



William Dreskin

**Superb Starling**

The September 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.

Famous for having the biggest concentrations of large mammals on the planet, Tanzania is also an exciting birding destination. This presentation will feature birds travelers would be likely to see on a safari to Northern Tanzania in the winter, before migratory birds have left for their breeding grounds, as well as some of the large mammals. Birds you will meet include the Hammerkop, a compulsive nest-builder, the Sacred Ibis, extirpated from Egypt but easily seen in Tanzania, the vulnerable Southern Ground Hornbill, the endangered Saddlebilled Stork and other storks, Ostriches, Coursers, Bee Eaters, the Secretary Bird, and a variety of eagles.

Wendy Dreskin is a professional nature educator. She has been teaching the popular class, Meandering in Marin, at College of Marin for more than 20 years as well as teaching nature education classes for children. She has been leading trips to Tanzania since 2014.

Photos in the presentation are by William Dreskin, an award-winning photographer whose photographs have appeared in books and magazines including *Marin*, and *Bay Nature*. He has exhibited in numerous galleries and national exhibitions, and his photographs are in private and corporate collections.



# The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

## Annual Report For FY 2020-21

It's been another unique and troubling year during which we continued our activities and programs based on adaptation to COVID. We used Zoom for our Speaker Programs, virtual field trips and also for our Board, committee, and conservation work. Agencies and government meetings still continue on Zoom with more than the usual attendance. Considering the circumstances, we're proud to have offered many programs and to have accomplished so much, including continuing land stewardship work at our Corte Madera properties. Our major activities and accomplishments are presented below.

**EDUCATION**

We presented our Speaker Series programs on Zoom and they were much better attended than the in-person meetings with two to four times more attendees. In addition to our usual ten-speaker program, we sponsored a special program on the Farallones Mouse Eradication Plan. We held virtual field trips on zoom also, one to two a month until near the end of the year.

**LAND PROTECTED**

Adding to our already more than 500 acres of habitat, we completed the acquisition of one parcel, the last undeveloped parcel at the Larkspur Boardwalk, donated by the Blauvelt family. This parcel, part of the larger tidal marsh that surrounds Piper Park, is habitat for the endangered Ridgway Rail. We worked on several other properties: one did not work out due to a cloud on the title and we're still working on another. Our attorney is researching whether the donor, the local chapter of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), can do so without approval of the state VFW. The county suspended processing of tax default parcels due to Covid-19, delaying work on several other properties we're interested in. We continue to serve as fiduciary agent for Marin Baylands Advocates, which partners with us to acquire wetland properties.

**CONSERVATION ADVOCACY ON PLANNING/ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

We are actively part of the following committees: Environmental Roundtable, Corte Madera Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Process, Bothin Marsh Adaptation Committee, Lagunitas Creek Technical Advisory Committee, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, San Francisco Estuary Partnership, and the Baylands Working Group for State Route 37.

**HABITAT STEWARDSHIP**

Last winter, we hired On Point Land Management to plant at Bahia and STRAW (Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed) to plant at our Simmons Slough property. Watering at Corte Madera was completed because the native plants have now established after being in the ground for two years. At Bahia, we hired Hanford ARC to irrigate our newly installed plants using reclaimed water. STRAW maintained plants they installed last winter. Also, we were able to get the granting and regulatory agencies to change the monitoring protocols at Simmons, so STRAW completed that monitoring. We've also been negotiating with STRAW to plant the transition zones at Bahia. Martha Jarocki and Bob Hinz continued with monthly volunteer workdays at Corte Madera and Triangle Marsh.

**SPECIAL PROJECTS**

- **Monarch Project** Volunteers for this project, managed by Ed Nute, have been planting narrow-leaf milkweed on our Simmons property and Bahia properties, and have been successful attracting butterflies.
- **Limonium Removal** Jude Stalker again organized volunteers to remove non-native sea lavender (*Limonium*) from the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve and our adjacent property, and from properties owned by others along the Sausalito waterfront.
- **Breeding Bird Atlas** We played a significant part in getting the Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas up and running, and successfully completing its first year.

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## 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 Doug Waterman 506-4675  
Secretary Ann Thomas 924-9559  
Treasurer Lelia Lanctot 924-6138  
Conservation Roger Harris 510/710-9120  
Barbara Salzman 924-6057

Field Trips Open  
Membership Chair Bob Hinz 383-8688  
Contact Bob for membership problems or questions.

