

Discovering Wood Warblers in Marin County

By Daniel Edelstein



Ellye Overnick

Wilson's Warbler

The April Speaker Series program will be a Zoom meeting. Visit the Speaker Series page on the MAS website for information on joining the Zoom meeting electronically.

Which wood-warbler species typically nest annually in Marin County and the North Bay region?

Which are year-round residents and when do returning spring migrant species arrive?

And why do vagrant wood-warblers in fall visit the Outer Point at Point Reyes National Seashore?

These questions and others will be addressed in this slide show highlighting one of our area's most captivating bird families.

In creating this program, Avian Biologist and Birding Guide Daniel Edelstein utilizes his 30+ years of watching wood-warblers throughout the USA to discuss both common and rare Marin County/North Bay wood-warbler species.

A professional Birding Guide since the mid-80s, Daniel Edelstein works full-time as a freelance, Consulting Avian Biologist, Environmental Scientist, and is a Certified Wildlife Biologist Associate. In addition, he teaches birding classes as an Adjunct Faculty member at Merritt College in Oakland. His popular blog, WarblerWatch.blogspot.com is now 15 years old.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER:

THURSDAY, MAY 13

7:30 PM

A Worldwide Collaboration to Track Bird Migration

Amie MacDonald

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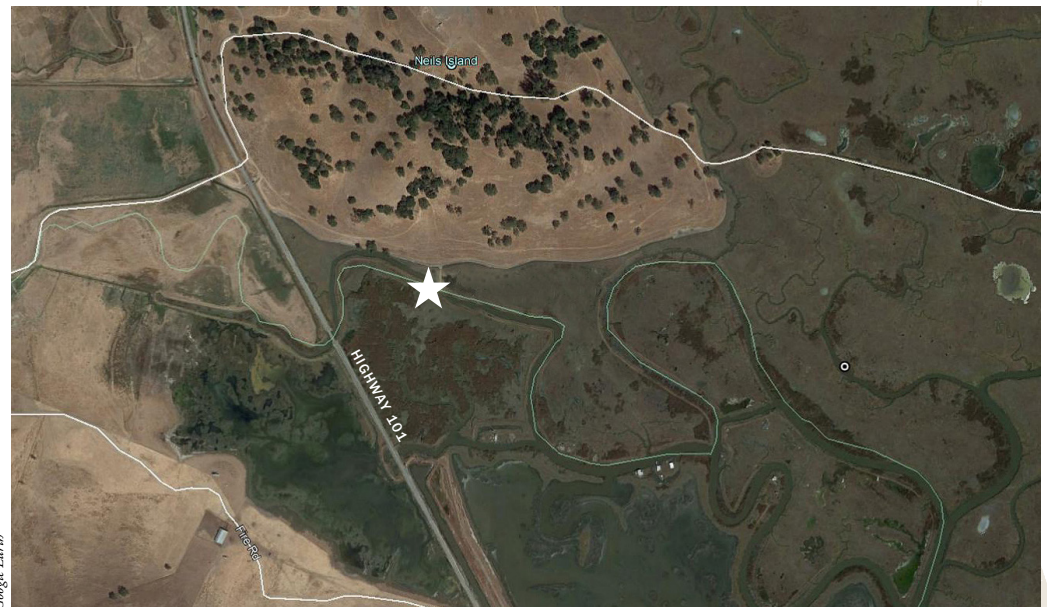
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The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

MAS's Petaluma Marsh Contributes to National Wetlands Survey



Google Earth

Petaluma Marsh section selected for Wetlands Survey is indicated by the star marker.

The U.S. EPA, states, and tribes are conducting a nationwide survey of the condition of the nation's wetlands, and one of MAS's marshes, our Petaluma Marsh Enhancement site, has been chosen as one of the sample sites. This *National Wetlands Condition Assessment* (NWCA) is one in a series of studies the EPA is conducting that will help determine the condition of our nation's waters, the action needed to prevent pollution, and evaluate the effectiveness of protection and restoration efforts. It will serve as a scientific report card on America's wetlands.

