

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14 7:30 PM

Amigos Alados: Students Protecting Migratory Birds

By Alison Quoyeser



Alison Quoyeser

Amigos Alados bird observation walk

The October 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.

How do we teach the younger generation to know and care about birds? How do we raise the next generation of conservationists? This presentation will be about Amigos Alados, an environmental education and pen pal program founded 14 years ago to address those questions. Amigos Alados links school classes in California and Mexico in the study of 16 migratory birds that they share. The program uses bird studies to guide children towards becoming stewards of the environment, as well offering an opportunity for cultural and scientific exchange across the US-Mexico border.

Alison Quoyeser is the co-founder and co-director of Amigos Alados. After retiring from teaching elementary school, she has devoted much of her time to the project. She is also a faculty member with Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed (STRAW), an educational arm of Point Blue Conservation Science. She works with Bay Area students to raise awareness of birds and their habitats, watershed ecology, and environmental restoration, as well as to instill cultural appreciation of our friends in Mexico.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER:

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11 7:30 PM

Birding Adventures in Morocco

By John Sterling

IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|---------------------|---------|
| President's Message | 2 |
| Field Trips | 3 and 7 |
| Conservation Report | 4 |
| Habitat Stewardship | 6 |



The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Tiscornia Marsh Project Progress and CEQA Review



Barbara Salzman

Tiscornia Marsh from MAS's levee along East Canal Street

historic marsh and current mudflat. Using the Corps sediments would be ideal, as they will be dredging right next to our site, and that would be an important step forward now that the value of sediments to restoring marshes and adapting to sea level rise is widely recognized. Coordinating dredging

Our Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea Level Rise Adaptation Project is advancing. The Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is completed and was just released for public review. Certification of the EIR by the city is essential for us to move ahead, get more funding and to construct the project. See below for the information about the public process for approving the EIR.

Our Measure AA grant will be ending at the beginning of next year. During this phase, the Biological and Cultural Assessments, cultural report and geotechnical investigation have been completed. The project design has progressed and we've had multiple consultations with the city and with regulatory agencies through the Bay Regional Regulatory Integration Team (BRRIT); BCDC, Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, US Fish and Wildlife Service, the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, and National Marin Fisheries Service. In these and other meetings with agencies we discussed getting sediments from the Corps' dredging of the San Rafael Canal next fall.

Recently, we've focused on where we will get the sediments we need to restore marsh on

projects with restoration projects, particularly Corps projects, has been just about impossible through the years. Although other dredging takes place, of course, most of the dredging in the bay is for Corps projects. Our project could be a model for using dredged material for restoring tidal marsh in the Bay (most marsh restorations are in diked baylands) and for using sediments dredged for Corps projects.

Unfortunately, it just doesn't seem possible we can accomplish all we would need to do to take the Corps sediments by the end of next summer. In addition to getting permits, we have to choose and hire contractors, and construct the cobble beach to contain the sediments to restore the marsh.

As reported earlier, we've applied to the Ocean Protection Council for funding, and we'll be applying to the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority for their next grant round as well. Work in our next phase will include preparing applications for permits/agreements from the seven agencies, soil borings for additional geotechnical surveys, preparing applications for permits or other permissions from seven agencies, and preparing the final design.

continued on page 4

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 Lancot 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. | |
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| Speaker Series | Missy Crowe 264-7823 |
| Special Projects | Jude Stalker 680-6291 |
| Nominating | Roger Harris 510/710-9120 |
| Editor, <i>The Rail</i> | Doug Waterman 506-4675 |
| Property Management | Ed Nute 669-7710 |
| Volunteer Coordinator | Open |
| BAAC Reps | Barbara Salzman 924-605 Doug Waterman 506-4675 |
| At-large Director | Lowell Sykes 388-2821 |

DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Meetings open to members. 6:30 PM, First Tuesday of the month. Meetings are currently held online via Zoom. If you wish to participate please call 924-6057.

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're cautiously restoring field trips. To make them as safe as we can, we are requiring reservations and limiting participants to the number leaders feel they can accommodate safely. So everyone has a fair opportunity to reserve a spot, the sign-up form on our web site's Field Trips page will open at a specified time. Our Speaker Series Program will continue on Zoom.

More members will be receiving our email notices and alerts thanks to our Outreach Chair, Elyse Omernick who transferred all of the email addresses. You'll be receiving notices of Speaker Series Programs, Field Trips, changes in scheduling and conservation alerts. You can unsubscribe.