Outreach, Website Elyse Omernick 694-2320  
Speaker Series Missy Crowe 264-7823  
Special Projects Jude Stalker 680-6291  
Nominating Roger Harris 510/710-9120  
Editor, *The Rail* Doug Waterman 506-4675  
Property Management Ed Nute 669-7710  
Volunteer Coordinator Open  
BAAC Repts Barbara Salzman 924-605  
Doug Waterman 506-4675  
At-large Director Lowell Sykes 388-2821

## 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

We've been looking forward to our new fiscal year, and returning to our field trips and speaker programs. However, the recent surge in COVID has given us pause. We stopped to ponder whether we can safely present our field trips. After careful consideration, we've decided that we can safely offer field trips if we follow County Health Guidelines. See page seven for the guidelines we will follow to keep everyone safe, along with our upcoming field trip list. Trip registration is available on the Field Trips page of our website.

To reach the most members we'll be adding email addresses that we have in our membership records to our email list. To be sure you get our notices and announcements, in case we don't have your email address, go to the MAS homepage and fill out the "Join Our Email List" form found in the right column. Being on our email list assures you will get timely notices of changes to our field trips, public health guidelines, and speaker series as well as conservation alerts and other important notices. There is an "unsubscribe" link at the end of each of our emails, should you wish to unsubscribe.

We'll be continuing to hold our Speaker Series programs on Zoom with the first one scheduled for September. These programs are now under the watchful eye of our new Speaker Series Chair Missy Crowe. Missy was appointed by our Board too late for us to announce her in our newsletter. Missy has lived in Marin for 30 years with her husband and two children. Missy was first introduced to Audubon through summer camp attended by her children at the Audubon Sanctuary at Richardson Bay. She is looking forward to contributing to the environment in joining our Board.

Welcome again to our other new Board Members. Lelia Lanctot is now taking our Board minutes as our new Secretary, Roger Harris, who is sharing the Conservation Committee Chair with me. A huge thank you to our outgoing Secretary who is fortunately

still serving as our Treasurer, and Doug Waterman who is moving to Vice President. Lowell Sykes will be continuing on the Board as an At-large Director.

Thank you to all who donated to our spring appeal to benefit our properties. If you haven't had a chance yet, it's not too late. Just send a check to our Post Office box or donate through our website – note that it is for our spring appeal for our properties. All of your donations will go to support and enhance habitats MAS owns. Your donation will help us purchase, install, and maintain plants.

And we are grateful also for two grants we have been awarded over the summer: from the Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission for plants at Bahia and from the Alpine Club Foundation for milkweed plants to support Monarch butterflies.



LEFT: Monarch egg on Narrow-leaf milkweed, RIGHT: Young Monarch caterpillar on Showy milkweed

Marin Audubon Monarch Rescue Project

The Breeding Bird Atlas has completed a successful first year and has transitioned to a new team of managers. We're working with them to define and codify our working relationship. In the meantime, you can read updates on our website.

We hope you like our new newsletter color photos. We're anticipating seeing what the first edition looks like ourselves. With COVID, the full Board has not been able to see the sample in person. Thanks to our printer MSI Litho in San Rafael, with their new equipment, for giving us this new look.

As you can see, we've been busy over the summer. We're excited about the coming year and hope you'll join us in our activities. Stay well; wear your masks and social distance.

# CONSERVATION

## CONSERVE, CONSERVE

We're in the middle of a drought and conservation levels are lower than they should be. The North Marin Water District (NMWD) has adopted significant conservation mechanisms to help their customers save water: a recycled water program and water meters that alert the District and customers when they have a leak. This undoubtedly saves many thousands of gallons. NMWD also operates a recycled water program that customers can use for landscape irrigation.

As we go to press, the Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) has announced it has established a recycled water program. Both districts have incentive programs, offering rebates to retire lawns and to change to water saving appliances, (consult their websites for more information). The Districts are under constant pressure from folks who want exemptions for housing, gardens, etc.

We can't expect to continue to use water as though it were a limitless resource. We don't know how much rain we will have next year. We can't expect there will be sufficient water next year if we don't do our part to conserve. And we can't expect others to provide us with water.

Now, our water comes from reservoirs built on creeks and rivers in Marin and Sonoma counties. Should MMWD get a pipeline over the Richmond Bridge, the water will be taken from another ecosystem most likely from the Delta. The less people conserve, the more water is taken from another ecosystem. And we people are not the only ones who need water. There will be less for the fish and other wildlife that depend on these ecosystems. Populations of salmon and steelhead that depend on Lagunitas Creek, the Russian River and the Delta, are at risk of extinction. Other species will also be adversely affected.

