



USFWS

California Condor

The recovery of California Condors from near-extinction is one of the inspiring stories of American conservation. Richard Neidhardt will describe the California Condor Recovery Project's past and present work restoring populations of this iconic raptor. He'll also share his personal experiences working as a volunteer with the condor program at Pinnacles National Park.

Richard Neidhardt was born and raised in South Carolina. He grew up on a lake, obsessed with everything that crawled, hopped, slithered, swam or flew. This obsession has stayed with him throughout his life. After a 40-year career as a construction manager/estimator, Richard retired in 2009 and began volunteering with the Pinnacles condor program in 2010. Richard is a board member of the Pinnacles National Park Foundation and serves as the chair of the Pinnacles Condor Fund. He is also a board member of the Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival.

Marin Audubon will host a follow-up trip to Pinnacles National Park to view the condors. Led by Rusty Scalf, it will take place on Saturday April 14th.



The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Anchor-out Update



Robert Hinz

The two hundred anchor-outs in Richardson Bay have damaged more than fifty acres of valuable eelgrass habitat. A new effort has begun to consider how to deal with the unauthorized boats.

Approximately 100 people attended the Richardson Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) workshop on March 6 to hear a review from RBRA Executive Director, Beth Pollard, of the Opportunities and Challenges report. There was a lively discussion ranging from enforcing existing laws to modifying rules to allow for some permanent liveaboards in the Bay, and then attendees were divided into groups to discuss specific topics.

The new Audubon California San Francisco Bay Program Director, Rebecca Schwartz Lesberg, gave a preliminary overview of the results of a GIS analysis quantifying the damage to eelgrass from the anchor-outs. The data indicates that the damage from the anchors attached to boats is worse than previously known—more than 50 acres have been directly damaged. A 2013 survey found 354 acres of eelgrass. Rebecca reminded the RBRA of the cost of eelgrass restoration, which would range from \$50,000 to \$100,000 per acre, if an entity were found liable. Although the RBRA members seemed receptive to this information, members of the anchor-out community challenged the results and even criticized the survey methods.

There were valuable discussions in the break-out groups. The small-group enforcement

discussion covered debris and derelict boat removal. There were four or five voices supporting the need to remove occupied anchor-out boats, which is more support than usual. Thank you to those supporters of the Bay.

A summary will be produced and discussed at the April 5 hearing date. It still feels like the approach is to attempt to modify or weaken the restrictions on the length of stays required by boats rather to enforce the existing laws.

Marin Audubon continues to be concerned that boats moored in eelgrass beds not only damage the beds themselves, but coverage of the Bay by their permanent mooring makes it impossible for birds that forage in bay waters to use those areas of the beds. The moored boats move on their anchors in circular motion driven by the wind and tides and leave large circular gaps in the eelgrass beds.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

It is important again for folks to attend the upcoming RBRA meeting to speak out. Attend the next meeting on Thursday, April 5, from 5 to 7 PM at Tiburon City Hall. Come and speak up for the birds and wildlife by urging enforcement of existing laws to remove the anchor-outs from the Bay.

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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.

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Property Management	Ed Nute 669-7710
Publicity	Barbara Freitas 924-7477
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.

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Website: www.marinaudubon.org

Members can receive *The Rail* electronically instead of a hard copy by emailing membershipsecretary@marinaudubon.org

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 \$500 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 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

This past month has been busy with many activities focused on sea level rise and dealing with complaints about the aesthetics of our habitat restoration in Corte Madera. I had meetings about our Tiscornia Marsh project with Chris Choo of the county BayWave staff, with the Resilient by Design Bionic Team and with San Rafael's new Community Services Director. I also attended Joint Venture and BCDC meetings focused on sea level rise. See article on page 4. If any of our members want more information about opportunities to engage with others on the topic of sea level rise, let me know.

Some residents of Corte Madera think the new cyclone fence on our Corte Madera property is ugly, and they don't like the berm, either. The purpose of our project is to protect the endangered California Ridgway's Rail and habitat. In addition to providing high tide refugia habitat for Rails, the berm will support vegetation that will be nesting, foraging and cover habitat for other special status species, including San Pablo Song Sparrow and Common Yellowthroat. It's curious that there are no reports of complaints about the maze of cyclone fencing on adjacent property or about the cyclone fence on the south end of the Golden Gate Bridge that visitors have to look right through to see the Bay. Undoubtedly the explanation for the Bridge fencing would be that it is to protect people. Our fence is to protect wildlife and their newly restored habitat.

Our Board has initiated a process in which we will be taking a closer look at our program areas to ensure we understand our history and current practices and are on the same page going forward. At our last meeting we looked at

our conservation and property acquisition. We began acquiring properties in 1999 and, before that, did restoration projects on properties owned by public entities, Marin County Open Space District, California Department of Fish and Game and the Tamalpais Union School District.