The sample sites were chosen randomly from a total population of wetlands. A total of 904 wetland sites are in the survey representing seven wetland types across the 49 lower states. The sites were selected using a statistical survey to represent the population of wetlands in the region.

The study was designed to estimate the percentage of the nation's wetlands that are in good, fair, or poor condition and assess the

extent of key stressors across the country. It will examine ecological, biological and water quality indicators. The field crews will be taking measurements including presence or abundance of grassy plants, grasses and shrubs, soil properties and chemistry, water chemistry, hydrology, and the condition of the habitat in the area surrounding the wetland.

The MAS site chosen is in a remote location near the Marin-Sonoma border, north of Redwood Landfill, east of Highway 101 along the south side of Mud Slough. We've owned this 182-acre property for almost 20 years and have never been to this specific spot. The property consists of 100 acres that we restored to tidal marsh 10 years ago. The remaining 82 acres, where the sample site is located, is historic tidal marsh that has never been diked. The site is so remote we would expect it to be in excellent condition.

We're pleased to have one of our marshes as part of this study. As we go to press, arrangements are underway for access.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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
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Outreach, Website	Elyse Omernick 694-2320
Speaker Series	Doug Waterman 506-4675
Special Projects	Jude Stalker 680-6291
Nominating	Doug Waterman 506-4675
Editor, <i>The Rail</i>	Doug Waterman 506-4675
Property Management	Ed Nute 669-7710
Volunteer Coordinator	Meghan Kehoe 209-769-8862
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 LETTER

By Barbara Salzman

Our lives are looking up now that three vaccines have been approved. We're getting the vaccine, slowly as allowed, and hope, that all of our members are, too. It's doubtful we'll be having outdoor field trips in the next few months, and possibly not until fall. We've been having Volunteer Work Days, supervised by Martha Jarocki, at our Corte Madera Reserve Restoration site. There are a limited number of volunteers and it is easy to maintain distancing as they work. So if you'd like to get outdoors with Marin Audubon, look at the Stewardship section of this newsletter or consult our website.

There are a few changes in our programming this month. The April Speaker Series program will be a week later than usual—the third Thursday instead of the second Thursday. Our speaker, Daniel Edelstein, had a schedule change. We have no field trip Zooms—the two that were planned were cancelled.

For information on the Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas, please see the MAS website.

At our last meeting, our Board adopted the following Inclusive/Diversity Policy:
Marin Audubon Society celebrates the diversity that is present in our local communities and recognizes the profound negative impacts of

discrimination and marginalization. Marin Audubon is dedicated to accepting and including all people in every facet of our organization and offering opportunities for all to connect with the natural world.

Now we'll begin to implement the policy. Offering field trips in underserved communities has been recommended. If you would like to join us and work on implementing this policy, please contact me.

Did you know that the Merriam-Webster Dictionary has a word of the day and they take sentences from local newspapers and present them as examples of the use of the word? I didn't either, until March 3 when I had an email from IJ reporter Will Houston that his quote of me in his article on Costco's huge Gas Station Project had been chosen by Merriam-Webster as the word of the day. The word was "contaminate" and the quote was "Marin Audubon Society Board president Barbara Salzman said she plans to review the city's environmental report but expressed concern about the potential for tank leakage to contaminate groundwater." — Will Houston, The Marin Independent Journal, Marin County California, January 2, 8 2021. Who would have thought MAS and Will would be recognized by Merriam-Webster!

MAS Board Election

Our annual elections are coming up in May. Last year we had not quite figured out Zoom in time, and so we did a mail in ballot. This year we are using zoom regularly and plan to do our election at the May Speaker Series program on Zoom. This Speaker Program is on the second Thursday of the month. A link to the May 13th Zoom meeting will be provided on the MAS website Speaker Series page. We urge you to join us and exercise your right to vote.

We are pleased to announce this year's candidates:

Roger Harris

Roger is a retired biologist and long-time MAS member. Roger has lead many Programs and Field Trips for MAS over

the years and so is well known by MAS membership.

Lelia Lancot

Leila is a former teacher and current docent at the Academy of Science. Lisa is a long-time MAS member, as well.