The time to act is now – to do your part and step up your conservation efforts. Reduce toilet flushing, save your pasta water for other uses, retire your lawn, and follow all of the other suggestions offered by the Water Districts. Plan to change your garden over to native plants. Irrigation consumes the most water. While you can't plant now, you can next winter when we expect we will have some rain, even if it's not enough to get us out of the drought. It will lessen the demand, and hopefully residents will make use of the reclaimed water.

## FARALLONES UPDATE

The California Coastal Commission hearing, to determine consistency of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's plan to eradicate the non-native house mice with the Coastal Program, has been delayed again to probably late fall. The explanation for the delay in part is the change in administration and the time needed for the new administration to get up to speed. Over the summer, the opposition appears to have been at work trying to drum up opposition. Their focus continues to be on advocating for a contraceptive – an approach they've promised for years, but does not exist. Even if it did, it would not work because it would just limit, not eradicate the mouse population.

And there is good news – Senator Diane Feinstein has announced her support for the Service's plan based on science. In her letter to the Commission, Senator Feinstein recognized that eradication of the invasive house mice is a critical step in restoring the Farallones ecosystem and that can only be accomplished by the one-time application of Brodifouam that has been successful on nearly 700 islands worldwide.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Testifying during the Coastal Commission's Open Time is an important action you can take to support the nesting sea birds and restore the ecosystem at the Farallones. It is easy to do and you only need to speak for two minutes because that's all you're allowed. The Commission meets the first Wednesday and Thursday of each month. Consult the Commission's website to sign up which you must do in advance. See our past newsletters on MAS's website for articles on the Farallones for talking points. The opposition has been speaking regularly at open times.

## PRNSS GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN DELAY

The administration delayed approving the General Management Plan's (GMP) Alternative B, which provides for ranching to remain at Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNSS) in perpetuity. We wrote the Assistant Secretary welcoming the



Half of the world's Ashy Storm-Petrels nest on the Farallones, where they are at risk from a complex interaction with migratory Burrowing Owls and introduced house mice.

Department of the Interior's review of the GMP approval by the Coastal Commission as being in the best interest of the natural resources of the Park and of the public. We advised Assistant Secretary Estenoz of our concerns: that local political interests dominated the choice of alternatives instead of the interests of the natural resources of the Park, i.e. tule elk, endangered, special status and migratory species and the great diversity of habitats. While we are sympathetic with the plight of ranchers, we are particularly concerned that the chosen Alternative B minimizes responsibility for natural resources. We requested that approval of the GMP consider the deficiencies of Alternative B and that an alternative be chosen that requires:

1. Leases be retired as families retire from ranching and those lands be restored to habitat. This would provide for restoration of habitats without negative impacts on current ranching families.
2. Ranchers to comply with water quality and other resource protection standards to retain their lease.
3. Leases be revoked for noncompliance with lease requirements and natural resource protection standards instead of allowing the decision to be at the discretion of the NPS.
4. Adequate staffing be funded and hired to enforce lease and General Management Plan requirements.

The NPS has delayed approval of the GMP. The reason given is the same as for the Farallones; the change in the administration  
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# Tiscornia Marsh Habitat Restoration and Sea Level Rise Adaptation Project

The Tiscornia Marsh Habitat Restoration and Sea Level Rise Adaptation Project is Marin Audubon's contribution to addressing sea level rise due to climate change. It is an on-the-ground project that will have many environmental and human benefits on both the local and regional level. The project will restore to tidal action four acres that have eroded over the last 30 years and San Rafael's 6-acre diked marsh behind the soccer field at Al Boro Community Center. Adding the restored tidal marshes to the existing marsh will more than double habitat for the endangered Ridgway Rail and other species. The restored marshes will buffer the levee from wave energy that causes erosion. Raising the height of the levee will improve flood protection for the Canal Area. The top of the levee will be paved to extend the Bay Trail. Our partner, the Multicultural Center of Marin, is using various approaches in reaching out to engage and inform Canal residents about sea level rise and our project.

Our San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority grant has funded the preparation of technical studies by our consultants, ESA, who are now preparing the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the project. We will be holding a public meeting in the fall.

Using nature-based measures to address sea level rise is in its infancy. Our project will be a model for other projects through the Bay. We'll be reusing sediments dredged from the San Rafael Canal or nearby to restore the tidal marsh in one of the first projects to restore tidal marsh in the Bay (not in diked baylands). We will also be using nature-based structures, a coarse beach and a living seawall/rock jetty, to protect the marsh. These components will yield valuable information to guide restorations throughout the bay.

