago, on the gelpacks because of the drought. Ordinarily we would only use them for one year. Most of the plants are doing well.

## CONSERVATION

### GOOD NEWS!

#### DRAKE'S ESTERO SAVED

In case you haven't heard, the US Supreme Court declined to hear the appeal from Drake's Bay Oyster Company to remain at the estero in spite of their expired lease. A group of restaurant owners are reportedly going to pursue a legal course, but the chances of success seem minimal. Owner Kevin Lunny is still threatening to fight the ruling, although how is certainly unclear. The Environmental Action Committee is asking for letters to the editor of the IJ and Chronicle supporting removal of the facility.

#### LAGUNITAS CREEK

This year's endangered Coho Salmon population is the largest ever recorded. Biologists speculate that the lack of rain may have kept smolts upstream away from predators.

### UPDATES

#### GOATS MUNCH AT CANALWAYS

The city of San Rafael hired a herd of goats from Goats R Us to eat the pampas grass that provided cover for homeless camps. There have been several fires due to homeless encampments this year. Canalways, the diked bayland north of Target, is another property we have had on our "purchase list" for many years.

#### COUNTY APPROVES SOLAR FACILITY

The Marin County Planning Commission approved a solar facility on a former serpentine (asbestos) quarry site at Bowman Canyon in unincorporated Novato. Although the site is disturbed, it is surrounded by agricultural lands with wetlands and a riparian stream corridor, all of which provide habitat.

At the Commission hearing we expressed concern about the lack of data on bird impacts and asked that surveys be required in order

to inform future decisions on such facilities, and that no chemicals be used in washing the panels, which is necessary from time to time to maintain their efficiency. The project was approved with a condition that chemicals not be used and that panels be removed when the facility closes, but with no requirement for surveys of avian impacts.

#### WHALERS POINT

Jack Krystal is back again with an application for a three-story, 72-room hotel on his property (the one with the junk on it) just north of seaplane facility on Richardson Bay. Krystal also requested the right to use adjacent public streets for project parking which, if approved, would give him the ability to have the large-size project he is requesting.

At a July 8 workshop, after extensive public testimony most of which was against the development, the supervisors directed staff to schedule a public hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to deny the request to use public streets and to provide direction to the applicant to reduce the size of his project so that it complies with the Tamalpais Community Plan. Several supervisors commented on the fact that Krystal ignored the advice they gave him at the project's last public hearing five years ago, to reduce the size of the project

#### BLACK POINT

The Marin County Planning Department is updating the Black Point Community Plan. MAS owns 150 acres in the plan area at Olive and Atherton Avenues as well as many small lots, in an area called Grandview Swale. The large seasonal wetland/former tidal marsh that we own already is zoned Open Space. We will ask for the other parcels to be also zoned Open Space.

# MARIN BIRDLOG: JULY - AUGUST 2014

By Josiah Clark



Photo courtesy of Len Blumin

**A California Thrasher was seen on the Carson Ridge field trip.**

Midsummer in Marin is synonymous with the aromas of dry Bay Laurel, redwood duff and dry grass thatch. The golden hills are bleached blonde and all the brittle grass seeds have fallen away. For birds, summer is a slack tide of sorts for migration. With only breeders present, the abundance of birds on the land reflects its carrying capacity and its important role as a source population for both resident and migratory birds.

If birds are thought of as environmental indicators, local breeding birds are surely the best ones. With few birds moving around there is generally little to report in the 'vagrant' category. One species found breeding in Marin this summer 7/4, constituting only the second county record, was **Least Bittern** at Las Gallinas (JH, ND, BD). Smallest of the North American herons, these pint-sized Ciconiiformes attracted onlookers from near and far, with likely 100 or more birders getting to see them. Breeding was first confirmed 7/4 through photographs of downy young (DS). Two adults and three young were the high count. These freshwater marsh obligates likely moved in due to low water levels throughout the state. The species' next nearest breeding locations are in the Delta and Valley.