We've decided to raise our chapter membership fee to \$35 beginning in July of this year. Raising our dues a modest amount will enable us to be more effective in our conservation, habitat protection and restoration work and bring you more of the programs and field trips you enjoy and learn from. See page 5 for a more complete explanation.

MAS NEEDS YOU!

If you love birds, want to protect them and want to help educate others about them, consider becoming an **MAS Board Member**. Contact a member of the Nominating Committee: Chair Bob Hinz, Lowell Sykes or Susan Kelly.

JOIN US FOR THE NEXT PHASE OF OUR TISCORNIA NATURE-BASED ADAPTATION GRANT

Walking Tour: Meet at the Pickleweed Community Center on Saturday, April 21 from 11 AM to 1 PM

Community Meeting: Meet at Bahia Vista School on Thursday, April 26 from 6 to 8 PM. Hear our engineers present options for addressing sea level rise by modifying the low levee and erosion of the marsh.

CORRECTION: The Tiscornia Marsh public meeting will be on April 26, NOT April 21 as was stated in last month's newsletter.

RETURN OF THE TERNS

REGISTRATION OPENS: MARCH 27, 2018, 8:30 AM

Crab Cove Visitor Center Alameda

Saturday, June 9, 2018
11 AM to 12 PM, 12:15 PM to 1:15 PM, or
1:30 PM to 2:30 PM

With East Bay Regional Parks District

Join with other Marin Audubon members for this special visit sponsored by the East Bay Regional Parks District to a nesting colony of the endangered California Least Terns in Alameda. We will meet at the Crab Cove Visitor Center for a slide show illustrating the tern's long migration journey and fascinating behavior. This will be followed by a bus ride to the proposed Alameda National Wildlife Refuge to view a nest site teeming with several hundred pairs of terns and their chicks. To avoid disturbing the endangered terns, visitors must stay on the bus to view activity. The site is

accessible just once a year with limited space costing \$9 for Alameda County residents or \$11 for non-residents. Experts aboard the bus will interpret bird behavior.

RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED for the bus ride to this tern colony with REGISTRATION OPENING ON March 27, 2018 at 8:30 AM. Three bus tours will be offered—11 AM, 12:15 PM, and 1:30 PM. Marin Audubon members may wish to reserve spaces together on the 11 AM tour but are free to reserve space on any of the three tours. Arrive an hour before the bus ride to view the slide show, then board the bus at 11, 12:15, or 1:30 for the visit to the tern colony. Gather after the tour for a picnic lunch near the visitor center. Reserve your space on this unique tour at: https://apm.activecommunities.com/ebparks/Activity_Search/return-of-the-terns/2018.

MAS FIELD TRIPS

Open to the public

No need to sign up for one-day trips, just join us. Bring lunch, snacks, water, field guide, and binoculars. For information, accessibility, and weather check: Jane Medley, 559/760-1551, janermedley@gmail.com.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE MOST RECENT UPDATES.

THE PONDS AT THE LAS GALLINAS VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT (LGVSD)

San Rafael

Thursday, April 5, 2018

8:30 AM to noon

With Sande and Bob Chilvers

Beginning birders are especially welcome on the first Thursday of each month for a leisurely walk around the Las Gallinas ponds. We will be searching for waterfowl, waders, songbirds, raptors, and shorebirds. With concerns about drought still foremost in our minds, there were no complaints about our March trip being rained out. The Las Gallinas trip is never boring, so perhaps you should think about joining us this month.

We welcome bird enthusiasts of all levels. We all help each other to find and identify the birds, so come assist in our search. You don't even have to arrive on time because we spend the first 30-60 minutes studying the birds around the first pond and the group is easy to find. Heavy rain cancels.

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101, exit at Smith Ranch Rd. Drive east on Smith Ranch Rd toward McInnis Park. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks and drive about 0.5 mile through the LGVSD gates and into the parking lot at the end of the road. Meet the group by the bridge just past the parking lot. There is an outhouse in the parking area for public use or you can use the bathrooms at nearby McInnis Park.

OLOMPALI STATE HISTORIC PARK

Novato

Saturday, April 7, 2018

9 AM to noon

With Rich Cimino and Janet Bodle

Located on the east-facing slopes of 1,558 ft. Mount Burdell, the Olompali State Historic Park was continuously occupied by Coast Miwok from as early as 6000 B.C. until the early 1850s. In addition to its historical significance, the park's oak woodlands and oak savannahs provide important habitats for a rich variety of birds. We will be watching both for resident species as well as any recently arrived spring migrants such as Hooded Oriole, Ash-throated Flycatcher, and Olive-sided Flycatcher. American Kestrel and Barn Owl nest here, and an occasional Golden Eagle soars overhead.