## Annual Report

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### GRANTS

We are working under our \$968,916 grant from the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority Measure AA to continue with our Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan for Tiscornia Marsh (see box). Other grants we received: \$2,350 from the Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission for native plants for Bahia; \$10,000 from the RHE Foundation for Bahia plants and for property acquisition; \$1,500 from the Alpine Club Foundation for the Monarch Project; and a grant through the Flood Control District funded installation of a water control structure to enable management of the water levels on our Simmons Slough diked baylands property.

### BIOLOGICAL STUDIES

We contracted with Point Blue Conservation Science to do bird surveys for Richardson Bay to help inform our work advocating for removal of anchor-outs from Richardson Bay. The fieldwork for the Year 3 monitoring required by regulatory agencies for our Corte Madera restoration project was completed in June. Environmental Science Associates and The Watershed Nursery are now preparing the report.

### CITIZEN SCIENCE

Sponsored three Christmas Bird Counts: Southern Marin, Point Reyes, and Cheep Thrills in North Marin although at reduced levels. Our Board also agreed to sponsor an update of the 1993 Breeding Bird Atlas by Juan Garcia. The first year was funded by a bequest from Mimi Burton's estate.

### CONSERVATION

- **Farallon Island Restoration** Throughout the year, we continued our efforts to support restoration of the Farallones ecosystem by implementing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's plan to eradicate the invasive house mice from the islands. We sponsored a webinar, with significant help from Point Blue Conservation Science, spoke at several Coastal Commission hearings at open time, and published regular articles in our newsletter.
- **Richardson Bay Anchor-Outs** Continued advocating for the removal of anchor-outs from Richardson Bay and for the protection of eelgrass by commenting to Richardson Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) and at BCDC's Enforcement Committee. We reviewed and commented on the *Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan*.
- **FERN** Partnered with the Native Plant Society and the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin to form the Fire and Environment Resilience Network (FERN) focusing on integrating the protection of natural resources with countywide fire prevention efforts.

- **Northern Spotted Owl** Sent information packets to residents within a quarter-mile of Northern Spotted Owl nests near San Anselmo, Corte Madera, Fairfax, San Rafael. This expanded our previous mailings to Marin County and Mill Valley residents, and we advocated for protection in various ways through the year.
- **Las Gallinas Wildlife Pond** Continued to engage with the Las Gallinas Sanitary District about management of its Wildlife Pond in an effort to ensure that sufficient cattails remain for nesting Least Bittern habitat as well as nesting and overwintering habitat for the many other species that use the pond.
- **MMWD** Engaged with District staff and Board on various watershed activities including eBikes and watershed protection. Testified to urge measures to conserve water to address the drought.
- **Bald Eagle** Wrote to alert the Marin County Community Development Agency, the District Supervisor and owners of the property and adjacent properties, to advise them of the presence of the nest. There are other nests in the Bay Area but this is the first known Bald Eagle nest immediately adjacent to the Bay. A special reason to celebrate!
- **Corte Madera Creek Flood Control Project** Commented in support of removing the concrete channel, removing the non-functional fish ladder and restoring habitat along the creek banks.
- **Town of Corte Madera Climate Change Report** Participated in the Town's Climate Change Steering Committee and testified in support of including alternatives to protect the houses while protecting Corte Madera's tidal marshes from impacts of sea level rise. Unfortunately, under pressure from some residents, the Town removed all alternatives showing protection scenarios.
- **General Plan Review** Submitted comments on the San Rafael General Plan 2040, and on the Larkspur and Sausalito general plans, aimed at strengthening policies to protect wetlands, bay habitats and trees.
- **Marin County Open Space District** Commented on Negative Declarations for projects intended to improve trails and having some habitat enhancement benefits, at Bahia in Novato and Cascade Bridges Project in Fairfax.
- **Pt. Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan** Submitted written comments and testified to the CA Coastal Commission in support of delaying a decision on the preferred alternative until the NPS demonstrates the water quality problems

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## Annual Report

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are corrected and also to allow ranches to be restored to nature as ranchers retire from ranching.

- **Ring Mountain Vegetation Removal** Sent letter to the Southern Marin Fire District objecting to destruction of endangered plants at Ring Mountain that were removed for defensible space.
- **Highway 37** Attended Policy Committee (elected officials) meetings, Caltrans Steering Committee meetings, and PEL meetings all of which discussed plans for short- and

## Conservation – PRNSS

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requires time for the new staff to get up to speed on the issues. The administration also has also had to address a lawsuit, brought by Harvard Law School's Animal Law and Policy Clinic on behalf of local groups, to force the Park Service to provide food and water for the tulle elk. A federal judge denied the environmental groups' request based on lack of evidence.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Send your own letter urging the Park Service to reject Alternative B and provide clear paths to restore ranchlands to habitat. Address communications to: Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Shannon Estenoz: [Shannon\\_estenoz@ios.dos.gov](mailto:Shannon_estenoz@ios.dos.gov).