We are living in a challenging time. We have two different, but related, major challenges – drought and fire. As environmentalists, our approach to both should be the same: what are the impacts of my actions on natural resources. As environmentalists we must consider the environmental impacts of our decisions and of the management decisions made by the government agencies in charge. It's not easy to balance or consider our personal needs with the needs of the environment – indeed if they can be balanced. At 26%, the conservation accomplishment of MMWD customers is much below the projected 40% goal – most disappointing. North Marin is about the same. We did much better the last drought. If we are responsible, we are inconvenienced by the water restrictions – maybe we lose some plants, our lawn, take shorter

showers, or save water in buckets for other uses. Unfortunately, some customers seem to have no interest in conserving. There are continued applications for new construction, new non-drought sensitive landscaping, new swimming pools, and many continue to water lawns.

What natural resources are impacted? I'm sure I don't even know all of them, but the first would be the endangered salmonids of Lagunitas Creek (the southernmost salmonid creek in California). Also of concern are the wildlife that depend on the vegetative habitats along reservoirs and streams. If a pipe is constructed over the Richmond Bridge there will be less water for species that are already endangered (Delta smelt and three runs of Chinook Salmon). We would add to the cumulative impact of the massive diversions south and to farmers. For desalination, there would be impacts on species entrained in the intake, disposal of the sludge, and energy consumption. In Novato, there will be impacts on the reservoir habitat at Stafford Lake and perhaps Russian River species. If we do not get rain this winter, impacts will be even worse.

So do your part to protect our natural resources and limited water – conserve in your daily lives and tell our water District Directors to take a firm stand to protect our limited water resources, and hold all customers to the same standards of limited use.

I'll discuss fire next time. No more space. Stay safe— wear your mask.

New Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas's First Year

The Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas (MCBBA2) project recently concluded its first year of field studies. The year's report below was provided by the MCBBA2 Steering Committee.

The new MCBBA2 got off to a successful start in 2021. Over the course of 92 days, from 15 April to 15 July, 52 volunteer block leaders and observers recorded more than 21,000 observations, representing the results of almost 1,600 hours in the field.

Regional coordinators, Susan Kelly, Alex Merritt, Juan García, and David Wimpfheimer recruited knowledgeable birders and guided them into blocks that needed comprehensive coverage. MCBBA2 was also able to benefit from the advice of many experts, including Dave Shuford, Dave DeSante, Rusty Scalf, Denise Wight, and many others. Offering his cartographic skills and technical know-how was our own in-house GIS analyst William Wiskes.

The pattern of breeding confirmations gives us a preliminary insight into overall results. After a single season, MCBBA2 has already confirmed 120 species! Many of these are resident birds, such as Spotted Towhee and California Quail but, importantly, several are

neotropical migrants like Olive-sided Flycatcher and Black-headed Grosbeak.

MCBBA2 has confirmed species not confirmed by in the older effort: American Avocet, Forster's Tern, Cedar Waxwing, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon. Also, some new non-native species were confirmed: Mute Swan, Wild Turkey, and Eurasian Collared Dove.

We'd like to express our heart-felt thanks to all who have counseled us, encouraged us and given their time and observational skills. The Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas is, above all, a community effort. Our efforts were also aided by many organizations, including Marin Audubon Society, Point Blue Conservation Science, the California Avian Data Center, and the Institute for Bird Populations.

Because of all the help you have given us, MCBBA2 has a bright future! Please watch the website for new announcements from the MCBBA2 Steering Committee and Marin Audubon: <https://marinaudubon.org/birds/marin-county-breeding-bird-atlas>.

If you're interested in volunteering for the project, please contact the Steering Committee at mcbreedingbirdatlas@gmail.com.

MAS FIELD TRIPS

Open to the public

In person field trips have resumed and are open to all fully vaccinated participants. Trips are limited to allow social distancing. Register for trips on the MAS website Field Trips page. Registration is available on the date indicated in the trip announcements below.

OLIMPALI STATE HISTORIC PARK

Novato

Saturday, October 9, 2021

9 AM to noon

With Rich Cimino & Janet Bodle

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. 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.

Registration will open on September 30 at 8 AM on the Field Trips page on the MAS website. There is a limit of 10 participants for this trip. There will not be a waiting list. No drop-ins, please.