Also present here during this period were at least 20 **Great-tailed Grackles**, which started breeding in the county only a few years back with just a single pair. Incidentally, marsh breeding grackles help facilitate the breeding of Least Bitterns, acting as "umbrella species", which drive off potential predators. A pair of **Wilson's Phalaropes** was also present for a week or so during the period (LK). Las Gallinas is likely the breeding capital for Marin's few breeding duck species. Parents and young of uncommon breeders included **Ruddy Duck**, **Gadwall**, **Northern Shoveler**, **Cinnamon Teal** and **Common Merganser** (JTC).

Observers and Acronyms **JTC:** Josiah Clark, **ND:** Noah DeLay, **BD:** Brian DeLay, **JH:** Jack Hayden, **LK:** Logan Kahle, **DS:** Dan Singer

## 2013 – 2014 Annual Report

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other adverse impacts including filling wetlands.

**Pt. Reyes Management Plan:** Our scoping comments requested that the Plan address the benefits of elk to the ecosystem and the visitor experience as well as their impacts on ranch facilities.

**Regional Advanced Mitigation Program:** We joined with other regional organizations to express our concerns about this program which has the potential to facilitate the loss of wetlands. We followed up with a meeting with the Coastal Conservancy (CC) and The Nature Conservancy about our concerns, after the CC Board approved funding for the program.

**Binford Road Temporary Storage:** MAS sent letters requesting changes to this application for a use permit for a smaller project than originally proposed. The revised project removed development from peninsulas that extend into the tidal marsh of Black John Slough. There remains an inadequate buffer between the project and tidal marsh.

### THANK YOU FOR CONTRIBUTIONS THIS YEAR

• Marin County Wildlife and Fishery Commission for approving a grant for plants

to be planted on the Central Peninsula at Bahia.

- RHE Foundation for a grant that we used to restore vegetative habitat at the Corte Madera Marsh Ecological Reserve.
- Beverly Bentley who contributed funds to remove the nonnative invasive acacias at The Redwoods.
- Early funders for the purchase of the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve parcel: Corte Madera Community Foundation, Friends of Corte Madera Creek Watershed, Alpine Club Foundation, Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission, Marin County Open Space Trust, Marin Conservation League and the Spring Creek Foundation.
- To all of our Board members and other volunteers who make possible our programs and accomplishments. Especially important to serving you is Mark Forney who maintains our membership list. Other important volunteers are Len Blumin, Susan Kelly, Jim White and Bob Battigan who volunteer their time as field trip leaders, Mary Anne Cowperthwaite who volunteers every year to take reservations at the Mother's Day Picnic, Debbie Ablin, Linda Nicoletto and Bob Bundy, all faithful volunteers at Triangle Marsh.

## 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 website at [www.marinaudubon.org](http://www.marinaudubon.org), or contact Wendy at 415/457-3949.



**Gwen Purnell** will be in first grade at St. Rita's School. She would like to see a Bald Eagle.

**Cooper Kraham** was a second grader at St. Rita School. He would like to see a Peregrine Falcon.



**Hudson Lofrano** will be a third grader at St. Rita School. He would like to see a Bald Eagle and an Osprey fighting over a fish.

**Jonathan Wentzell** was in the second grade at St. Rita School. He would like to be in a boat and see an Osprey diving for a fish.

### VOLUNTEER TO COUNT SWIFTS

Volunteers are needed for an attempt to estimate the world population of Vaux's Swifts this fall migration season. In mid-September tiny transmitters will be placed on six swifts in the Pacific Northwest. Volunteers here will count swifts and look electronically for the tagged swifts at McNear Brick and Block (brickyard) every evening for two weeks beginning about September 10. Three volunteers per night may be needed. If you are interested in helping on some nights, please contact Rusty Scalf ASAP (510/666-9936, 510/495-5837 cell, e-mail [rscalf@sonic.net](mailto:rscalf@sonic.net)).



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## SAVE THE DATE

- Sept. 6     **Stewardship Day**, Triangle Marsh
- Sept. 13   **Stewardship Day**, Bahia
- Sept. 14   **Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Acquisition Party**  
Corte Madera
- Sept. 20   **Field Trip: Drake's Beach and the Fish Docks**  
*With Jim White and Bob Battagin*
- Sept. 25-28 **Monterey Bay Birding Festival**  
<http://montereybaybirding.org/>
- Oct. 18    **Field Trip: Rodeo Lagoon and Pt. Bonita**  
*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 website 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**.

- Enroll me as a Chapter Supporting Member
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