## STATE ROUTE (SR) 37 ALTERNATIVE DESIGNS THREATEN MARIN WETLANDS

It was a shock to learn that three of the five alternatives Caltrans has developed for connecting the SR 37 with Highway 101 involve major filling of wetlands. At a recent meeting, Caltrans revealed these alternative routes: Over-Bay goes through diked baylands and tidal marsh adjacent to Novato Creek and then across open water of San Pablo Bay; Bahia-Atherton extends right through the middle of the Bahia tidal marsh we restored 13 years ago and is now owned by the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW); Burdell Island Alternative goes through Mira Monte, SMART's mitigation marsh and the CDFW diked baylands. Of the two other scenarios which are on the current alignment, one is for an earthen embankment and the other a causeway.

It's perplexing that these alternative routes

long-term alternatives for improving traffic conditions. We advocated protecting the marshes and other natural resources along then State Route 37 corridor. Also participated in the Baylands Group, which consists of organizations that focus on protecting the North Bay wetlands and other resources.

- **Commented on various other smaller projects** Mountain Review Road Negative Declaration to protect riparian vegetation; Fairview Road Residence to protect Redwood trees for Northern Spotted Owl habitat; and Canalways Vegetation Removal to ensure this year's pampas grass removal by the property owners does not impact the wetlands.

have been proposed because they violate the very criteria Caltrans has put forward to disqualify routes. Caltrans criteria include the presence of tidal marsh, wetland restoration sites, open space/public lands, floodplain, and bay mud. Most are also endangered and special status species habitat.

We will be working with agencies and other North Bay organizations to have these environmentally damaging alternatives rejected.

## AGREEMENT WITH BCDC APPROVED BY REGIONAL AGENCY

At its August meeting, the Richardson Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) approved an agreement negotiated with BCDC to remove anchor-outs from Richardson Bay. The agreement, based on an adopted Eelgrass Protection Zone, sets forth specific deadlines for removing unoccupied, occupied, and safe and seaworthy vessels (those who are seaworthy and with experienced operators) by 2026.

Fifteen to 20 moorings could be installed in the Anchorage Zone for seaworthy vessels relocated from the Eelgrass Protection Zone and these vessels could remain after October 15, 2026 as long as the RBRA gets a permit from BCDC. This would basically be a mooring field permitted by BCDC. The only regulations that would apply to address the use of the Bay by permanent anchor-outs using the moorings would be the 72-hour anchorage limit of the county and cities (10-hour Belvedere). Enforcement of these limits, which are not mentioned in the agreement, has not been consistent through the years. So, this appears to be a big loophole.

The agreement provides for restoring eelgrass in a phased adaptive-management approach over 10 years. However, 10% of the existing eelgrass would continue to be at risk because it is outside of the Protection Zone.

The Agreement still must be approved by BCDC.

## Marin Audubon Society Statement of Financial Position As of June 30, 2021

### ASSETS

Current Assets	
Operating Bank Accounts	144,870
Property Bank Accounts	91,627
Marin Baylands Advocates Bank Account	52,809
Total Current Assets	289,306
Real Property	4,667,993
Investment Account	1,943,125
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$6,900,424</b>

## Marin Audubon Society Statement of Activities July 2020 through June 2021

### REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Donations	177,867
Grant Income for Property, Restoration, and Enhancement	354,190
Membership	58,324
Events and Activities	779
Interest and Dividend Income	74
Marin Baylands Advocates Income	21,710
<b>TOTAL REVENUE &amp; SUPPORT</b>	<b>612,944</b>

### EXPENSES

Property Restoration, Enhancement, and Management	22,151
Professional Services	494,200
Office Supplies, Printing, and Postage	35,201
Program Expenses	6,138
Insurance	10,164
Property Parcel Taxes	13,347
Permits and Fees	3,529
Website and Social Media	4,175
Other General Expenses	(1,817)
Marin Baylands Advocates Expenses	5,713

**TOTAL EXPENSES 592,261**

### RESULTS FROM OPERATIONS 20,683

Investment Gain – Realized and Unrealized	386,856*
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**CHANGE IN EQUITY 407,539**

**TOTAL EQUITY – 6,492,886**

### BEGINNING OF YEAR

**TOTAL EQUITY – \$6,900,424**  
**END OF YEAR**

\*Includes endowment

## TAKE OPEN SPACE COMMUNITY SURVEY

Tell Marin County Parks and Open Space your views on extending Measure A, the 1/4 cent Bond Measure that will extend support for parks, open space and agriculture. The current bond measure expires in March 2022 and must be renewed by a vote of the public.