DIRECTIONS: Take Hwy 101 to the Atherton Ave./San Marin Dr. exit in Novato. Head west, crossing over Hwy 101, then turn north onto Redwood Blvd to the park entrance on the west side of the highway. We will meet in the large parking lot. Park day use fee is \$8 per vehicle. **Payment is by credit card only.** There is a portable toilet in the parking lot.

PETALUMA RIVER BOAT TRIP

Departure/return in Petaluma

TRIP FULL – WAITLIST ONLY

Monday, April 9, 2018

8:15 AM to 1:30 PM

With Peter Colasanti

Those confirmed on the trip will receive directions to the Petaluma Turning Basin and other instructions prior to the trip. If you wish to be placed on a wait list, please contact Jane Medley at janermedley@gmail.com. Provide the name, email address, and



phone number for each person interested in participating in this boat trip.

PIPER PARK

Larkspur

Wednesday, April 11, 2018

8:30 to 11:30 AM

With Rich Cimino & Janet Bodle

This morning trip to Piper Park provides an opportunity for local birding during the early days of spring migration. Located in Larkspur on Doherty Drive behind the Larkspur Police Station, Piper Park has a paved trail, making for an easy walk. We'll bird a mix of pine, oaks and ornamental trees, a wet meadow (sports field), and the Corte Madera tidal marsh. Join our group as we search this small urban park for a variety of resident and migratory birds.

DIRECTIONS: From the north, take Hwy 101 and exit at Lucky Dr. Turn left from Fifer Ave to Lucky Dr. and then turn right at the school onto Doherty Dr. Coming from the south, you can exit on Tamalpais Dr., turn right onto Magnolia Ave for one mile, turn right onto Doherty Dr, and look for the park on your left. We will meet on the green area next to the electric car charging stations on the left as you enter the Piper Park parking area.

PINNACLES NATIONAL PARK

San Benito County

Saturday, April 14, 2018

9 AM to mid-afternoon

With Rusty Scalf

If you wish to participate in this field trip, we highly recommend that you attend the Marin Audubon Speaker Series on Thursday evening, April 12 (see page 1), which will feature a presentation by Richard Neidhardt, founder of the Pinnacles Condor Fund, now a part of the Pinnacles National Park Foundation. Richard's evening program will prepare you for our Saturday field trip to be led by his long-time friend Rusty Scalf.

We will begin our day of birding with Rusty at the Pinnacles Visitor Center (east side of the Park) with an hour of birding in the chaparral, riparian and gray pine woodland habitats. The group will then travel to Bear Gulch (possibly by NPS shuttle) where we will hike 1.7 miles one way up the Condor Gulch Trail to the observation area for condor watching and lunch. We cannot guarantee a condor sighting, but the likelihood of seeing one is good, possibly with the assistance of a condor tracker present in the observation area. On our 2016 trip to this area with Rusty, we were lucky to get lengthy close-up views of four condors as well as distant views of four additional condors. Super cool!! We will be hiking through distinctive geological terrain formed by rhyolite volcanism. Geologists as well as birders are invited to join us to see and interpret this unique park feature.

You must be in good hiking shape to participate in this trip. The Condor Gulch Trail is quite steep and involves an elevation gain of approximately 1,100 feet. We will hike approximately 4 – 5 miles total during the day. EACH PERSON IN THE GROUP MUST CARRY PLENTY OF WATER. Also, bring sunscreen, a hat, a lunch, and dress in layers.

DIRECTIONS: Driving time to the Pinnacles from Marin is approximately 2-1/2 to 3 hours. We will enter the park from the east side, south of Hollister. Hwy 25 southward from Hollister is recommended. Go through the town of Hollister and continue about 30 miles to Hwy 146. Turn right on Hwy 146. Turn left into the Pinnacles Campground to check in at the Pinnacles Visitor Center (5000 CA-146, Paicines, CA) where we will meet. The park entrance fee is \$15. You may wish to stay overnight in Gilroy or Hollister the night before. SIGN UP FOR THIS TRIP; contact Jane Medley at janermedley@gmail.com. We will limit the group to 15 people.

MUIR BEACH, REDWOOD CREEK AND SLIDE RANCH

No. 4, Birding in Marin (BIM) Series

Saturday, April 21, 2018

8:30 AM to mid-afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Starting the morning at Muir Beach, we will scan the ocean where we usually find Pigeon Guillemots, Common Murres, Pelagic and Brandt's Cormorants, grebes, loons, and Black Oystercatchers. We will check out the restored riparian area at Muir Beach before birding along Redwood Creek where we hope to hear the beautiful songs of Swainson's Thrushes, Black-headed Grosbeaks and Pacific Wrens, along with Warbling Vireos, Wilson's and Orange-crowned (perhaps even MacGillivray's) Warblers.

Afternoon will find us at the Muir Beach Overlook before heading down to Slide Ranch with hopes of seeing a Wandering Tattler or Surfbird. We plan to walk three miles. Bring bins, scopes, lunch, dress in layers and carpool if possible.