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.

RODEO LAGOON

Marin Headlands

Wednesday, October 20, 2021

7:30 AM to noon

With William Legge and David Wiechers

With large numbers of birds moving through the area this time of year, it's sure to be interesting with unusual sightings a definite possibility. As we watch for more scarce late fall migrants, early winter wildfowl and passerine migrants, perhaps we'll discover a rarity to add to the current eBird list of 303 species here. We will begin the morning with a sea watch at 7:30 AM.

Registration will open on October 11 at 8 AM on the Field Trips page on the MAS website. There is a limit of 12 participants for this trip. There will not be a waiting list. No drop-ins, please.

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 Road to the Rodeo Lagoon Parking Lot at the end and meet by the bridge over the channel to the beach.

CORTE MADERA ECOLOGICAL RESERVE AND NEWLY RESTORED GOLDEN GATE WETLANDS

Corte Madera

Wednesday, November 3, 2021

9 AM to noon

With Rich Cimino

Purchased in 2016 by Marin Audubon, this important bayland property has undergone extensive restoration work in subsequent years thanks to the hard work of Marin Audubon Society board members, hired restoration specialists, and volunteers. The area is now a restored marsh that supports an important population of Ridgway's Rails and other special status species and includes a newly created high tide refuge habitat where hired crews have planted 16,200 native upland plants.

Regularly scheduled workdays are held here for those who might like to help with the continuing restoration work, but on this particular day, we will join Rich for a tour of the area with a focus on BIRDS! Recently Rich began visiting the area regularly and will share his discoveries with us. High tide is approximately 11 AM, species we may see are ducks, long-legged waders, shorebirds, rails, plovers, **White-tailed Kites, Osprey, American Pipits, Savannah Sparrows** and **Western Meadowlarks**.

No restrooms are available here. Bring binoculars, scopes, layers, water, and snacks, planning a 1.5 to 2 mile walk, light rain does not cancel the walk.

Registration will open on October 25 at 8 AM on the Field Trips page on the MAS website. Limit of 15 participants for this trip. There will not be a waiting list. No drop ins, please.

DIRECTIONS: Corte Madera Ecological Reserve is located behind Trader Joe's at the eastern end of Industrial Way in Corte Madera. Meet and park behind Trader Joe's.

LAS GALLINAS AND HAMILTON WETLANDS Birding in Marin

Saturday, November 6, 2021

8:30 AM to mid afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Join Jim and Bob on an easy, birdy walk of 1.5 miles around the Las Gallinas ponds where we are likely to see 10 species of ducks, five of herons, five of raptors, five of sparrows and some rails like **Ridgway's, Sora**, and **Virginia** with **Gallinules**, coots, swans and geese! Shall we try to identify the duck species by females? I wonder if the Merlin will be back. These oxidation ponds, where a large portion of Marin's waste water is converted to useful nutrients and clean enough to return safely to the San Francisco Bay ecosystem, demonstrate how we can provide for wildlife and live in harmony with nature.

After lunch we are going to visit the Hamilton Wetlands, restored by the Army Corp. of Engineers in the recent 5–10 years

to the SF Bay ecosystem, which have become the winter home of some ten thousand birds. It is remarkable that thru the 2nd World War and the Cold War years the US Air Force stayed on alert and could launch jet fighter planes in minutes from an airport here to defend the Bay Area. We will try to find 10 species of shorebirds here while staying alert to many other possibilities.

Registration will be open starting on October 27 at 8 AM on the Field Trips page on the MAS website. There is a limit of 15 participants for this trip. There will not be a waiting list. No drop-ins, please.

DIRECTIONS: From 101 north San Rafael take the Lucas Valley/Smith Ranch Road exit east. In about 0.5 miles, immediately after crossing the RR tracks, left turn and follow the road another 0.5 mile to the Las Gallinas parking at the end.

To the Hamilton Wetlands return to 101 North, take the second exit, Nave Drive toward Hamilton. Stay on Nave Dr, heading north, to Main Gate Dr and turn right. Go east to Hanger Ave and park along the levee behind Hanger 7.

WILLOW CREEK ROAD

Jenner

Saturday, November 13, 2021

8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

With Teresa and Miles Tuffli

Head up the Sonoma County coast to bird Willow Creek Road in Jenner. We'll have the chance for multiple raptor species, including potential for **Ferruginous Hawk, American Kestrel**, and maybe even **Bald Eagle**. Many year-round passerines will be frequenting the willows, alders, and scrub. With a view of the Russian River, we'll look for some waterbirds as well.