RETURNING MEMBERS

Ed Nute

Ed is a long-time member of the Board, Chair of the Property Committee, Co-chair of our Christmas Bird Count and Chair of the Monarch Working Group.

Barbara Salzman

Another long-time Board member, Barbara has served as President and Conservation Co-chair in recent years.

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.

POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE MANAGEMENT PLAN SCHEDULED BEFORE COASTAL COMMISSION

At its April 22 meeting, the California Coastal Commission will consider whether the Seashore General Movement Plan is consistent with the California Coastal Zone Management Act and Program.

In our last article on this issue (January 2021), we reported our position that additional analysis is needed and we joined with other organizations in asking for a delay and additional study. Areas that we found needed additional study included: 1) Assessment of ESHAs (Environmental Sensitive Habitat Areas)—impacts on endangered Coho salmon stream habitats, 2) Analysis of impacts of diversifying (raising new farm animals pigs, chickens, goats, row crops), and 3) Monitoring and enforcement—oversight and enforcement is needed to ensure compliance with standards and lease conditions.

It appears that approval of the Management Plan by the Commission is almost certain.

- The National Park Service (NPS) has received federal approval to hire two of the five new hires that will be needed to implement the Management Plan. It is critical that these first two employees be dedicated to natural resources to ensure that the leases are prepared in a timely manner and that the staff time necessary to prepare a plan to ensure state water quality standards are met and that enforcement is effective.
- Several Environmental groups, including Western Watersheds Project, tested water quality at Abbotts Lagoon, Kehoe Lagoon and East Schooner Creek and found levels of *E. coli*, *Enterococci* and fecal coliform exceeded state health standards. The last time the NPS monitored these creeks was in 2000 and 2013, reported the Marin Independent Journal in an a March 19 article. The only creek where water is monitored regularly is Olema Creek a tributary of Lagunitas Creek which flows into Tomales Bay, possibly because of the presence of endangered salmonids in that watershed. According to the Regional Board the ranchers outside of Olema are required to submit annual reports

confirming that they are implementing practices that protect water quality. Apparently that isn't working very well.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Tell the Commission for the Management Plan to be consistent with the Coastal Zone Management Program it needs to require the NPS:

- To test, or require to be tested on an annual basis, the waters of creeks/streams that flow into lagoons and esteros from beef and dairy ranches. An enforcement program should be prepared and implemented. It should include penalties for non-compliance with state water quality standards.
 - Require the new staff positions currently funded to be dedicated to natural resources including water quality and preparing and executing ranch leases. Actually, we recommend that the NPS dedicate all of the positions to natural resources until the Management Plan has been completed and is fully implemented and all leases have been fully executed.
- Email your comments to

pointreyesmanagementplan@coastal.ca.gov or letter to John Weber, California Coastal Commission, 455 Market Street, San Francisco, Suite 300, CA 94105. Use the points above. Other MAS articles on Pt. Reyes Management Plan are in January 2021 and November 2020 issues of *The Rail*.

LARKSPUR FERRY TERMINAL EXPANSION PROJECT

The Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District is embarking on a study that will look at increasing ferry capacity from 2019 levels. The Plan will consider two additional ferry trips and more parking to expand capacity. A multilevel additional parking structure as one of the options.

The District began planning this expansion prior to the pandemic. Even though ridership is down very significantly now, the planning continues. The District believes that "beginning the study now, will help the region plan and prepare for the recovery and a post-pandemic future." They add that the City of San Francisco is constructing a new Ferry Terminal at Mission Bay, which they expect, will boost ridership to get to the UCSF's

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NEST BOX TENDERS NEEDED

For about ten years now we have had nest boxes at our Simmons Slough property and at Bahia. The boxes were erected for Blue Birds but only the few at Bahia are used by Blue Birds. The nest boxes at Simmons are used by Tree Swallows—that's okay, too. For many years, former Board Member Dave Harrema, and his wife, Vicki Van Mete, have tended the boxes. The nest material needs to be cleaned out when nesting is over, otherwise the nest material breaks down and can be infested with insects and the birds won't use them.