DIRECTIONS: We will meet at the Muir Beach parking lot. From Hwy 101 take the Mill Valley/Hwy 1/Stinson Beach Exit. Follow the signs to Hwy 1 and then to Muir Beach.

INDIAN VALLEY COLLEGE/INDIAN VALLEY OPEN SPACE PRESERVE

Novato

Saturday, April 22, 2018 - Earth Day

9:00 AM to 12:30 PM

With Wendy Dreskin and Lucas Corneliusen

Once a part of the Pacheco family dairy ranch, this 653-acre open space preserve was acquired in 1975. It is mostly oak/bay/madrone woodland with two creeks and a man-made pond.

Join Wendy and youth birder Lucas for an Earth Day hike as we look and listen for spring migrants like Pacific-slope Flycatchers, Warbling Vireos, and Orange-crowned Warblers, as well as singing resident birds. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and be prepared to hike for several miles. YOUTH BIRDERS ARE ESPECIALLY WELCOME! Bring water, lunch, sunscreen, hat, and dress in layers.

DIRECTIONS: Take Hwy 101 to the Ignacio Blvd exit. Go west and follow Ignacio Blvd into the Indian Valley Community College campus. Our hike starts from the athletic field near the police station close to parking lot #3. You will need to purchase a daily \$4 parking permit at a parking permit dispenser, which will accept credit cards and exact change only.

MORE FIELD TRIPS ON PAGE 2

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.

SEA LEVEL RISE ACTIVITIES

This month a UC Berkeley professor's work on subsidence and sea level rise threats to the Bay Area received much attention in the press. Maps were published showing vulnerable areas. Marin County did this last year with the publication of BayWave, a vulnerability assessment that included maps and descriptions of sea level rise (SLR) risks for each community along San Francisco and San Pablo Bays.

The Bay Conservation and Development Commission's "Adapting to Rising Tides" (ART) project has been conducting meetings with interested communities around the Bay to address SLR. The project is based on the immediate need to develop a more comprehensive regional understanding of threats posed by climate change and sea level rise across the Bay Area and identify appropriate adaptation strategies. So far, they have had three meetings, the last one in Novato. They will be meeting every two to three months and reports are accessible online. The ART Bay Area project will conduct a regional vulnerability assessment of the transportation infrastructure, Priority Development Areas and Priority Conservation Areas as identified in the Sustainable Communities Strategy (ABAG's Plan Bay Area), and vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. Learn more at: www.adaptingtorisingtides.org/project/art-bay-area. Join or register for updates here: www.adaptingtorisingtides.org/art-bay-area-working-group-registration.

Sea level rise is also being considered in the Highway 37 discussions primarily as a result of input from the Baylands Group, which consists of landowners (including MAS) organizations and regional scientific and environmental interests. The current focus of the efforts to address the traffic congestion along 37 is no longer on a toll road (although the toll road has not gone away) but is on modifications that can be made in the short term, like a bus route, and roundabouts and realignment of the interchanges to make for more efficient passage, and on alignments that address environmental constraints and sea level rise in the long-term. At the last MTC Workshop with Baylands Group members, the message was heard loud and clear that an alignment that gets 37 out of the baylands to the maximum extent possible needs to be considered.

A sub-committee of the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture has been hard at work producing a White Paper on Sea Level Rise. The White Paper is intended to be used as an advocacy

tool to outline Joint Venture priorities as well as identify agencies and processes for Joint Venture partners to engage. Marin Audubon is a Joint Venture partner.

The Resilient by Design Bionic Team working on San Rafael has been meeting with community members, including MAS and MCL. They presented an array of very conceptual designs that included various options of moving communities and/or businesses around and to higher ground. One alternative had a wider expanse of diked marsh extending into the Bay from our Tiscornia Marsh. They are interested in having information from hydrologists on our Tiscornia Marsh design team (see below).

