



The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

The Farallon Institute



Northern Gannets, a species of the open ocean

“State of the Ocean” science talks are informational and inspirational presentations on the latest scientific understanding of the ocean. The talk will cover pertinent and timely topics of ocean issues that are both of global interest and that directly impact our northern California waters. Globally, we will explore the impact of plastic in the oceans and the myriad of ways that climate change is changing ocean ecosystems. Regionally, we will understand how current and past ocean conditions have led us to local fishery closures and explore what kind of ocean ecosystem we can expect in the future.

Dr. Jeffrey Dorman is a Principal Scientist and the Executive Director of the Farallon Institute. Jeff’s research interests center around biological productivity of the California Current and how climate changes might impact future productivity. Much of that work has been focused on understanding the importance of krill in the California Current and discovering what drives changes in their populations.

Farallon Institute is a non-profit scientific organization dedicated to the understanding and preservation of healthy marine ecosystems. Its research is designed to provide the scientific basis for ecosystem-based management practices and policy reforms consistent with a productive marine world.

More information can be found at www.faralloninstitute.org.

Native Tule Elk or Domestic Cattle?



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Native Tule Elk are not welcomed by ranchers whose cattle operations occupy thirty percent of the area of Point Reyes National Seashore.



Rita Raj, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/us/>

HR 6687, introduced by Congressmen Huffman and Robert Bishop (R-Utah), directs the National Park Service to keep Tule Elk away from ranches and to extend 20-year leases to dairies and ranches. “In areas of agricultural property where Tule Elk present conflicts with working dairies or ranches, the Secretary shall manage the Tule Elk for separation from the working ranches or dairies, to minimize the conflicts and prevent establishment of new Tule herds on agricultural property. To minimize the conflicts and prevent establishment of new Tule Elk herds on agricultural property, the Secretary may work with Indian tribes to relocate and establish Tule Elk on tribal lands, partner in hunting Tule Elk on a subsistence or ceremonial basis or other suitable partnerships and activities.”

The National Park Service is currently undertaking a General Management Plan amendment for the Seashore and North District of GGNRA. The major focus is management of the number of Tule Elk some of which have been moving onto ranch lands, damaging fences and eating grasses their

cattle eat. The Management Plan planning process would necessarily include preparing an Environmental Impact Statement the purpose of which is to provide independent environmental review that discloses descriptions of the park resources, impacts of the elk, and alternatives to address impacts to decision-makers and the public.

Instead HR 6687 guarantees 20-year leases no matter what the EIS process reveals in terms of potential environmental damage or management alternatives that could better protect natural resources such as streams, wetlands and wildlife. It states “The Secretary is directed to complete a General Plan Amendment ... Environmental Impact Statement and upon completion issue leases and special use permits of 20 years for working dairies.” An amendment states “nothing in this act requires the Secretary to issue general use permits where there are no willing lessees, or to a previous lessee who has abandoned or discontinued ranching.” These are the only reasons the leases can be terminated. This

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

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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

Title to the 2.6 acres at Black Point, for which we have been raising funds, was transferred to Marin Audubon on October 3, 2018. This brings the number of parcels we own at Black Point to 17. Several of the parcels have been combined to reduce our parcel taxes. Although the Black Point parcels are small we are gradually increasing our holdings thereby directly protecting habitat on the properties and limiting development of adjacent parcels. Black Point has a topography like Bahia with wooded hills that form coves. The lowlands between the coves are now seasonal wetlands because the tides have been blocked by levees. At Bahia the levees were lowered and breached 10 years ago to allow the tides to return.

This month is the first anniversary of the Sonoma County fires. As the human residents rebuild, more information is coming forward about the importance of leaving the burned areas undisturbed. Fire releases seeds of some plants creating new life in the forests. Many burned trees may not be dead and those that are dead attract insects that provide food for birds and provide nesting and shelter cavities for birds and mammals. Nature is resilient if left alone.

The destructive hurricanes on the East Coast are causing horrendous damage consistent with climate change. Whether the West Coast will have a dry or wet winter we will find out soon enough. A recent scientific publication warned of the dangers of climate change if more aggressive action is not taken soon. According to the scientists, we have 10 years to make changes, and many countries and the state of California are dedicated to reducing

our impacts. There are many things we can do as individuals to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, even though the federal government is not acting. As examples, we can eat less meat or give up meat altogether to reduce methane production, use less water which takes energy to treat and deliver, or drive energy-efficient cars. MAS continues to work through our advocacy, education, habitat enhancement and restoration projects on our properties to address climate change. Vegetation not only provides habitat for wildlife but it enhances air quality by releasing oxygen and addresses climate change by sequestering carbon, benefitting both people and wildlife. We encourage you to join us to help enhance a habitat. We have habitats in Novato and south in Corte Madera and Mill Valley that would benefit from your care and stewardship. Call Barbara Salzman or Jude Stalker.