To take the survey, Google "Marin County Parks Community Survey." You will be asked your priorities for use of the funds and whether funding should be lowered, remain the same or raised for categories to be funded.

## HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

### HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Perhaps the most important activity on our workdays will be watering a few plants that are suffering the most from the drought. We also will pull two invasive nonnative plant species that grow and bloom in the fall, namely, *Salsola soda* and *Dittrichia graveolens* (stinkwort).

Act locally and join us on a workday. California's wild plants and animals need your help. We all make a difference.

#### Volunteer Workdays

##### Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: September 4, October 2

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: September 11, October 9

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, please contact Jude at judestalker@gmail.com.

### THANK YOU, STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Annette Anzalone, Alanna Hickey & Andy Bruns, Bob Hinz, Martha & Gerry Jarocki, Linda Nicoletto, Ed Nute, Kristin Nute, Lowell Sykes

### MISSING THE BIRDLOG?

Not to worry! Noah Arthur's Birdlog will return in October.

### 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>.

### BAHIA

A crew from Hanford ARC (the contractors we have hired for some of our restorations) has been doing a great job watering our young plants installed last winter. The crew irrigates every two weeks and under that regime the plants are doing great too. We're so lucky that recycled water is available to the public in Novato.

It does not take the crew the entire day to do the watering, so we have them do other work for the rest of the day. At first, they removed radish. For the last three waterings, the crew has been sheet-mulching Harding grass, which is present in several large stands and some smaller ones. Sheet mulching is a method of preventing the growth of undesirable plants using sheets of cardboard, covered with a thick layer of woodchips to hold them down, placed over the target plants to prevent their growth. Harding grass is a highly invasive species that is major problem at both Bahia and Simmons properties.

### CORTE MADERA RESTORATION SITE

We held Volunteer Workdays on the second Saturdays of June and July and on both days we cut and dug invasive plants. Volunteers watered

monthly for the first two summers at the site, however, the plants have been in the ground two years now so they should not need further watering. Should watering be needed, we will not be using potable water from the hydrant. We are monitoring the plants and until now, few have showed signs of intense stress.

Now, however, several large (two to three feet tall) coyote brush plants on Fish and Wildlife property are looking drought stressed – turning reddish all over. But the plant for which we have the most concern for survival in the drought is *Euthamia occidentalis* or Goldenrod, a late fall bloomer and valuable food for migrating songbirds and sparrows. In July, our volunteers began hand watering about a dozen *Euthamia* on the site at two-week intervals with water brought from their homes. They are hanging in there and hope they will go to seed.

Most of the coyote brush in general is soldiering on and beginning to bloom. The Ambrosia or ragweed is spreading vigorously and preparing to seed. Soil quality seems to be the determinate for the ragweed, on the higher mounds where the soil is thin there is less survival. We look forward to the time when successive generations of plants have improved the soil.

## Thank You, Donors to the Spring Appeal

Deborah Ablin, Bud Alderson, Donna Allen, Janice Bass, Janet Arrigotti Mark Birnbaum, Erin Blanchard, Greg Block, Carl & Jean Blom, Nancy Bohnet, Kay Bolla, DeWitt Bowman, Sharon Bozic, Faith Brown, Geraldine Brown, Leslie Brown, Patricia Buzzotta, Anthony Campodonico, Ingrid and Samuel Chase, William Clarke, Guy Craig, John Crawford, Victoria Cunningham, Richard Daly, Elaine Drude, Bonnie Edwards, Brett Elebash, Christopher and Phoebe Fielding, Ross Flewelling, Barbara Ford, Rick Fraites, Lewis Fredrickson, Judy Frost and Ted Steiner, Sandra Fullerton, Arlene Goldfarb, Carl and Donna Gowan, Sallie Griffith, Ron and Belle Guelden, Jeanette Gustafson, Erika Harris, Roger Harris and Meryl Sundove, Harry Hicks, Bob Hinz, Linda and Peter Hoch, Roger Hooper, Stephen Inciardi, Victoria Jackson, Susan Janson, Martha Jarocki, Emily Johnson, Rama Kumar, David Kimball, Joe & Barbara Kirkbride, William Klemme, M.D., Lelia Lanctot, Lisa Langevin, David Leech, Warren and Barbara Levinson, Patricia Lowrie, Sarah Martin, Sandra Massen, Sharon McCloskey, Tony Mekisich Stacey McGurk & Josh Romano, Doyleen McMurtry, Jean Moore, John and Hilda Mosher, Kari Mueller, Barbara Munden and Jerry Kenney, Eileen Murray, Patrick Murray, Michael Muschell, Linda Nicoletta, Larry and Maxine Nilsen, Frank Noonan, Ed and Marcia Nute, Bill Parrish, Susan Peters, Stephen Piatek and Meg Rosegay, Jessie Powell, Jeanne Price, Marianne Riser, Susan and John Ristow, Jillian Robinson, Georg Roth, Sallie Anne Rowe, Andrina Ruzick, Richard Scott, Eugene Sechser, Harold Sherley, Sharon, Sherrard, Sharie and Clem Shute, Sandra Slichter, Harry St. John, Lindsay Sparks, Court Stewart, Jeanine Strobel, Valorie Van Dahl, Paula Vitaris, Doug and Joyce Waterman, Jim White, David Wiechers, Helen and Victor Wong, Carolyn Zwicker