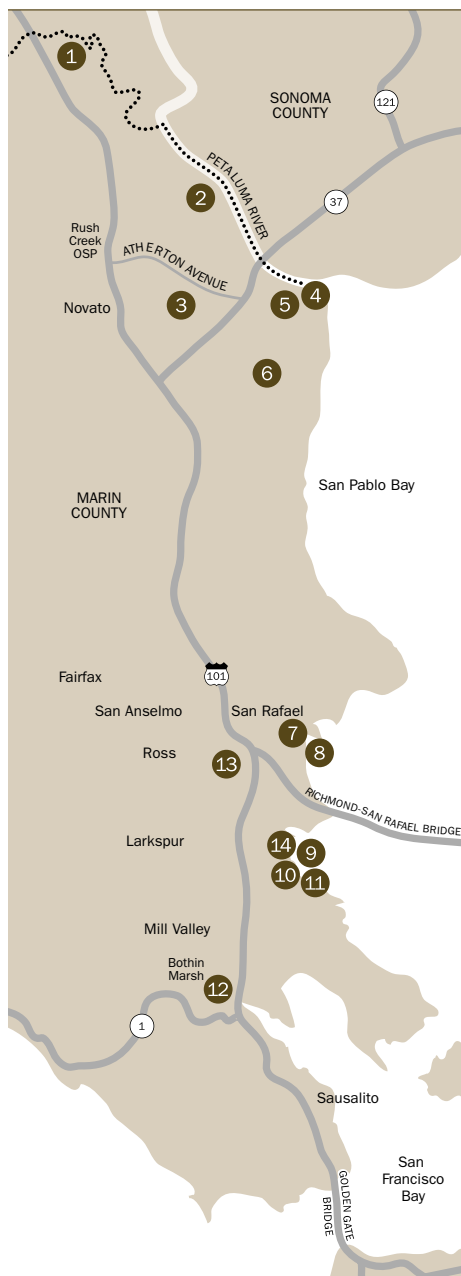
We're looking for new nest tenders. It takes almost a day to clean the 36 nest boxes at Simmons. There are nine boxes at Bahia and it takes about an hour to clean them out.

Can you help? Call Barbara at 415/924-6057 to volunteer or to find out more.

INTERESTED IN JOINING MAS BOARD?

Marin Audubon Society's accomplishments in preserving and restoring precious natural habitats has been prominently displayed in this Newsletter and other environmentally concerned publications. But there is always more that needs to be done. For MAS, the impetus for creating new projects and confronting ongoing challenges starts with the Board of Directors. At this critical time when climate change and destructive development still threaten habitat, the stronger the Board is the more effective it can be. Our Board of Directors are totally staffed with volunteers and we invite anyone seeking to deepen their involvement with our efforts and concerns to join us.

Currently, the Board is seeking to add members to fill spots in the Field Trips and Speaker Series Chairs. By fall, MAS field trips will resume and again provide adventurous bird watching opportunities for members and guests alike. Scheduling these events is the job of the Field Trips Chair. Selecting field trip locations provides the coordinator the rewards of bringing participants experience rich outings. Likewise, the Speaker Series job also directly connects with members and MAS guests. Its Chair brings participants entertaining, edifying programs from local and visiting presenters. Opportunities to present creatively chosen subjects vary broadly. While birds are a common topic, related topics from the natural world are also offered. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Doug Waterman at 415/506-4675.



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	many 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

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growing Mission Bay campus.

The District's plan is to produce an Initial Study in which various options would be screened. Options to be studied further would be identified and reviewed for potentially significant impacts, along with methods to minimize or eliminate the impacts, in a CEQA document. They seem to be being very careful not to call the CEQA document an EIR, perhaps hoping to only have to produce a Mitigated Negative Declaration. The District expects the environmental review to be finalized in 2023.

Check the District's website for information on the project and public meetings planned to be sure issues of concern can be put forward.

Our primary concern is increased erosion along the Corte Madera marshes, including our own Triangle Marsh, which would result from the increased wakes generated by more ferryboat trips.