We are honored and grateful to have been remembered in the wills of Margot Brogger Richardson and the Nena Lyon Family Trust. Making Marin Audubon a beneficiary in your will is a thoughtful and easy way to ensure our environmental work continues, our habitats are cared for and wildlife supported. Your bequest will leave a legacy of enhanced habitats to support future generations of wildlife and people to enjoy.

The Christmas counts will be here before you know it. Mark your calendars (see page 7) and join us on one of the counts. Participate!

Also look for your End-of-Year appeal letter arriving the end of November or early December. Your generous gift will help to keep us operating.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY BOAT TRIP

Departs from Berkeley Marina

Sunday, November 18, 2018

9 AM to 4 PM

Registration begins October 1, 2018

With John Klobas and Sarah Brooks

The San Francisco Bay complex comprises one of the largest and most important estuaries along the Pacific flyway. It is located in our backyard, but remains somewhat unvisited. From a new perspective on the water our appreciation of the dynamics of the bay can change dramatically in the course of a day. Join John Klobas and his daughter Sarah Brooks for a memorable day as we cruise the bay with Ronn Patterson of Dolphin Charters in search of natural and cultural history, birds, and marine mammals.

Fall is the season of mild weather and calm water on the bay as we cruise by ten islands, under two bridges, and up two creeks in four

counties in search of migrating and resident waterfowl, water and shore birds, and marine mammals that call the bay's habitats home. For a complete description of all the bay landmarks we'll be cruising past, read the online trip description at <http://marinaudubon.org/events-field-trips.php>.

The cost will be \$110 per person for Marin Audubon Chapter-Supporting Members and \$145 for all others. Registration will be limited to 25 people. If you are not yet a Marin Audubon Chapter-Supporting Member, please sign up now at www.marinaudubon.org to enjoy the reduced cost of this trip. Include the name, email address, and phone number of each participant. We recommend that you sign up for this trip ASAP as our boat trips usually sell out quickly. Those confirmed on the trip will receive directions to the Berkeley Marina and other instructions prior to the trip.

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, November 1, 2018

8:30 AM to noon

With Bob and Sande Chilvers

Beginning birders are especially welcome on the first Thursday of each month for a leisurely walk around the Las Gallinas ponds. Join our skilled leaders as we search for waterfowl, waders, songbirds, shorebirds, and raptors. Recent unexpected migrants seen by many birders at the ponds included **Sage Thrasher** and **Vesper Sparrow**!

Wintering waterfowl expected to arrive in the next few weeks will add to our enjoyment of this fall walk.

We welcome bird enthusiasts of all levels. We all help each other to find and identify the birds, so come assist in our search.

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.

RODEO LAGOON PART 2, Marin Headlands

Saturday, November 3, 2018

7:30 AM to noon

With William Legge and David Wiechers

Back by popular demand, William and David are offering another morning of fall birding at Rodeo Lagoon. This is their "patch" where we observed 58 species on our September walk. Since then, the area has been visited by several surprising vagrants including an **Eastern Yellow Wagtail**!! With large numbers of birds moving through the area this time of year, unusual sightings are a definite possibility. We will be targeting scarcer late fall migrants. Join us for a Sea Watch at 7:30 AM or arrive later at 8:30 AM for a circuit of the lagoon.

DIRECTIONS: Head south on Hwy 101 and take the last Sausalito exit just before the Golden Gate Bridge. At the exit stop sign, turn right and go under the freeway, then follow the road down to the left. Within 300 feet turn left at the sign to the Marin Headlands (This is the only available left turn before you begin the descent into Sausalito). You should see the tunnel with the five-minute light. Proceed through the tunnel on Bunker Rd. to the Rodeo Lagoon Parking Lot at the end and meet by the bridge over the channel to the beach.

CONSUMNES RIVER PRESERVE, Galt

Saturday, November 10, 2018

1 to 5:30 PM

With Kurt Rademacher

At the junction of the Great Central Valley and the Delta, the Cosumnes River Preserve is a 46,000-acre conservation project acquired and jointly managed through the collaboration of a number of conservation organizations and agencies. Here, the last undammed river on the west slope of the Sierra still routinely floods up in winter, fostering bountiful habitats of wetlands, savannah and riparian forest for wintering waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds and raptors. **Greater** and **Lesser**

Sandhill Cranes are a highlight of our tour, and we'll end up at Staten Island for sundown to witness the spectacle of some 15% of the Pacific Flyway's cranes noisily settling down for their nightly roost.

DIRECTIONS: We'll meet at the Cosumnes River Preserve Visitor Center **parking lot** at 13501 Franklin Blvd, Galt, CA. Allow about two hours from Central Marin via Hwys 37, 80 and 12 through Rio Vista to I-5, then north 12 miles to Twin Cities Road exit. (Or you can take I-80 to Sacramento, then south on I-5 to Twin Cities Road exit.) On Twin Cities Rd. proceed east briefly to turn right (S) on Franklin Rd. about one mile to the parking area. You are welcome to come earlier and enjoy your lunch on the Visitor Center veranda. After a briefing at 1 PM, we'll enjoy a 1-mile loop hike on a trail and boardwalk, then drive to other key observation points on the preserve ending up at Staten Island. Come prepared with warm clothing for changeable weather including rain and mud for "Crane-down."