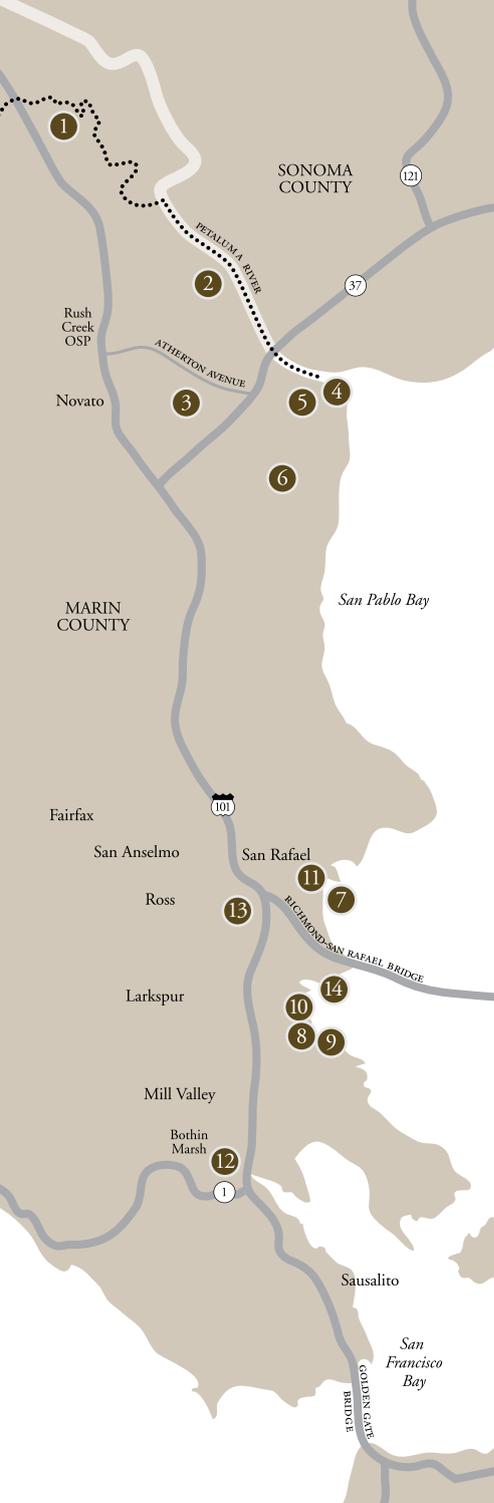
Our own Nature-Based Sea Level Rise Adaptation Grant team has been hard at work. We've met with Brenda Goeden of BCDC, on regulatory implications of our various alternatives and with San Rafael's new Community Services Director, Susan Androdi-Wax, about designs for our levee as it would interface with a tiny city park. Our consultants, Siegel Environmental, is nearing the final version of memos on sediment supply and sources, and ESA is moving along on conceptual design alternatives.

In short, there are many efforts underway. There are undoubtedly some I missed or that are focused on areas other than Marin. As recognized in the Joint Venture White Paper, while there are many efforts underway to address sea level rise and increased flooding, the approach remains fragmented. If you would like more information or to become more involved with sea level rise issues, contact Barbara Salzman.

ANOTHER SPOTTED OWL NEST SITE AT RISK

The latest threat to nest sites for Northern Spotted owls in Marin County is from a private home proposed for a property adjacent to a NSO nest in Larkspur. The owners are proposing to demolish much of the existing structure, construct a new house that is almost twice the size of the existing house, cut down two redwood trees (6 feet 4 inches and 6 feet 9 inches in circumference), possibly damage other redwoods during construction, exceed the allowable floor area ratio and obtain a variance to exceed the parking requirements.

The city staff attempted to address the project as Categorical Exempt under CEQA, apparently not recognizing CEQA Exemption



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
14. Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Expansion Site	5.2 acres

15300.2 “A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to a special circumstance.” The presence of a nest site for a fully protected species certainly qualifies as a special circumstance.

One hearing has been held before the Planning Commission during which MAS

pointed out the CEQA difficulties and that an Initial Study is required. The Commission voted to continue the project to a date uncertain. Commissioners generally seemed to agree that that additional information should be acquired. Following up after the hearing, we learned that the city intends to require an Initial Study be prepared in compliance with CEQA.

How Climate Change is Impacting Local Birds and How We Can Help

By Susan Kelly

Dr. Wendy Schackwitz, Executive Director of Napa-Solano Audubon, recently gave an excellent presentation about birds and climate change to a large audience at our monthly speaker series. She began by providing an overview of the science behind the greenhouse gas effect, then discussed National Audubon’s study, “Birds and Climate Change Report,” and finished by sharing ideas about how we can help birds in our areas. In particular, she discussed the importance of native plants and displayed beautiful photos of native gardens.

Dr. Schackwitz explained that scientists from National Audubon analyzed the observations of thousands of birdwatchers (including Christmas Bird Count data) and information from leading climate scientists and concluded that the message birds are telling is “stark and clear”: about 50% of North American bird species are seriously threatened by climate change. You can read this report at www.audubon.org/climate. With Wendy leading the charge, Napa-Solano Audubon interpreted this study with a focus on California species in four ecoregions: the Central Valley, the Mojave and Sonoran Deserts, the Sierra Nevada, and the California Coast. Entitled “California Birds in a Changing Climate, 170 Species at Risk” you can download this report in PDF format (free of charge) on their website: www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Main/Climate.

Among our most endangered bird species are Burrowing Owls, Swainson’s Hawks, Allen’s Hummingbirds, and Black Oystercatchers. For example, the breeding range of the Allen’s Hummingbird, along the coast of California and Oregon, is quite small and could shrink by 68% by 2050 and 93% by 2080. Unless they can expand into new territories, the species may not make it.

So, what can we do to help? Take action!

- Become a Citizen Scientist
- Reduce your carbon footprint

- Create bird-friendly habitat in your yard.