We'll meet at the Russian House #1 restaurant and bird the road's entrance on foot. We'll then move all cars down the road to a large pullout. We'll bird the willows, creek area, and river view on foot before consolidating cars and continuing down the road, stopping to bird various sections. For a peek at the area, check out Miles and Teresa's recap of birding Willow Creek Road back in July: <https://imbirdingrightnow.com/2019/07/28/sonoma-county-birding-willow-creek-road>.

No bathrooms. Heavy rain cancels. Bring binoculars, layers, sunscreen, water, lunch, or snacks. Please carpool if possible.

Registration will open on November 4 at 8 AM on the Field Trips page on the MAS website. Limit of 15 participants for this trip. There will not be a waiting list. No drop-ins, please.

DIRECTIONS: Russian House #1 is at 9960 Hwy 1, Jenner, CA. It is 9 miles north of Bodega Bay (15–20 minutes), directly along Hwy 1, on the right just before the Russian River bridge.

continued on page 7

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.

Tiscornia Marsh

continued from page 1

Over the past year, our community partner, the Multicultural Center of Marin (MCM) arranged and conducted a public meeting, engaging community youth and adults. MCM will be arranging another public meeting in October (see below).

Environmental review for our Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea Level Rise Project is underway. The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is available at <https://bit.ly/3Cli5cG>, on the City of San Rafael's website, Marin Audubon's website, and on the Tiscornia Project website.

CEQA RELATED MEETINGS:

1. **Marin Audubon-Multicultural Center of Marin community meeting will be held on October 13 at 5:30 on Zoom.**

This is a special meeting for the community to learn about the current project, ask questions of the designers get information about the City's CEQA process.

2. **City of San Rafael's public hearing on the Environmental Impact Report.**

Comments are due to the City of San Rafael by October 26 at 4 pm or comment verbally at the City's Zoom meeting that evening beginning at 7 pm. The meeting will be streamed live at www.youtube.com/cityofsanrafael. This is the legally required public hearing for the EIR review and certification. All questions and comments will be responded to. The Draft EIR describes the project and project setting, and addresses potential impacts to:

- Air Quality from the heavy equipment needed to construct the levees and place sediments. Aesthetics due to the coarse beach required to contain the sediments.
- Biological Resources because mudflat will be converted to tidal marsh and the work will be done in and near the tidal marsh that has been habitat for the endangered Ridgway Rails and fish.
- Water Quality from placement of dredge material, which will result in temporary suspended sediments in the water column.

- Greenhouse Gas increase from the heavy equipment use.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

You are invited to review the EIR and comment to the lead agency, the City of San Rafael, by the comment deadline of October 26. The EIR can be found <https://bit.ly/3Cli5cG> on the MAS website, the City's website and the Tiscornia Project website. See item 2 above for details.

Attend City's hearing and convey your comments and questions.

Mail comments to Theo Sanchez, Associate Civil Engineer, City of San Rafael, 1400 Fifth St, San Rafael, CA 94901 or Theo.Sanchez@cityofsanrafael.org.

FARALLON ISLANDS NON-NATIVE MOUSE ERADICATION PLAN

We're still waiting for confirmation of a date for a Coastal Commission hearing on the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Plan to Eradicate Non-native House Mouse. The house mice are disrupting the ecosystem and threatening the population of ash storm petrel and Leach's storm petrels, as well as endemic plant species.

Throughout the world more than 600 island habitats have benefitted from the program proposed by the USFWS to remove the highly destructive, non-native house mice from the Farallones. They are isolated unique ecosystems that are especially vulnerable to impacts of introduced species be they rats, mice or domestic cats. Islands are critical habitat for many seabirds and mammals that live most of their lives in the ocean but depend on islands to breed and raise their young. Species native to islands have evolved in the absence of mammalian predators making island species especially vulnerable. From 55 to 67% of recorded animal extinctions have occurred on islands.

It would be a tragedy and a disgrace if we lose species and allow the unique ecosystem of the Farallones to continue to decline because of failure to remove the introduced house mice. Other islands have benefitted from the procedure the USFWS proposed for use here. At Anacapa Islands, for example, brodifacoum was aerially applied in 2001 and 2002 to eradicate introduced rats. No rats have been observed on Anacapa

Islands since that time, and the ecosystem is recovering. They too had individuals and organizations that attempted to stop the project through media coverage and political pressure, as we have. Support of mainstream environmental groups and conservation biologists are credited with the project moving forward.