CORTE MADERA CLIMATE CHANGE

After a public review, The Town of Corte Madera has revised the Shoreline Section of its Climate Change Plan to focus primarily on the risks that climate change poses to the community and the identification of some initial next steps that the community could take to explore and better understand these risks. References to different designs that would protect from flooding the east Corte Madera neighborhoods that are built on tidal marsh have been removed. Three design alternatives that were produced to address bay water intrusion into the neighborhoods are: earthen levee, which would require more filling of marsh, sheet pile barrier, and a box structure. These were thoughtful science-based designs that warranted further consideration and study, but residents objected so the Town changed the document.

There are other significant changes in the document related to climate change impacts in other parts of the town and creating a new Executive Summary.

There is a comment period on the revised document, which ends on March 31, 2021, in case this document should get to you in time. You can review the draft document at <https://cortemaderaadapts.org/draftplan>.

- Comments can be emailed to pwcounter@tcmmail.org
- Potential consideration for adoption by Council on April 20, 2021.

CASCADE BRIDGES PROJECT

The Marin County Open Space District (OSD) has been planning to install two bridges at the Elliot Nature Preserve, which is part of

the Cascade Canyon Open Space Preserve. The bridges are planned to eliminate two crossings of San Anselmo Creek where users of the Canyon Trail go through the creek, which impacts water quality by generating sediment and adversely affecting habitat for aquatic species. The creek is habitat for the threatened Yellow-legged Frog. Northern Spotted Owl are seen in the project area, and dens of their primary prey item, Dusky-footed Woodrat, are located in the project area.

The project includes: realigning the Canyon Trail and installing speed control features for bikers; changing use on the segment between Cascade Canyon Fire Road and the south end of bridge #1 to multi-use by allowing bicycle use; realigning the trail to, meet the bridges; installing fencing and signs; and decommissioning the High Water Trail and the spur between the Cascade Canyon Fire Road and the Canyon Trail spur. The bridges spanning the creek would be six feet wide. Footings would be constructed first and the bridges lowered in place. While the project will have environmental benefits, there are concerns.

MAS expressed concern about: potential impact on the eight Dusky-footed Wood rats nests that were recently found; possible impacts on Northern Spotted Owl; impacts of the staging of construction vehicles, the locating of which is yet to be defined; and possible continued adverse affects of people using the stream crossing that will remain open. Only one of the current stream crossings will be closed. Whether users could continue to use the open crossing area is not clear.

We asked that the OSD revise the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration to address our concerns.

FARALLON ISLANDS UPDATE

The Plan for the Consistency Determination hearing before the Coastal Commission continues to be scheduled for May.

It has recently been learned that the "Farallon Islands NWR has the largest bird list of any national wildlife refuge—436 species! This was discovered through a data mining project by (just retired) FWS Inventory and Monitoring Data Manager, Steve Holzman. The list is ever growing, with the newest addition of Dusky-capped Flycatcher in November.

Of course this incredible diversity is due to the use of the islands by migrating birds going off course. Non-breeding species seen the latest month there are records compiled, December 2020: Pacific Loon, Eared Grebe, Brown Booby, Northern Gannet, Sooty Shearwater, Brown Pelican, Canada Goose, Surf Scoter,

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Conservation

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Peregrine Falcon, Wandering Tattler, Whimbrel, Ruddy Turnstone, Rock Sandpiper, Red Phalarope, California Gull, Herring Gull, Thayer's Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Glaucous Gull, Eurasian Collared Dove, Barn Owl, Furrowing Owl, Anna's Hummingbird, Black Phoebe, Rock Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, Savannah Sparrow, Townsend's Warbler, Palm Warbler, Spotted Towhee, Clay-colored Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, White-throated sparrow, Golden-crowned sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, House Finch and Pine Siskin.

Add your voice advocating restoration of the Farallon's ecosystem:

- A similar plan has been used on 600 different islands worldwide with great success restoring the ecosystems.
- Protect nestling Leach's and Ashy Storm-Petrels that are preyed upon in their nests.
- No other method will work to ensure house mice are removed from the island and the nesting birds are no longer preyed upon by the Burrowing owls. The owls are attracted to remain on the islands by the mice. When the mice die off in fall, the owls prey on the Petrels.
- Contraceptives, even if one existed, would not be effective in removing all mice.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Testify during the California Coastal Commission's Open Time at its April meeting. See the Commission's website for directions. Send an email to Farallonislands@coastal.ca.gov or letter to John Weber, California Coastal Commission, 455 Market Street, San Francisco, Suite 300, CA 94105 with the message that the project is consistent with the Coastal Zone Management Program because it will restore the ecosystem of the Farallones to the benefit of its wildlife.