The average American yard does not provide much for birds to eat; instead, exotic “pest-free” plants dominate the landscaping industry. Yet these habitats are critical for birds and can be improved by replacing non-native plants with native species.

Our native birds have evolved with native plants, and the natives provide both resident and migrating birds what they need, when they need it, all year long. Natives generally require less water and pesticide use, and, perhaps most important of all, they support pollinating insects, often dramatically better than non-natives. Since all but 4% of land birds feed insects to their chicks, this is critical.

Native plants and insects co-evolved over millions of years and 90% of the insects that eat plants can only eat the native plants with which they co-evolved. To illustrate this, Dr. Schackwitz described a scientific study that was done on the East Coast to determine how chickadees used natives vs. non-natives. A chickadee pair brings 390-570 caterpillars to the nest per day, amounting to over 9000 caterpillars over the 16 days from hatching to fledging. The study found that native oaks host over 550 species of caterpillars while Ginkgo, a commonly planted landscaping tree from Asia, supports only 5 species of caterpillars.

Dr. Schackwitz concluded with a discussion of tools that can be helpful in choosing native plants for your area, including National Audubon’s Native Plants Database (www.audubon.org/native-plants). Enter your zip code and email address and you’ll receive a suggested plant list that includes the birds that will be attracted to each plant. Napa Solano Audubon also provides a native plant chooser, along with a list of Bay Area nurseries that specialize in native plants www.napasolanoaudubon.com/Main/NativePlants.

Membership Fee Increase for Chapter-Supporting Members

We want to inform Chapter Supporting Members that we will be increasing our individual annual membership fee from \$25 to \$35 per annum from July 1, 2018 onwards. We do not take this decision lightly. The increase reflects Marin Audubon’s growing expenses of maintaining our programs and properties. The increase will better ensure our continued strong advocacy work including funding for scientific and legal input when needed, enable us to expand our field trip, speaker series and workshops and maintain and restore the land that we own and protect in Marin.

This is Marin Audubon’s first increase in membership fees ever and it will bring our individual Chapter Supporting Membership fees in line with the individual membership fees of the neighboring Golden Gate Audubon and Santa Clara Audubon chapters. However, we will maintain the \$25 individual annual membership fee for seniors (those aged 65 years old and above) and for students (aged 18 years or younger). We are very fortunate that more than fifty percent of current Chapter-Supporting Members already contribute in excess of \$35 in annual membership fees for which we are truly grateful.

Thank you for your past support. Your support for this increase will enable MAS to continue our important habitat protection and restoration work and for furthering our advocacy of birds and wildlife in Marin.

THANKS FOR YOUR DONATIONS

Judy Ardzrooni, Autodesk Foundation, Marjorie Belknap, John Crawford, Leslie Ellison, Fonseca Data Science Inc., Gena Galenski, Google Matching Gifts Program, Elizabeth Graham, Greg Haskins, Valerie Hetherington, Robert & Karen Kustel, William Lary, Mardi Leland, Lincoln Financial Foundation, Inc. (donor match), Rockwell Lowe, Robert & Sandra Mauceli, Sharon McCloskey, Cynthia Meigs, Nancy C. Merritt, Network for Good (donations), Elizabeth Onesto, PG&E Corporation Foundation (donor match), Noah Pollaczek, Retirement Capital Strategies, Sonoma Country Antiques (In memory of E. Judson Weller), The Seelenfreund Family Fund, Cameron Torcassi, United Healthcare Group (donor match), United Way California Capital Region (donor match), Jerald & Sharon Young

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Now that the rainfall situation has greatly improved, the warmer weather that is soon to follow will accelerate the blooming season for many plants, both native and non-native. Radish, mustard and French broom are already blooming, and thistles will start flowering very soon. Pulling them now will be relatively easy. We don't have a big population of broom but old seeds are still germinating to produce some seedlings every year-probably for many years to come.

Act locally and join us on a workday. Come out into the early spring air. Witness restoration firsthand and be a part of it. We all 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. Bring a friend.

VOLUNTEER WORK DAYS

Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: April 7, May 5
Meet at 10 AM on Paradise Drive directly across from the main Ring Mountain trailhead near the Montessori School.

Bahia, Novato:

Monthly workdays are continuing but on a more irregular schedule. If you would like to help, please contact Jude at judestalker@gmail.com.

Invasive *Limonium* Removal, various locations:

For information on the dates and locations to pull invasive *Limonium* from high tide areas, please contact Jude at jstalker@gmail.com.