We cannot let the Farallones ecosystem continue to degrade because of opposition from a few organizations and individuals who are working hard to defeat the USFWS plan - the same thing happened at Anacapa. Learning from the lessons of Anacapa, we must assure that the Farallon Islands have the benefit of this well-tried procedure. The Coastal Commission vote is the last step.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Testify during the October Coastal Commission hearing at Open Time 9-10 AM in support of the USFWS's plan to rid the Islands of this non-native species once and for all. The first hour of each Commission hearing is reserved for public comment on items not on the agenda. The Commission meets the first Wednesday and Thursday and sometimes Friday of each month. You must sign up in advance - by 7 PM the evening before. Go to the Coastal Commission's website to sign up. The opposition has been speaking regularly at open times.

Tell the Commission in your own words that you want the ecosystem of the Farallones to be restored by removing the introduced house mice; that there is no other known way to remove these rodents but the two-episode use of the rodenticide brodifacoum; extensive mitigation measures will be employed: e.g. implementing when fewest birds are on the islands, hazing to chase gulls from landing on the islands, removing carcasses and others. See our past newsletters on MAS's website for articles on the Farallones for talking points.

BCDC TAKES ACTION ON ANCHOR-OUTS

During its regular meeting on September 2, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) approved a

continued on page 5

Anchor-outs

continued from page 4

negotiated Agreement between the Commission and the Richardson Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) that will guide the use of Richardson Bay for private residential use. The Agreement provides that by October 15, 2026 all vessels used for permanent residential use must be off the Bay.

The Agreement is based on boundaries defined in the RBRA's Eelgrass Protection and Management Plan (Plan) for an Eelgrass Protection Zone (two alternatives were proposed) and for an Anchorage Zone. The Eelgrass Protection Zone (Alternative A), approved by both the RBRA and BCDC, is the least protective of the alternatives. Alternative A excludes 10% of the current eelgrass in Richardson Bay; Alternative B would have protected 100% but was rejected because it was too difficult to manage. The anchoring zone extends along the Sausalito waterfront, beyond Sausalito's actual boundaries. Sausalito City Council members objected that they were not included in the negotiations and that the Agreement puts an unfair burden on their community because, with the anchorage Zone off Sausalito's shoreline, all of the vessel occupants will come ashore in Sausalito.

In addition to limiting use of the Bay for private residential use, the Plan has strong requirements for the protection of eelgrass. The RBRA must prepare a 10-year "adaptive management plan" to protect and restore eelgrass. The Plan must include studies comparing active management scenarios to restore the crop circles, the wide circles of destroyed eelgrass within the beds caused by anchor outs moored in the eelgrass beds.

The Agreement sets forth a schedule with specific dates by which the RBRA must have completed specific actions to progressively remove the anchor-outs. The Agreement provides that:

- By October 15, 2021, remove all unoccupied marine debris and other vessels. Floating homes outside of Waldo Point removed by October 15, 2023.
- By December 15, 2021, RBRA install 15-20 ecologically sound mooring tackle in the anchorage zone and the RBRA will test the effectiveness of the environmental moorings in avoiding damage to sub-tidal resources. The moorings are intended to be used by current anchor-outs who have enrolled in the RBRA's Safe and Seaworthy (S&S) program and who will be moved from the Eelgrass Protection Zone.
- By December 15, 2021, no more vessels



Richardson Bay anchor-outs seen from the air. Look for "crop-circles" – damaged eelgrass caused by moorings of the anchor-out vessels.

are anchored in the Eelgrass Protection Zone.

- No later than October 15, 2023, remove all illegally anchored vessels moored in the Eelgrass Protection Zone after August 2019, the date they started counting. RBRA will take all reasonable efforts to prevent continued importation of derelict vessels into Richardson Bay.
- By December 15, 2023, begin implementing eelgrass restoration in a phased approach over 10-years pursuant to the adaptive management plan.
- No later than October 15, 2024, remove occupied vessels that failed to register for the S&S program.
- By October 15, 2026, allow vessels staying for no more than 72 hours to anchor in the Anchorage Zone.
- No later than October 15, 2026, occupied vessels enrolled in the S&S Program must be removed and the RBRA must apply for a permit if it wishes to retain the moorings.