MARTA'S MARSH, Corte Madera

Sunday, November 11, 2018

9 to 11:30 AM

With Mark Schulist & Derek Lecy

Marta's Marsh hosts a wide variety of bird species and provides great viewing opportunities. Typically, shorebirds, ducks, gulls, terns, and some of Marin's only endangered **Ridgway's Rails** can be seen at this Marin birding hotspot. Join our leaders, young birder Mark Schulist and experienced birder and educator Derek Lecy, as we take a short walk alongside San Clemente Creek to the creek mouth where it then enters the bay. We will time our walk to put us at the creek mouth a few hours after low tide, as the incoming tide causes sandpipers, gulls, and ducks to fly from the bay mudflats to the high tide refuge at Marta's Marsh. As we walk, we will listen for rails as well as any other migrants that we may run into. The fennel patches and grassy areas surrounding the marsh can also be productive for a variety of sparrow and warbler species. At the mouth of the creek we will scope the bay looking for ducks like **Lesser** and **Greater Scaup**, **Bufflehead**, **Wigeon**, and possibly **Canvasback** or **Redhead**.

Heavy rain cancels. Bring binoculars and, if you have one, a spotting scope. There are no restroom facilities in the marsh.

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101, take Exit 449A at Tamalpais Dr. in Corte Madera; go east 0.2 mile toward the bay; turn right at the Home Consignment Store and go 0.4 mile on San Clemente Dr.; make the first left onto Harbor Dr. for 0.2 mile; turn right onto Yolo St. for 400 feet. Then turn left onto Channel Dr. We will meet where the road dead ends at the marsh.

POINT ISABEL TO MEEKER SLOUGH Richmond

Tuesday, November 13, 2018

9:45 AM to 1 PM

With Cathy Bleier

Join members of both Marin Audubon and Golden Gate Audubon for this walk of 2.5 to 3 miles along the east Bay Trail shoreline (paved and flat) on a rising tide from 3.5 to 5 feet. Our guide, Cathy Bleier of GGAS, will lead us along bay shoreline, tidal marshes

and sloughs, looking for ducks, shorebirds, passerines, raptors, and **Ridgway's Rail** if we're lucky. Ebird bar chart of observed species is at <https://ebird.org/barchart?r=L1415714&yr=all&m=>.

Dress for the weather and bring binoculars and water. Heavy rain cancels. Feel free to call or email any questions to Cathy at 510/527-2327 or csbleier@sbcglobal.net

DIRECTIONS: Take the Central Ave. exit west off Hwy 580, turn north on Rydin Rd. and go to end of street: <https://goo.gl/maps/1dAQxT1dNpq>. Park in parking lot next to dog park or along the street. The lot fills up, so carpooling is helpful. We'll meet at the restroom where Rydin ends at the dog park. **Please give yourself extra time to negotiate commute traffic; it has been very heavy.**

LAS GALLINAS STORAGE PONDS AND HAMILTON WETLANDS

No. 11, Birding in Marin Series

Saturday, November 17, 2018

8:30 AM to 3 PM

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

The Las Gallinas ponds are a great place for good views of many kinds of ducks and raptors. This is an easy 1.5-mile walk where many other species may be seen, including **Sora** and **Ridgway's Rail**. After a lunch break we will go to the Hamilton Wetlands in Novato. This extensive wetland was recently reconnected with the Bay after two decades of planning and work, and the birds have repopulated the area in big numbers. We will see the waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and other species that have made these new wetlands their home.

DIRECTIONS: We will meet at Las Gallinas. From Hwy 101, take the Smith Ranch Rd. exit east toward McInnis Park. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks and continue about 0.5 mile to the Las Gallinas Ponds parking lot at the end of the road.

HAMILTON WETLANDS, Novato

Thursday, November 29, 2018

8 AM to noon

With David Sexton and Bill Jones

In our annual trip to this fabulously restored habitat, Hamilton Wetlands Volunteers, David and Bill, will lead us to view the wetlands and celebrate the return of shorebirds to this former flight line and landing strip. The trip will start with a stop at the nursery where Nursery and Restoration Manager, Christina McWhorter, will give a brief update on the restoration and replanting progress after which our group will be allowed to visit several portions of the wetlands not usually accessible to the public.

Our outing will cover both the east side and the southwest sides of the wetlands as we search for early returning shorebirds and ducks.

DIRECTIONS: The outing will start at the Novato Skate Park at 1200 Hamilton Pwy. Take Exit 459 from Hwy 101 toward Ignacio Blvd, Bel Marin Keys Blvd. Turn right on Nave Dr., then left onto North Hamilton Pkwy. for about 0.25 mile. The skate park is on the left. We will carpool from there. We will finish at the south end of the wetlands at noon with parking at the pool and ball fields on Hangar Ave.