### OTHER DONATIONS

Thank you to Richard Mendelsohn for the gift in memory of Diane Brown and Geraldine Barsotti in memory of Linda Spence; to Ann Tepovich in celebration of Tara Taupier and David Roger's wedding, and to Susan Cumming in honor of Joan Turner.



## MAS Resumes Field Trips

After more than year absence due to COVID, we're excited to be returning to our outdoor field trips starting in September. We're fortunate to have so many talented leaders in our community who will once again be bringing their expert knowledge of birds to our members. Jim White and Bob Battagin will be resuming their popular series, Birding in Marin, with monthly trips to different birding hot-spots on the first Saturdays. William Legge will again be leading trips to Rodeo Lagoon two times this fall, and four trips coming after the first of the year. Rich Cimino will lead monthly trips and we're planning trips with other leaders. Trips planned for September and early October are described below.

**COVID SAFETY MEASURES** Field trips are open to fully vaccinated participants. To allow for social distancing, trips will be limited to the number of participants most suitable for the location. Registration is required for each trip. There will not be a waiting list. No drop-ins, please.

### POINT REYES FISH DOCKS, LIGHT HOUSE, AND BEACHES

#### Birding in Marin Series

Saturday, September 4, 2021

8:30 AM to mid afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Limit of 15 participants for this trip. Register at <https://marinaudubon.org/activities/field-trips>.

September provides the most birding surprises in Marin as many juvenile birds make their first migration west and south without the aid of Google maps. Western migrants such as **Townsend's**, **Hermit** and **Black-throated Gray Warblers** may be in the Point Reyes Tree islands with rarer eastern species. Western Tanagers may share a tree with a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**.

Drake's Bay begins to harbor large numbers of wintering species like scoters, loons, terns and gulls. A **Wandering Tattler** may join **Black Turnstones**, sanderlings and **Godwits** along the shores. This is a good time and place to witness **Parasitic Jaegers** harassing **Elegant Terns** to try to snatch a captured fish.

The Point Reyes Light House sits well out into the Pacific Ocean so some pelagic birds like **Shearwaters** may be seen from the comfort of the shore. **Peregrine Falcons** are often seen, especially on mornings when the fog hides the coast, and migrating land birds may be hunted out over the ocean. The point with its few Monterey Cypress can then be a life saving vision to them.

**DIRECTIONS:** Meet at 8:30 at the Fish Docks parking lot on the outer point. Take Sir Francis Drake thru Inverness toward the Light House. Left turn to the FISH DOCKS just after Ranch A (The Nunes Ranch) and one mile before the Light house. Carpool if possible, be vaccinated and allow 1.5 hour from the San Rafael area.

### VAUX'S SWIFTS AT MCNEAR BRICK AND BLOCK

#### San Rafael

Wednesday, September 8, 2021

6 to 7:40 PM depending on the weather

With Rich Cimino

Limit of 15 participants for this trip. Register at <https://marinaudubon.org/activities/field-trips>.

Join other MAS members for an evening opportunity to witness **Vaux's Swifts** during

their fall migration through Marin, which occurs in September and October. Dan McNear of McNear Brick & Block has kindly allowed Marin Audubon to access this remarkable site where decommissioned smoke stacks provide an important communal roosting place for the swifts.