After waiting 35 years, we finally have a date – October 15, 2026 – when the anchor-outs should be out of Richardson Bay. The firmness of this date, however, is not entirely certain. Acknowledging that hardships might exist due to COVID, the RBRA can extend the mooring period, with BCDC's permission, for the health and safety of occupants. There is no process for ensuring hardship vessels are eventually removed. Also the RBRA can apply for a permit to retain the moorings after October 15, 2026, creating another uncertainty. The Agreement does not restrict permitting to the mooring tackle alone. A permit could include both the mooring tackle and the

vessels.

Without a provision in the Agreement that BCDC will not issue a permit authorizing S&S enrollees to continue to live on the Bay, we are concerned that the temporary moorings could become a permanent mooring field. BCDC staff responded to this issue by pointing out that the Richardson Bay Special Area Plan and Public Trust Doctrine prohibit residential use of the bay. We're not so sure these policies would prevent future residential use. They were in effect over the last 35 years and that didn't make any difference. They were simply not enforced.

So, while the Agreement is a significant step forward for restoring eelgrass in Richardson Bay and removing anchor-outs, these goals will be reached only if the RBRA actually removes all of the anchor-outs and implements the eelgrass restoration plan. The 1984 Special Area Plan was expected to remove the anchor-outs. This Agreement is different – it requires scheduled reporting to verify compliance. The Special Area Plan had no compliance or follow-up by BCDC. However, in our view, success will require consistent oversight and, if necessary, enforcement by BCDC, and monitoring by the public in its watchdog role.

POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE ROD RELEASED

The Record of Decision (ROD) for Point Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan has been released as we go to press. We'll be reviewing the ROD over the next month. In the meantime, we report

continued on page 6

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

With shorter daylight hours and longer, cooler nights (and a heavy rain??), watering might be done for the year. It will be the last chance to pull Russian thistle (*Salsola soda*) and stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens*) before they set seed. We seem to have nearly eradicated stinkwort at both Triangle Marsh and Corte Madera, but one missed plant can lead to a small patch next year. Harding grass will be showing signs of new growth but we'll be digging more of it again.

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: October 2, November 6

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: October 9, November 13

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, Mr. Black, Rich Cimino, Alanna Hickey, Bob Hinz, Martha & Gerry Jarocki, Ed Nute, Kristin Nute, Bryan Flaig, Lowell Sykes, Martha Jarocki, Alison Pence, Jude Stalker, Kamala Tippo, Jade Waters, Katharine Cagney

ALERT

Report Barred Owl Spotting

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-spotting>.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

BAHIA

We are pleased to have executed our Agreement for STRAW (Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed) to begin planting with students from local schools sometime soon. STRAW will be planting from a palette of native species that are found on the edges of the Bay. STRAW staff and students will be working on the eastern peninsula, closest to the Petaluma River. STRAW estimates that five to six groups of students will plant this coming winter, after rains begin. STRAW operates its own nursery and so will be supplying the plants. We're so pleased about this partnership and look forward to them coming. There are three peninsulas on our Bahia property that were constructed on tidal marsh as building pads for houses that would have been built around the lagoon and would have boat access to the Petaluma River.

Hanford crew continues to water the native plants we planted on other locations of the Bahia Peninsulas. They're watering with a

Point Reyes

continued from page 5

what the National Park Service has to say in their press release. Reportedly the activities described are modifications to the preferred Alternative B and the changes made are responsive to public comment and regulatory agency input. Changes include:

- More robust requirements for ranch operation – unspecified infrastructure upgrades and operational changes to protect natural and cultural resources.
- Further restrictions on ranch diversification – limited to 50 sheep, 66 goats, no chickens, farm stays limited to 2 guest rooms.
- Improvements to the management of elk – Tule elk in the Drake's Beach Area to 140 elk; the Limatour herd would be allowed to expand in population and geographic distribution.

Craig Kenkel, the new Pt. Reyes Superintendent is quoted as saying, "The plan strikes the right balance of ranching while also modernizing management approaches to protect park resources and the environment." Somehow, I doubt that we'll agree.