CONSERVATION

Point Reyes

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pretty much guarantees extending repeated leases for all park lands in agriculture. It is unlikely that *no willing* lessees would be found. The bill allows transfer of leases from the intergenerational succession now occurring to anyone wishing to lease to continue agriculture of any sort.

HR 6687 legislates continued ranching regardless of the condition of the land or the need for ranches. There are no references to managing the land in a manner that does not adversely impact the natural environment. The need to keep a basic number of ranches for the dairy industry to be viable is often cited as a reason not to lose any ranches. What would happen if a time is reached when there are no families interested in continuing ranching, or the lands are badly managed, or severe environmental damage is occurring?

HR 6687 contravenes the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process analyses, recommendations, and alternatives if they do not support continued grazing and ranching. In compliance with the NEPA and federal policies and regulations for managing park lands, the bill should provide for unbiased review of the environmental impacts and sound environmental management. Introducing this legislation in the middle of the planning process can only be expected to predetermine the outcome.

MAS is not opposed a priori to ranching in the park boundaries, but as is our approach to all uses, agricultural uses should be required to protect the resources of the land for future generations of people and wildlife. These lands belong to all of us. The decision-making process should not be preempted, undermined or circumvented. NEPA was adopted in the public interest to provide information upon which sound environmental decisions can be made to protect the public's interest. We will be continuing to follow this issue as it is addressed in the Senate (it has already passed the House).

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Write Congressman Huffman and tell him the bill should be amended to ensure these public lands are managed to protect natural resources including wildlife. The bill is now in the Senate Subcommittee on Energy and Natural Resources. Sending your view to our senators is also advisable. Representative Huffman's address: 1406 Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC 20505; <https://huffman.house.gov/contact>.

COYOTES IN MARIN

We live in a county that is rich in natural resources and vegetated habitats, from wilderness areas to backyards. These may be what attracted most of us here, and it is what attracts our native wildlife. Wildlife can only live in suitable habitats, and they have adapted well to suburban or even some urban areas where there is vegetation, cover and food. While some folks dislike or fear wildlife that are attracted to our communities, many of us enjoy their presence and delight in the brief sightings of them. Living among native wildlife, in an environment that, while developed, is still able to support wild animals is both a special experience and a responsibility. The coyotes are not going away. The question is, how can we improve the ways we share this space with them?

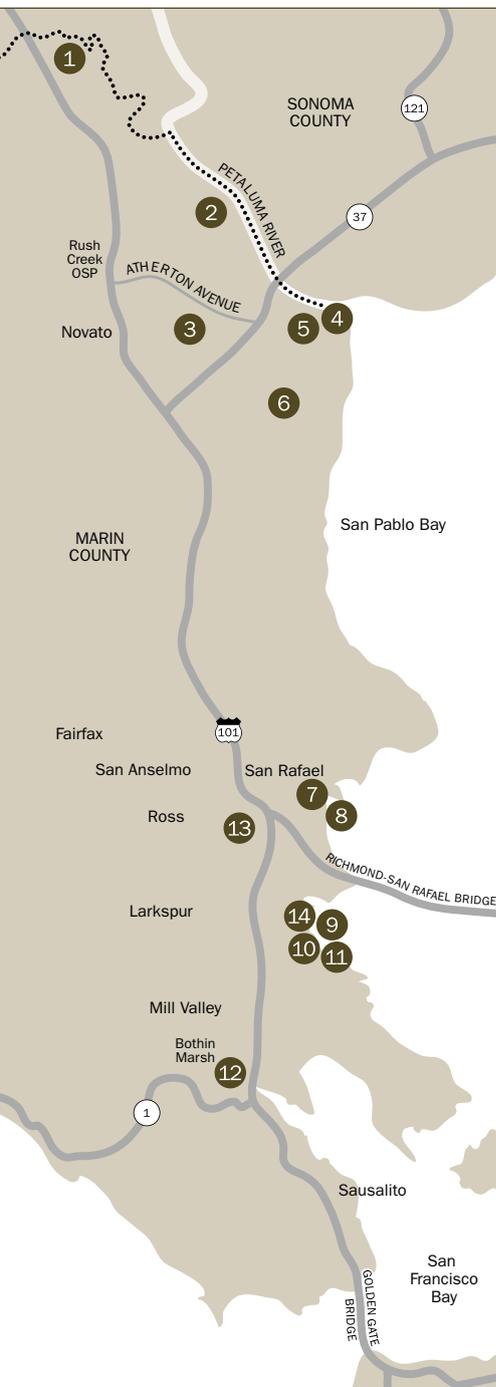
Much of the call to get rid of coyotes, heard at a recent Board of Supervisors meeting and voiced in the local press, appears to be from folks who see the outdoors as places where their pet cats and dogs can roam free.