Correction: The address (45 Market) in last month's newsletter was incorrect.

UPDATE ON STATE ROUTE 37 PLANNING

Do you travel State Route 37? Then you'll be interested in knowing that planning for congestion relief is well underway, The State Route 37 Policy Committee



Gulls nest near the North Landing area of the Farallon Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

(consisting of elected officials from the four north Bay counties) meeting in early March featured presentations from various agencies showing some progress in planning for improvements to 37. Many agencies are working on plans to improve conditions. The following matters were addressed at the Policy Meeting.

Caltrans plans two Public Outreach meetings on

- Thursday, April 15 will be a virtual Town Hall 6:00-7:30 PM that will provide updates on flood fixes, progress on the congestion relief project and the ongoing planning for the ultimate project to address sea level rise. Details on meeting: www.scta.ca.gov/highway37. Project info: www.SR37CorridorProjects.com.
- Wednesday, May 26 on the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) program on comprehensive planning activities including natural resources, flooding, and congestion relief. The meetings will be held on Zoom from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. Project website: www.SR37CorridorProjects.com.

Specific information on accessing the Public Outreach meetings is not yet available as we go to press. Check the websites or email above or, when it gets closer to the meeting date, call the following number: Public Information phone 510/286-1204.

Caltrans also provided an update on

Corridor PEL, the federal process Caltrans is using to address the corridor planning. For the ultimate project, they have undertaken extensive outreach. Meetings are planned for the Stakeholder Working group (of which MAS is a part) to discuss the purpose and need, alternatives and mitigations for the ultimate improvement project.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) discussed design alternatives from US 101 to SR 121. The Environmental Technical Group has met three times, looking at Alternative Routes—causeway versus embankment.

Caltrans also discussed flood reduction along US 101 to SR 121. Expect a public notice on alternatives to reduce flooding on an interim basis. Interim options include raising pavement, constructing concrete floodwalls, improving the drainage system, monitoring the weather and installing temporary rubber bladder and pumps when a storm is predicted.

MTC reported on Sears Point-Mare Island interim congestion relief that they are making progress on the design for access improvements, variations on the design, potential access improvements, and how the project can encourage a mode shift away from single occupancy vehicles to carpooling and HOV, where to start HOV lanes, and mass transit.

Do attend the Caltrans meetings described above.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Some of the invasive nonnative annuals will be blooming soon, and we will greatly reduce next year's numbers by cutting or pulling the Italian thistle, radish and mustard before they flower. Bristly ox-tongue has a long flowering period but our winter work has considerably limited its blooms.

Our volunteer days remain on the schedule. They are good opportunities for students who need community service hours. Staying a healthy distance apart from each other outdoors on our volunteer days is easy, so don't let that concern keep you away! A little physical activity is good for a person's mood, and, if it does good for the environment, it is doubly good.

Act locally and join us on a workday. We all make a difference.

Volunteer Workdays

Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: April 3, May 1

Meet at 10 AM on Paradise Drive directly across from the Ring Mountain Phyllis Ellman trailhead near the Montessori School.

Corte Madera Ecological Reserve:

Second Saturdays: April 10, May 8

Meet at the end of Industrial Way.

For up-to-date information, contact Martha Jarocki, marthajarocki@gmail.com or phone 415/461-3592.

Bahia, Novato:

If you'd like to help at Bahia, contact Jude at judestalker@gmail.com.