TAKE OPEN SPACE SURVEY

Tell Marin County Parks and Open Space your views on renewing Measure A, the 0.25 cent Bond Measure that will expire in March 2022 and is planned to be on the ballot in June 2022. The current Measure A provided that the funds raised be divided up and spent as follows: 15% to cities for local parks etc.; 13% to the Marin County Open Space District

water buffalo trailer with reclaimed water from Novato's purple hydrants.

Need Truck To Transport

We're considering purchasing a water buffalo trailer. We're seeking a volunteer with a truck to help us transport reclaimed water to irrigate plants on a few of our properties. Please contact Barbara Salzman, 415/924-6057.

CORTE MADERA RESTORATION SITE

Martha Jarocki been watering the most stressed plant species, goldenrod (*Euthamia*), by hand about every 10 days. Our volunteer Lowell Sykes picked two huge plastic jugs that have been stored at Bahia, signed up for the Marin Water recycled program at the Civic Center, and brought water to CMER and to Triangle on September 1 and 2. Hurray and huge thank you Lowell for saving our plants, and to Martha who watches over the plants at Corte Madera. Five volunteers helped at Corte Madera on the September workday.

for acquisitions; 52% for Marin County Park Programs; and 20% for agricultural easements to MALT a portion of which goes to the Resource Conservation District. A vote of the public is required to renew Measure A. The Measure we will vote on need not divide the funds according to the same percentages nor do the categories even have to be the same.

Our Conservation Committee will be studying the measure, its categories and percent allocations over the coming months. Although questions are being raised about the next measure coming up for a vote, it is undeniable that Measure A has benefitted Marin's habitats and the public. The County has used the bond funds to hire resource staff, improve management of open space and parklands and purchase open space. The Resource Conservation District, which works to protect natural resources, has received funding and MALT, although they have generated some controversy, has purchased agricultural easements. MAS has also benefitted directly. We received funding that assisted with the acquisition of the property at the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve and a five-acre property at Black Point.

Marin County wants to hear from you. Take the survey by Googling: 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. We'd like to hear from you too. Tell us what you'd like: respond to Conservation@marinaudubon.org. Do not delay. The survey will be taken down in early October.

MARIN BIRDLOG: AUGUST 2021

By Noah Arthur

We tend to think of August as shorebird month on the NorCal coast, but it is also a peak time for another group of warm-season waterbirds: terns. And this August started off with the rarest tern that has ever been found in Marin, a **Sandwich Tern** at Limantour Beach on the 5th (EM, LS, & MS). This is only the 4th or 5th record of the species in California.

Shore-birding was generally not great this August, especially with the former Valley Ford wetlands dry. The second rarity of the month didn't come until the 16th, when two **Black Swifts** flew over CC's house in San Anselmo. Continuing 2021's theme of unseasonable "winter" gulls, an adult of the newly-split **Short-billed Gull** (former Mew Gull) was at Rodeo Lagoon on the 18th (DM & MH).

Rarities began to hit hard on the 20th, with a **White-winged Dove** in Bolinas (MD) and a **Black-and-white Warbler** at the "Junior Mendoza" grove on Outer Point Reyes (EMk & LK). We all know that one good tern deserves another, and a very lost juvenile **Least Tern** was at the Mendoza Ranch pond (BA). Also on the 21st, a **Black-chinned Hummingbird** showed up at Keith Hansen's gallery in Bolinas (KH).



Noah Arthur

Semipalmated Sandpiper

show continued on the 22nd, with an **Eastern Kingbird** at the Fish Docks (MSa), **Northern Waterthrush** at the New Willows (LS & CC), **American Redstart** at Spaletta Ranch (CD & LK). A juvenile **Lesser Yellowlegs** was also in the Mendoza Ranch pond (CD & LK), and an unseasonable **White-winged Scoter** was off the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse (LS, CC, EM, & MS). Elsewhere on the 22nd, a **Yellow-headed Blackbird** turned up at Las Gallinas (KC) and a very early **Brewer's Sparrow** was at Corte Madera Marsh (AM).

Shore-birding finally picked up more speed on the 23rd, when an expedition to the mysterious and rarely-visited Horseshoe Pond near Drakes Beach yielded at least 9 **Baird's Sandpipers** and an unidentified peep that may have been a juvenile Red-necked Stint (EM, LS, & CC).

Horseshoe Pond continued its good run on the 26th, with a juvenile **Semipalmated Sandpiper** and two **Lesser Yellowlegs** joining the continuing Baird's Sandpipers (NA).