While pleas for corrective action from people who have lost beloved pets are understandable, the most effective actions are taken by pet owners themselves, by keeping their pets indoors. The safest place for the animals you care about is in your home, in your safely enclosed yard or with you on a leash. Avoiding encounters with native wildlife is not the only reason to keep your domestic pets indoors. When roaming free they can be hurt in many other ways. They can be hit by cars, targeted by kids with BB guns or adults with real guns, poisoned, infected by diseases, and attacked by other dogs or cats. We'd wager that more people and pets are hurt or killed by domestic dogs than by coyotes.

If you are afraid, walk your pet on a well-used path where encounters with coyotes and other wildlife are less likely. Be alert. If you do encounter a coyote, make lots of noise and wave your arms in the air to appear as large as possible.

Allowing pets to roam free is at the expense of others, including neighbors who may not want your domestic animals on their property. Native wildlife don't have houses; they can only live in the outdoors where they can find cover and food. Sometimes this is in or near our neighborhoods. As part of the landscape and food chain, Marin's coyotes provides many services. As scavengers, they benefit us by cleaning up our environment. They also eat carrion and

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MARIN AUDUBON PROPERTIES

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. Petaluma Marsh Expansion Site | 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. Tiscornia Marsh | 20 acres |
| 8. Tidelands and Murphy's Rock | 34 acres |
| 9. San Clemente Creek Tidelands | 4.34 acres |
| 10. End of Channel Drive | ?? acres |
| 11. Triangle Marsh | 31 acres |
| 12. Arroyo Corte Madera del Presidio | 2 acres |
| 13. Cal Park | <1 acre |
| 14. Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Expansion Site | 5.2 acres |

Conservation

continued from page 4

help keep rodent populations in check. In some areas, they have been known to eat pet food and garbage, so do not attract them to your yard by putting food outside or leaving garbage cans uncovered.

MAS supports native birds and other species and works to protect their habitats. We encourage those who fear interactions with coyotes to learn more about them. It is to everyone's benefit if we can all learn to live with and enjoy Marin's native wildlife.

See MAS's Mission Statement on page 2.

ANCHOR-OUT UPDATE

The Richardson Bay Regional Agency is pursuing two paths to legalize anchor-outs on Richardson Bay: 1) a request for proposals to advise on "potential locations, mooring type, capacity and access to the shore in the light of the presence of eelgrass and aquatic life and migratory birds, weather, wind and tide conditions, water quality and other physical conditions" (in other words where can they put a mooring field); and 2) preparing draft ordinance language for amending definitions, vessel requirements, and nuisance abatement hearing location.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) mentions natural resources "in the light of the presence of eelgrass...", but there is nothing in the proposed RFP to obtain data on what areas migratory birds, marine mammals and fish use in the Bay. They are depending completely on the Audubon California data for eelgrass presence, but there is no data on areas of the bay that are used by diving birds and shorebirds for resting or foraging. Nor is there any mention of compliance with state and federal laws and even local ordinances, in other words the legality of the anchor-outs on the water.

The final RFP went out noting that MAS has Christmas Count data, however, our data will not be useful because it is not broken down into sufficiently narrow areas. Surveys that will identify the areas that are most used by diving birds, migratory birds and marine mammals are needed.

NEW MARIN AUDUBON PROPERTIES AT BLACK POINT

On October 3, the deed was recorded to transfer of the ownership of the 2.6-acre property at Black Point for which we have been raising money over the last six months. Our special thanks to donors: Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission, Marin County Open Space District, estate of

Joanne Heffelfinger, Wimberly Fund through Audubon California, Richard and Anne Ruben, Arntz Family Foundation, California Alpine Club Foundation, Rose Foundation, RHE Foundation, Marin Open Space Trust, Jackie Bonner and Michael Ring, Janet Evans, Stacy Pogorzelski, John and Jill Templeton, and donors to Marin Baylands Advocates. Contributions from these donors made the acquisition of this property a reality.

In addition, the donation of the Leech property on Norton Pond, featured on page 1 of *The Rail* last month, was finalized on October 16. We greatly appreciate the Leech's generous donation of this key parcel. MAS now owns the pond and all of the parcels along the south edge of the pond.

SOLAR FARM PROPOSED FOR DIKED BAYLANDS

A pre-application has been submitted to the Marin Community Development Agency for approximately 11,310 solar modules and 66 string inverters on what the planner calls a vacant lot. The solar arrays would be a maximum of eight feet above grade. Power would be sold to MCET. This "vacant" lot is actually diked bayland located between Highway 101 and Redwood Landfill.

Historically tides flowed over this lot and they still would if it weren't for dikes. The site plan provided by the County shows that the applicant realizes the site has wetlands but they have defined them as four limited ponded areas around which they propose 30-foot wide buffers.

Actually, rainwater ponds on the entire site during times of heavy rainfall, such as the massive rainstorm that occurred on the day of Cheep Thrills Count two years ago. It is the count area for Lowell Sykes, Lisa Hug and Barbara Salzman. We saw the entire site was deeply flooded and follow up visits showed the ponding lasting for days.

Constructing a solar array on this property would eliminate its functioning as overwintering habitat for migratory waterfowl that rest and forage on these flooded lands during high rainfall as in 2016, and for the migratory shorebirds that forage on the invertebrates brought to the surface when the soil is saturated or flooding is minimal.