THANK YOU TO OUR STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Bob Bundy, Katharine Cagney, Dave Chenoweth, Ross Flewelling, Bob Hinz, Jennifer Hitchcock, Gerry & Martha Jarocki, Sandra Marburg, Sharon McCloskey, Lucas Metzger, Flinn Moore Rauck, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, Thomas Ullman, Marla Ulrich, Kenji Yamamoto

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Margaret Baer, Richard DiLuzio, Tamara Fehrenbacher, Valerie Hetherington, Dale Kuhn, Rockwell Lowe, Patricia Mahoney, Cynthia A. Meigs, Kurt Rademacher, Dede Sabbag

BAHIA

On volunteer workdays in February and March Jude Stalker's crews removed Harding Grass and radish. The work of volunteers and hired crews during previous years has been rewarded with a noticeable reduction in this year's radish population.

CORTE MADERA RESERVE SITE

Jude Stalker and volunteer crew began this year's non-native invasive sea lavender (*Limonium ramosissimum*) removal effort at the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. The group consisted of folks from the Greenbrae Boardwalk and students from the Mark Day School in San Rafael. All went well and the group removed several hundred plants from the area that is north and east of the Marin Audubon restoration area.

Some of the invasive plants still remain and another day's work will be needed.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Jude Stalker, judestalker@gmail.com for information on the time and place for the next work day.

TRIANGLE MARSH

On a showery first Saturday of March volunteers persisted long enough to remove weeds, mostly thistles, Harding grass and various other non-native grasses, from the sheet-mulched area where purple needlegrass and yarrow were planted this winter. The substantial March rains will be invaluable in allowing the needlegrass, yarrow and all the other new plantings on MAS's properties to establish themselves before the summer.

Protecting the Corte Madera Restoration

March 19 must have been a slow news day—the IJ chose to print a front-page article about complaints from a few Corte Madera residents about fencing at our Corte Madera marsh restoration project. Yes, we installed a cyclone fence for the specific purpose of keeping people from walking through the formerly well-used western boundary of our property. We needed to ensure this boundary was blocked to the maximum extent possible because for many years people used it to access the Ecological Reserve marsh. They walked their dogs, sometimes on-leash, more often not, and many times allowed their dogs to run through the marsh and after wildlife. People would fly model airplanes and drones, ride bikes, walk and run, set up encampments, and traipse through the site to kiteboard on the Bay. Given its history of access misuse, the restoration area needs a secure fence to best ensure people cannot follow their previous paths, disturb wildlife and destroy habitat.

The purpose of the project is to restore habitat primarily for the endangered Ridgway's Rail. We have created berms on all of our marsh restoration projects at Triangle Marsh, Bahia and Petaluma. Berms serve important purposes. They form a transition zone where endangered rails can hide from predators, buffer impacts from adjacent uses, buffer sea level rise and enable us to use the material excavated from the marsh. The berm will compact and subside over time. According to the UC professor recently quoted in the press, all lands around the bay are subsiding. In time, vegetation will grow and obscure the fence.

To design our projects, we depend on professional engineers and biologists and on granting and permitting agencies experienced with the

needs of wildlife and designing marshes.

But some do not want to wait to see what this property looks like when it matures. They want it to be the way they want, right now, according to their standards. Some want a split-rail fence such as is on the north boundary of the property. With a split-rail fence along the western boundary, the split rails would bisect the view and the fence would be too low to keep people out. Agile folks would just leap over it.

The photo on the front page of the IJ misrepresents the current condition. The fence is not "in your face" as the photo suggests. The photographer and subject had to walk off the SMART-owned trail to stand next to the fence. The fence is actually 50+ feet from the public trail.

We created a viewing area specifically for the public to see the marsh. From this overlook, people have a full, unobstructed, view of the marsh and its wildlife from the north. We are keeping vegetation low so people can see over it.

The project was designed to ensure the most protected habitat for the Ridgway's Rail. This is private property and we purchased it to restore habitat for the rails, not to provide a public park or to please everyone in the community. We would be irresponsible to agency funders and all of our donors, and to the endangered species, if we did not take all steps necessary to protect the evolving habitat.

In time the vegetation will grow up and block access more naturally, as it has at our Triangle Marsh property. Then, we can reevaluate the situation. We cannot let the complaints of a few residents hold sway over the ever more vital task of protecting habitat for Marin's endangered species.

MARIN BIRDLOG: FEBRUARY 2018

By Noah Arthur

To non-birders in coastal California, February may be the duller, rainier, and gloomier month of the year, but for us birders it is populated with such things as northern gulls, ducks, loons, and grebes. This February, the **Arctic Loon** at Abbotts Lagoon continued through the 20th (RS), and some other nice deep-winter waterfowl included a **Long-tailed Duck** and 8-10 **Red-necked Grebes** on Tomales Bay on the 3rd (DW).

Much more unexpected for late winter was a **Palm Warbler** at Las Gallinas on the 8th, likely wintering in the area. The continuing **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** was also still present there (BB).