THANK YOU, STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Rich Cimino, Bob Hinz, Martha Jarocki, Gerry Jarocki, Carolyn Losee, Alison Pence, Lowell Sykes, Zoe Trainer

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

PETALUMA MARSH

A small crew of MAS volunteers (Jude Stalker, Phil Peterson and Lowell Sykes) took a trip this month to the last remaining shack on our Petaluma property on Mud Slough, a tributary of the San Antonio Creek and the Petaluma River. There still are shacks that probably were originally used by hunters in the Petaluma Marsh sloughs. The person who used the shack when we purchased the property used it as a get-away. He has not been seen in years and apparently has died. The shack, full of junk, is breaking apart and the junk is falling into the marsh. It's not a good scene, but to clean it up will be difficult and expensive. Mud Slough is narrow and would be difficult to access by boat and there are no roads.

BAHIA

We're working with Students and Teacher's Restoring a Watershed (STRAW) to vegetate sections of the levees around the Homeowner's lagoon. We're excited about working with STRAW, which has about 20 years of experience restoring habitat. Not decided yet what section will be planted first. The goal of the planting is to create high tide refugee habitat for endangered Ridgway rails that need vegetation as cover from predators. Funding is coming from the Restoration Authority Measure AA funds. The Authority allowed STRAW to transfer their grant funding to Bahia from Tiscornia after it was realized that the section of Tiscornia levee they were planning to plant is part of our plan to raise to 13 feet and widen the levee side to provide transition Zone habitat and improve flood protection for the Canal area.

CORTE MADERA

We were pleased to welcome a group of 12 young men in 11th grade, their coordinator, Kirsten Womack and a parent from the National League of Young Men, Inc. (NLYM), a non-profit organization for young men in grades 9-12. NLYM is a structured program for mothers and their sons and promotes the development of young men into community

Eleventh graders from the National League of Young Men, Inc removing Harding grass and bristly ox-tongue at the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve.



The last remaining shack on MAS's Petaluma Marsh property on Mud Slough.

Jude Stalker

leaders through leadership involvement, charitable and community service, cultural experiences, and protocol education.

They pulled and dug out a lot of Harding grass and bristly ox-tongue and put mulch on several of the planted native plants.

TISCORNIA

February was a big month for our Tiscornia project. The city of San Rafael held a Scoping meeting at the Planning Commission to gather questions and issues to be addressed in an Environmental Impact Report we have to prepare. The Commissioners had lots of questions and were very supportive of the project. However, there were no questions from attendees. One could assume our engineer did such a good job explaining the project that attendees had no questions. The attendee count was 27.

We also had a second meeting with the Bay Regulatory Restoration Integration Team (BRRIT). The BRRIT consists of agency staff (NOAA, BCDC, Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife) and has been established to review and facilitate restoration projects that are or could be funded by the SF Bay Restoration Authority. There were lots of questions about our design, potential loss of mudflat and about beneficial reuse of dredge sediments possibly from dredging of the adjacent San Rafael Canal or other marinas in the vicinity. We're now in the process of working out specific components of the project with the city and the BRRIT.



Jude Stalker

MARIN BIRDLOG: FEBRUARY 2021

By Noah Arthur

February is early spring on the California coast, with wildflowers blooming and the days beginning to warm. With midwinter rarity season well and truly over and spring migration not here yet, relatively few new rare birds are usually found this time of year.

This month began with two **Ancient Murrelets** and a **Cassin's Auklet** off Pt. Reyes South Beach on the 2nd (LC). A magnificent 1st-winter **Glaucous Gull** showed up at Sacramento Landing on the 3rd (DW), and subsequently kicked around Tomales Bay for several days and was seen by many birders. Becoming more regular in recent winters, even outside their usual winter stronghold of Tomales Bay, a **Caspian Tern** was in Richardson Bay on the 4th (RH).

Few rare wintering passerines usually stick it out in town neighborhoods until February; most presumably either perish during the coldest weeks of mid-winter, or disperse back out into natural habitats as the weather begins to warm. But a **Cassin's Auklet** was seen in Bolinas on the 6th (MS, LS, & CC), possibly the same individual that was around town in January. And a pair of **Hooded Orioles** that had wintered around a Novato backyard since December were first reported to eBird on the 14th (EN).