This is the second proposal for a solar array on this site. The proponent of the first proposal withdrew the application, possibly realizing that it would be difficult to get approvals or because he became more knowledgeable about constraints. The bayland has been on the MAS-MBA list of sites needing to be protected and restored since 1985.

Benefit Marin by Donating to Marin Audubon Society

Help make a difference in Marin County. Here are three ways to contribute:

1. Many employers offer **charitable giving matching programs** to their employees. If your employer offers a matching program, your donation could be twice as valuable to MAS. Check with your employer's human resource department to see if they have a charitable giving matching program in place.
2. For those age 70½ or older, you can turn your required **minimum distribution from a traditional or Roth IRA** account into a tax-favored charitable gift. You can give up to \$100,000 annually from your IRA directly to a qualified charity such as MAS without paying income tax on the withdrawal. Taxpayers who will no longer deduct their charitable contributions may still reduce their tax burden by making a qualified charitable donation from an IRA. Discuss with your IRA administrator (the bank or broker who holds your IRA) and request that they initiate the transfer and process a check to Marin Audubon.
3. **Donate a vehicle.** Have a car taking up space in your driveway? Donate the car to MAS. All you have to do is make a call (or you can fill out an on-line form) and the rest is easy. You will receive the benefit of a tax deduction while providing a significant level of support for our activities.

To find out more, go to our website at www.marinaudubon.org. MAS is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. 100% of your donation will be devoted to programs.

PROPOSITION 3:

Authorizes bonds to fund projects for water supply and quality, watershed, fish, wildlife, water conveyance, groundwater sustainability and storage.

MAS has not taken a position on Prop 3. While it contains funding for projects that would benefit fish and wildlife, it would also be a funding source for projects that would have adverse environmental impacts on Bay and Delta natural resources. It is not clear that the environmental benefits would outweigh the potential adverse impacts.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Perhaps our most useful tasks will be to remove the most invasive non-native species from areas where native species were planted last winter and from areas where we plan to plant in the next couple of months. *Dittrichia* is about gone from these properties, but there is some on our Black Point property. The early rain was enough to enable some perennials to show signs of life and to allow many seeds of annuals to germinate and produce a short, dense carpet of green under last season's now dead stems.

Is one of our project areas in your neighborhood? Act locally and join us on a workday. Witness restoration first-hand 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: November 3, December 1

Meet at 10 AM on Paradise Dr. 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.

Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Expansion:

A small group of volunteers has begun to work at Marin Audubon's new restoration site behind Cost Plus Plaza. We are trying to keep the native plants ahead of the invasive non-natives from year one. Please pitch in.

Contact Martha Jarocki, marthajarocki@gmail.com or phone 415/461-3592

THANK YOU TO OUR STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Emily Dong, Bob Hinz, Martha Jarocki, Vivian Liu, Hannah Ma, Linda Nicoletto, Lowell Sykes, Nhi Vuong

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Make your next Amazon order through AmazonSmile. For information, visit <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/94-6076664>.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

The early rain has benefitted all of our properties and has made the plants happy.

CORTE MADERA PROPERTIES

- At Corte Madera the upland soils are finally moist to several inches in depth. Lowell Sykes has had difficulty getting irrigation water down to half inch all summer. But with the heavy rain in Corte Madera, the soil moisture was below two inches.
- Students from San Domenico School have committed to volunteering at our Corte Madera sites. So far four students have worked diligently removing weeds at Triangle Marsh and at the new restoration at the Ecological Reserve. The girls are hard workers and we are most pleased to have them help restore our habitats. Their weed pulling makes space for native plants, which native wildlife are adapted use, to colonize the sites.
- We received a generous donation of \$1,000 from John Perone to be used for our Corte Madera Ecological Reserve restoration. It will certainly come in handy because we will have more than 15,000 plants to care for this coming year. Our **HUGE THANK YOU** to John for helping to restore this important habitat.

TISCORNIA MARSH

We're thrilled that on October 1 the San Rafael City Council voted unanimously to support our application for a Measure AA grant for a sea level rise adaptation project that will improve the levee and expand the marsh at the mouth of the San Rafael Canal, adjacent to the Albert J. Boro Community Center. The project includes MAS's Tiscornia Marsh property and city-owned properties, a 4-acre diked marsh

and a small adjacent pocket marsh.

The purpose of the grant is to produce a final design for nature-based sea level rise adaptations that restore tidal marsh and upland transition habitat, improve the levee for transition zone habitat and protect the adjacent Canal Community from flooding. A grant from the Marin Community Foundation enabled us to prepare a conceptual design. Next, biological and topographic surveys, mapping, soils investigations, engineering and other technical studies necessary to further the designs for the project will be conducted. An environmental document will be prepared in compliance with CEQA, and permits from regulatory agencies will be secured.