Watching thousands of swifts as they descend into the stacks just before night-fall is an unforgettable sight. At the peak of migration, as many as 19,000 swifts have been counted in one evening. However, keep in mind that the number of swifts varies greatly from night to night and can range from a few hundred to thousands. Like everything else in birding, there are no guarantees!

Sunset on the evening of our visit will be at 7:12 PM, so plan on arriving on time to be ready. If the weather on the day of our trip is particularly cool or windy, the swifts are likely to enter the stacks early, so plan accordingly. Bring scopes, binoculars, and, if desired, folding chairs for your seating comfort. It can be chilly at dusk. Please stay with our group and do not enter any of the private areas on the property. Use soft voices and be sure to respect the privacy of local residents.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Hwy 101 take the Central San Rafael exit. Head east on Third St./Point San Pedro Rd for about 3.5 miles. The brickyard will be on the right. The address is 1 McNear Brickyard Rd. Park as close to the San Pedro Road entrance as possible. Please do not drive to or park near the closed gate.

### ABBOTT'S LAGOON AND THE INVERNESS TENNIS AREA

#### Birding in Marin Series

Saturday October 2, 2021

8:30 AM to mid afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Limit of 15 participants for this trip. Register at <https://marinaudubon.org/activities/field-trips>.

Abbott's Lagoon on the Pacific Coast in the Point Reyes National Seashore is one of Marin's premier birding locations sporting an eBird sum of 283 species. Fall migration south along the coast brings many birds to this area. Some that we hope to see include **Ferruginous Hawk**, **Baird's** and **Pectoral Sandpipers**, **Red-necked Phalaropes**, **Lapland Longspur**, **Horned Lark** and **Pipits**.

## FIELD TRIP CHAIR NEEDED

Board members have come together to ensure we have a robust field trip program for the coming year. But we still need a Field Trip Chair. We know there is a member out there who would be a great fit to take the lead and work with our committee to continue planning field trips. Contact Doug Waterman at 415/506-4675 to find out more.

Hundreds of ducks of a dozen species, geese, herons, **Peregrines** and **Ospreys** are also likely visitors. Plus you get some exercise; out and back is about 3 miles (some in sand) and Jim likes to do a full 5-mile loop. So pack a lunch for a picnic on the beach and bring a couple of layers for the fresh ocean air and help us spot a rarity.

To help bolster our participant's species lists to our yearly goal of 200, we plan to stop along Tomales Bay near the Inverness Tennis club to look for Pine and Alder woodland birds. A surprising number of species have been seen here and there is a nice little beach where we usually find several kinds of gulls.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Point Reyes Station on Highway 1 go just south of town, right turn onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd, follow that thru Inverness up over Inverness ridge into the Point Reyes National Seashore then go north on Pierce Point Road. The ABBOTT's Lagoon parking lot is on the left in about 3 miles. Car Pool if you can, allow 1.5 hours from San Rafael and please be vaccinated.

### OLOMPALI STATE HISTORIC PARK

#### Novato

Saturday October 9, 2021

9 AM to noon

With Rich Cimino & Janet Bodle

Limit of 10 participants for this trip. Register at <https://marinaudubon.org/activities/field-trips>.

It's always an exciting time to birdwatch at Olompali State Historic Park! October can bring fall surprises. This year, with the fires in the northern part of the state, Olompali Park may become home to species typically not seen in the park seeking shelter. Beginning and experienced birders are invited to join leaders Rich Cimino and Janet Bodle to bird the park. We will walk the old ranch road to the park's reservoir. We hope to see a wide variety of species that thrive in the park's oak savanna and open grasslands. The field trip will start at 9 AM meeting in the front of the visitor center.

**DIRECTIONS:** Exit Hwy 101 at Atherton Ave/ San Marin Dr in Novato. Follow the signs to Olompali State Historic Park. A right turn onto the Old Redwood Hwy frontage road will take you to the park. **There is an \$8 parking fee.** Recently the park gates have been opening by 8:30 AM.



# The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

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## SAVE THE DATE

October 20 **Field Trip:** Rodeo Lagoon  
With William Legge &  
David Wiechers

November 3 **Field Trip:** Corte Madera Creek  
With Rich Cimino and Janet Bodle

November 6 **Field Trip:** Las Gallinas &  
Hamilton Wetlands  
With Jim White & Bob Battagin

Check website for updates and details

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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](http://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](http://www.audubon.org/join).

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

## Join or Donate to the Marin Audubon Society

Please fill in this form and mail to the address below. If you are paying by check, please make it payable to **Marin Audubon Society**.

- Enroll me as a Chapter-Supporting Member
- Renewal
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