Much rarer in California than intermediate birds, an apparently pure **'Yellow-shafted' Flicker** was found in Tomales Bay State Park on the 14th (MR). Yet another off-season warbler, a **Black-throated Gray** was at Cypress Grove on the 18th (NW).

A classic late-winter rarity for Marin, a male **Tufted Duck** was found on Bahia Marsh on the 20th (AM). A **Long-tailed Duck**, very unusual anywhere away from the outer coast, was found by Tufted chasers later that day (MSch).

Very rare despite both parent species being among our commonest winter birds, an immature **White-crowned X Golden-crowned Sparrow** hybrid was at Rodeo Lagoon on the 20th (OM). Yet another rare hybrid appeared on the 22nd in the form of a **Gadwall X Mallard** on Bahia Marsh (LN). Oddly enough, the next and last new rarity of the month was also a hybrid, a **Western X Clark's Grebe** at Raccoon Strait on the 28th (CC).

Continuing birds found in previous months included the **Tundra Swan** near Abbotts Lagoon, **Common Teal** at Las Gallinas, **Yellow-billed Loon** on Tomales Bay, **Yellow-crowned Night-heron** in San Rafael, **Black Skimmers** on Bolinas Lagoon, and **Mountain Bluebirds** at Drakes Corner on Pt. Reyes. The wide-ranging and long-staying **Black Vulture** floated over Olema-Bolinas Rd. on the 6th (BB).

Observers and Acronyms **LC:** Lucas Corneliusen, **DW:** Dave Weber, **RH:** Robert Hinz, Lucas Stephenson, **MS:** Mark Stephenson, **CC:** Connor Cochrane, **EN:** Erin Nickel, **MR:** Mark Rauzon, **NW:** Nils Warnock, **AM:** Alex Merritt, **MSch:** Mark Schulist, **OM:** Oscar Moss, **LN:** Larry Nigro, **BB:** Brian Browne



Caspian Tern

Glen Tepke, www.phase.com/geepke



Black-throated Gray Warbler

Patricia Ware, CC0 1.0



Long-tailed duck

Glen Tepke, www.phase.com/geepke

POINT REYES BIRDING & NATURE FESTIVAL IS GOING VIRTUAL! REGISTER NOW!

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The event will be live streamed and EAC is offering two ways to join the festival through LIVE STREAM and LIVE + VIDEO passes. Video passes allow you to watch the classes through 2021 if you can't make it to the live event. EAC members get special pricing!

For information about signing up go to pointreyesbirdingfestival.org, click on "Schedule of events, speaker bios & registration."

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Laura Abramson, Joyce Asmussen, Anne Baele, Mary Barter, J Bayer, Edgar Bowron, Kathy Carrasco, Lorena Chandler, Joyce Clements, Sandy Colombi, Pamela Condos, Mike Cummings, Martha Curtis, David Desante, Eli Davey, Michael Day, Laurel Doremus, Andrea English, Paul Esperance, Mary Faucette, Karena Franses, Jennifer Gelini, Paul Giampaoli, Bill Goldman, Michelle Guchereau, W. Kurt Hauser, Christy Hayes, Donald Heyneman, Aleksandr Iakovlev, Shannon Johnson, Mary Kasher, Tanya Kennedy-Degrazia, Kenneth King & Nina Foighel, Eve Kruse, Helen Lang, Steven Lanum, Dennis Mac Donnell, Emily Magnaghi, Maureen McGowan, Julie McGuinness, Michael Moerman, Pieter S. Myers, Kevin Olson, Irene Omi, Dvora Parker, Rafael Perez-Espejo, J. Perino, Barbara Perkins, Joseph Perry, Rayner Foundation, Susan Reynolds, Naomi Saunders, Barbara Sievers, Blaise Simpson, Mervyn Stein, Earl Titman, While Hiking Marin

ALERT

Report Barred Owl Spottings

Barred Owls have extended their range to the west coast and have been seen in Marin. There is increasing concern about their impact on Marin's Northern Spotted Owl population. Barred Owls are larger, more aggressive and occupy the same habitat type as Spotted Owls. See contact list at <https://marinaudubon.org/2020/09/01/alert-report-barred-owl-spottings>.



The Rail

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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.

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.

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