The current preferred alternative includes expanding MAS's marsh using a rock jetty on the north (canal) side and a cobble revetment/beach on the east-facing side. These stable structures will serve to trap and hold sediments. If available, we will use clean material dredged from nearby marinas. The levee along the shoreline will be raised and widened to improve flood protection. The stretch along the diked marsh will be relocated to the north-facing side of the field. The project will benefit the endangered Ridgway's Rail that still use the marsh, other migratory and resident wildlife, fish and the residents of the Canal Community.

The project will also expand public access by constructing the Bay Trail on top of the new levee. This section of the existing levee has an unimproved dirt-gravel path and some other amenities. We will again partner with Shore Up Marin to engage and keep the public informed.

Applications are due November 26 and awards will be made in summer.

MARIN BIRDLOG: SEPTEMBER 2018

By Noah Arthur

September is the month that we Marin birders live for, when outer Point Reyes and other coastal locations come alive with eastern warblers and other rare and colorful migrants. Shorebird passage is still at its peak in early September, but the first rare find of the month—and quite an unexpected one—was neither passerine nor shorebird but two **White-winged Doves** at Spaletta Ranch on Pt. Reyes (LS).

One of the most unusual and exotic rarities of the month showed up on the 2nd in the form of a **Broad-billed Hummingbird** at Keith Hansen's feeders in Bolinas (KH). This bird was joined by a **Black-chinned Hummingbird** on the 2nd (KD, BS), and a **Costa's Hummingbird** was at the Pt. Reyes Fish Docks also on the 2nd (LC).

The eastern warbler trickle also began on the 2nd with a **Hooded Warbler** at Drakes Beach (LC) and a **Canada Warbler** caught by the Palomarin banding team (DH).

Another interior Western waif was a **Cattle Egret** at Abbots on the 2nd (DL). Rarer for the Outer Point than many eastern vagrants, and fitting into early September's interior Western theme, were a **Gray Flycatcher** at the Fish Docks on the 7th (MS), and a **Dusky Flycatcher** there on the 8th (LC). A **Brewer's Sparrow** was in Corte Madera Marsh on the 9th (AMe).

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Birdlog

continued from page 6

One of the rarest warblers of the month was a **Bay-breasted Warbler** at Kent Island in Bolinas on the 8th (PP). Similarly rare, a **White-eyed Vireo** was found in Muir Beach on the 15th by AMe, who pulled off the incredible feat of getting identifiable photos of the foraging vireo with his iPhone through binoculars! A female **Painted Bunting** was also in Muir on the 16th (LC).

Rarest Marin bird of the month, and one that drew many rarity-chasers from elsewhere in the state, was an **Eastern Yellow Wagtail** found at Rodeo Lagoon on the 17th (WL). This East Asian vagrant continued for several days, and call recordings were obtained to rule out its (highly unlikely) European relative, Western Yellow Wagtail.

A male **Summer Tanager** was photographed in Inverness early on the 19th (SB, JM, GD, AMA, BF), but was never re-found by anyone and became infamous among Pt. Reyes regulars over the



Eastern Yellow Wagtail

(DS). These were the forerunners of a spectacular wave of eastern migrants and other rarities that would continue into October, including an **Ovenbird** and two **Blackburnian Warblers** at Fish Docks on the 29th (MS), and a **Blackpoll Warbler** (NA) and an **Indigo Bunting** (JV) at Mendoza Ranch on the 30th. Also on the 30th, a **Lawrence's Goldfinch** made a brief early morning stop at Nunes Ranch (NA), a **Vermilion Flycatcher** was in Bolinas (CO), and a **Blue-footed Booby** was on Chimney Rock (LN).

As usual for September, some of the more common eastern vagrants were reported multiple times. There were many reports of **Least Flycatchers** at the Fish Docks in the first half of the month; however, I'm not sure if any were confirmed by Empid experts. **Chestnut-sided Warblers** were found at the Pt. Reyes New Willows on the 2nd (RR), the Inverness Tennis Club (CC) and Rodeo Lagoon (HT) on the 9th, Bolinas on the 9th (JN), Fish Docks (AH) and Drakes Beach (LC) on the 22nd, Clem Miller EEC on inner Pt. Reyes on the 22nd (GH), and Mendoza Ranch on the 28th (PC). **Clay-colored Sparrows** were at Mendoza Ranch on the 3rd (TP) and Fish Docks on the 22nd (AH).

Comparing this September's eastern warbler occurrences with past years, some interesting trends are apparent. Chestnut-sided Warblers have continued to increase in abundance over the last few years, and were by far the most numerous eastern migrant in Marin this month. Blackburnian reports also seem to be increasing, while Blackpolls and American Redstarts seem to be getting less frequent.