Both rare on the coast, a **Prairie Falcon** (DS) and a **Bank Swallow** (JZ, CC, LS, MS, & RC) cruised by the Fish Docks on the 28th (DS). Another early wave of eastern warblers began on that day too, with a **Black-and-white** at the Lighthouse (DS), and a **Yellow-breasted Chat** was at Las Gallinas (RA & BT). Another **Eastern Kingbird** turned up on the 29th, this one along Mesa Rd. north of Bolinas (BA).

The warbler wave continued on the 30th with a **Tennessee** at the New Willows and an **American Redstart** at the Lighthouse (AP). On the 31st another **Yellow-breasted Chat** showed up at Rodeo Lagoon (WL & DW), and another **Northern Waterthrush** at Muddy Hollow (NM).

Observers and Acronyms **EM:** Eddie Monson, **LS:** Lucas Stephenson, **MS:** Mark Stephenson, **CC:** Connor Cochrane, **DM:** Doug McEachern, **MH:** Martha Harbison, **MD:** Mark Dettling, **EMk:** Ethan Monk, **LK:** Logan Kahle, **MSa:** Mark Sawyer, **CD:** Cedric Duhalde, **BA:** Bob Atwood, **AM:** Alex Merritt, **KH:** Keith Hansen, **KC:** K. Cherry, **NA:** Noah Arthur, **BA:** B Acord, **JZ:** Joseph Zeno, **RC:** Reef Comer, **AP:** Adam Panto, **RA:** Robert Aramayo, **BT:** Bernadette Talbot, **NM:** Nathaniel Marchessault



Baird's Sandpiper

Noah Arthur

FIELD TRIPS (continued from page 3)

SAN FRANCISCO AND SAN PABLO BAYS BOAT TRIP

Sunday, November 14, 2021
9 AM to 40 PM
With Dolphin Charters

San Francisco Bay, the largest and one of the most important estuaries along the Pacific Flyway, is right in our own backyard. Join us as we cruise from Berkeley toward the Golden Gate Bridge and north into San Pablo Bay, hugging the shorelines and waters that are home to thousands of wintering birds. We will pass by 10 islands, under two bridges, and up two creeks in four counties in search of migrating and resident waterfowl, shore-birds and marine mammals. This trip offers water bird and marine mammal viewing in stunning locations, many of which can only be seen by boat.

Dress in layers. Bring liquids and lunch. Please bring a mask for any time spent inside the cabin.

The trip costs \$120 and is limited to 25 people. Registration begins on October 8 on MAS website's Field Trips page. All participants must be fully vaccinated.

Registered participants will receive directions to the Berkeley Marina and other instructions prior to the trip.

THANK YOU, DONORS

Mariah Baird, Deborah Brown, Priscilla and Michael Bull, William Clark, Daniel Drake, MaryAnne Flett, Heather English, Ken Evans, Elizabeth Graham, Betsy Gullickson, James Harrison, Elizabeth Jameson, Joyce Johnston, Klein Donahue Family Fund, Derek Lecy, Sondra Lanstein, Claudia Lewis, Sarah Martin, Marc and Ria Medoff, Jerry Meral, Louise L Murphy, Russell Nelson, Diane Parish, Robert Portnoy, Marianne Riser, Roger Roberts, Scammell Consulting, Sonja Schmid, Julianne Schrick, Georgia and Jim Struhsaker, Anne-Christine Strugnell, Peter and Jeanne Tymstra, Ken and Christina Waldeck, Dawn Williamson, and Stefan Williams.

To the California Alpine Club Foundation for their grant to support Marin Audubon's Monarch Project.

To the C/L Psychiatry/Psychology Service & Friends at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas for their gift in celebration of the retirement of Dr. Celia Jenkins of Inverness. Dr. Jenkins was a Distinguished Teaching Professor in Psychiatry at the Medical Center.

To the 8th grade class at Mark Day School for their generous donation to support Marin Audubon's Monarch Butterfly Project.



The Rail

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SAVE THE DATE

- November 17 **Field Trip:** Rodeo Lagoon
With William Legge & David Wiechers
- Nov. 19–20 **Central Valley Birding**
cvbirds-symposium.netlify.com
- December 4 **Field Trip:** Bahia and The Horseshoe Pond
With Jim White and Bob Battagin

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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

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

- ☐ Enroll me as a Chapter-Supporting Member
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