Greg G. Schechter

Glaucous Gull, first-cycle

Rare gulls aren't often reported in Marin, which (except during herring spawns) is a surprisingly poor gulling area for a coastal county, with no good places to consistently find large numbers of loafing gulls. However, a stunning 1st-cycle **Glaucous Gull** flew by Gull Rock (north of Muir Beach) on a windy Feb. 11th, flying north into the wind with other gulls (DK). It's quite possible that winter gull-watching at points along our outer coast—especially during or just after foul weather, when large numbers of gulls are pushed in close to shore and can be seen flying by at close range—will turn up more rarities.

A very early **Rufous Hummingbird** was caught and banded at the Palomarin Field Station on the 12th (MD).



Andy Reago and Chrissy McLarren

Rufous Hummingbird

Two more waterfowl rarities were a **Redhead** on Corte Madera Creek on the 13th (LS), and an even rarer female **Tufted Duck** at China Camp State Park on the 14th, seen along with modest numbers of **Greater** and **Lesser Scaup** and thousands of **Canvasback** (LH, JM). Another **Long-tailed Duck** was off Rodeo Beach in the Marin Headlands on the 22nd (WL).

Observers and Acronyms **BB**: Bob Battagin, **DE**: Durrell Kaplan, **DS**: David Sexton, **DW**: David Wimpfheimer, **EC**: Everett Clark, **JM**: Janet McGarry, **LH**: Lisa Hug, **LS**: Langdon Stevenson, **WL**: William Legge

MARCH 10 FIELD TRIP

Bodega Bay

By Gene Hunn

On March 10 a dozen or so birders joined me for a field trip around Bodega Bay. The weather was excellent for birding, cool with a low overcast.

Highlights included a number of species developing their fancy alternate plumage, including **Common Loons**, **Horned, Red-necked**, and **Eared Grebes**, and **Pelagic** and **Brandt's Cormorants**. We spotted our first of season **Pigeon Guillemots** off Bodega Head, several pairs in alternate plumage. Search as we might we could not locate the Rock Sandpiper there, but we did study several **Surfbirds** at close range, enjoyed the **Black Oystercatcher** performance, and watched a pair of **Peregrine Falcons** patrolling the cliffs.



Miles Triffitt

Ruddy Turnstone

We found eight **Snowy Plovers** on the outer beach at Doran and three **Ruddy Turnstones** at The Tides (with a single **Spotted Sandpiper**). A male **Allen's Hummingbird** performed his pendulum display for us at the Rail Ponds. A lone male **Cinnamon Teal** at the entrance ponds at the base of Doran Spit was somewhat unusual at this location.

Birding in Marin Turns Five

By Jim White

Birding in Marin, Marin Audubon's monthly local birding field trip series led by Bob Battagin and me, entered its fifth season with our usual, modest goal of finding and sharing 200 species. In our first four years, we have witnessed an astonishing total of 240 species! We try to point out the distinguishing features and get everyone a view of each species. We hope that our larger goals of sharing the beauty and diversity of nature to inspire caring for our planet have been as successful.

We visit many of the exceptional parks and preserves in Marin throughout the seasons. Many fine folks, ranging from beginning to advanced birders, join us, and we have had the pleasure of the company of several youngsters on some trips. If you care to join us, we meet at 8:30 AM on the third Saturday of each month. We usually bird until mid-afternoon (Staying for the entire trip is not mandatory).

Mark your calendar now with the dates and destinations for remaining 2018 BIM trips.

2018 Birding in Marin Schedule with Jim and Bob

04/21	Muir Beach, Redwood Creek, Slide Ranch
05/19	Mount Burdell, Stafford Lake or Rush Creek
06/16	Five Brooks/Bear Valley
07/21	Big Rock/Las Gallinas
08/18	Limantour/Muddy Hollow
09/15	Drakes Beach/Fish Docks/Outer Point Reyes
10/20	Abbotts Lagoon
11/17	Las Gallinas/Hamilton Wetlands
12/01	Bahia/Rush Creek (early date due to CBCs)



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- May 3 **Field Trip:** Las Gallinas
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With Matt Perry
- May 6 **Field Trip:** King Ridge Road
With Jeff Miller
- May 10 **Field Trip:** Bird Songs at Five Brooks
With Lisa Hug
- May 12 **Field Trip:** Pine Flat Road
With Lisa Hug
- May 13 Mother's Day Picnic at Martin Griffin Preserve
With Marin Audubon Society
- May 14 **Field Trip:** Marin Art & Garden Center
With Meryl Sundove & Roger Harris
- May 17 **Field Trip:** Bird Songs at Big Rock
With Lisa Hug

Check website for updates and details

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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. We receive a fixed amount based on our 2001 membership. MAS relies on local support for our habitat protection efforts, conservation advocacy, birding field trips, educational speakers series, and publication of *The Rail*. 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 because all of your chapter-supporting dues stay with MAS.

If you're 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 chapters. With this joint membership, you receive our newsletter and other chapter benefits. However, MAS receives no portion of your National Audubon Membership dues.

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