Observers and Acronyms **AH:** Adrian Hinkle, **AMe:** Alex Merritt, **AMA:** Andrew Mauro, **BF:** Blanche Fenwick, **BS:** Byron Stone, **CC:** Collin Cochrane, **CO:** Carol Oakes, **DA:** David Assmann, **DH:** Diana Humple, **DL:** Derek Lecy, **DS:** Dan Singer, **GD:** Gail DeLalla, **GH:** Gjon Hazard, **HT:** Holly Thomas, **JMo:** Joseph Morlan, **JMy:** Jane Mygatt, **JN:** Joey Negreann, **JV:** Jason Vassalo, **KD:** Keith Denkler, **KH:** Keith Hansen, **LC:** Lucas Corneliusen, **LN:** Larry Nigro, **LS:** Lucas Stephenson, **MS:** Mark Sawyer, **NA:** Noah Arthur, **PC:** Peter Colasanti, **PP:** Peter Pyle, **RC:** Reef Comer, **RR:** Ruth Rudesill, **SB:** Steve Brad, **TP:** Todd Plummer, **WL:** William Legge

next few days as one that got away. Much rarer in fall than in spring, a young female **Northern Parula** was at Nunes Ranch on Pt. Reyes on the 22nd (NA). A long-staying **Northern Waterthrush** was first found at Fish Docks on the 23rd (JM), and a **Lark Bunting** was near Nunes Ranch on the 25th (RC).

Another excellent find at Rodeo Lagoon was a **Yellow-green Vireo** on the 26th (WL). A **Sage Thrasher** was found at Las Gallinas on the 26th (DA) and later seen by many others, including LC who also found a **Vesper Sparrow** there on the 28th.

Also on the 28th a **Yellow-breasted Chat** and a **Magnolia Warbler** were at Fish Docks



Summer Tanager

Marin's Christmas Bird Counts

The 119th Christmas Bird Count (CBC) season is coming at the end of the year. Administered by the National Audubon Society, CBCs are the longest-running citizen science program in the world. The Marin Audubon Society sponsors three counts with hundreds of participants from novice to expert who count every bird they encounter:

Point Reyes

► **Saturday, December 15**

Cheep Thrills (Northern Marin)

► **Thursday, December 20**

Southern Marin

► **Saturday, December 29**

Everyone, whether beginner or more experienced, is encouraged to participate. See some new birds, meet old and new friends, be a citizen scientist. It's fun. Mark your calendar.

THANKS FOR YOUR DONATIONS

Deborah S. Ablin, Audubon California, Benevity Community Impact Fund, Donal Brown, William A. Clarke, Ivan Rodriguez Cosentino, The Endurance Fund, Jane W. Evans, Edwin & Carol Ewry, Fischer Family Fund, Kat Foster, Pauline Grant, Maureen Groper, Julien I.E. Hoffman, Richard Jennings, Marin County Fish & Wildlife Commission, Nancy Anne Marshall, Steve & Ruth Nash, John Perone, Dianne Sierra & Chris Pattillo

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Benevity Community Impact Fund, Gretchen Antill, Kathy Armbruster, Steve & Janice Barlow, Donal Brown, Brian Browne, Lillian Capell, Donna Casella, Elisabeth Crawford, Chris Gospodnetich, Matthew Hamre, Margaret Hannan, Linda Harrison, Stephanie Hom, Natasha Lettis, Nancy Anne Marshall, Oscar Moss, Kelly Purcell, Tanya Reuvekamp, Doris Sloan, Margarita Smagina, Hunter Steven, Joyce Waterman



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- December 10 **Boat Trip:** Sacramento Delta
Signups begin online
February 3, 2019
- December 15 **Christmas Bird Count**
Point Reyes
- December 20 **Christmas Bird Count**
Cheep Thrills
- December 29 **Christmas Bird Count**
Southern Marin

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SUPPORT MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY — BECOME A CHAPTER-SUPPORTING MEMBER

We invite you to become a Chapter-supporting member of Marin Audubon Society (MAS) to support our important habitat protection and restoration work, conservation advocacy, our full calendar of birding field trips and speakers and our newsletter, *The Rail*. Marin Audubon is a chapter of National Audubon (NAS). However, becoming a **Chapter-Supporting Member** of MAS is separate and distinct from a membership in NAS. While MAS works with NAS on issues of mutual concern, we are a separate non-profit Section 501(c)(3) all-volunteer organization. Marin-based NAS members do receive this MAS newsletter, *The Rail*, however we encourage all NAS members to also become Chapter-supporting members of MAS to support our local work. Very little of our funding comes from NAS, and we rely on our MAS Chapter-supporting members and donors to help us fund our land acquisitions, restorations, habitat protection, conservation advocacy, this newsletter and our local programs.

If you're not already a Chapter-supporting member, we urge you to join MAS and urge your friends, neighbors and relatives to join us, too.

You can join MAS or make a donation on our website using your credit card or PayPal by going to www.marinaudubon.org. Alternatively, you can join by filling out this form and sending us your payment by mail.

ALTERNATIVELY, IF YOU ARE LOOKING TO JOIN NATIONAL AUDUBON FOR THE FIRST TIME ...

MAS will receive 100% of your initial membership if you enter **MAS's chapter code C04** on your application. To join, go to www.audubon.org/join.

The best option for the birds: Join MAS **and** NAS.

Join or Donate to the Marin Audubon Society

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