

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9 7:30 PM

**Monarchs in Marin! How Much Trouble Are They In?**

By Mia Monroe and Ed Nute



Mia Monroe

**Monarch and Poppies**

The December Speaker Series program will be a Zoom meeting. Visit the MAS website Speaker Series page to register for the program.

Our program will review the monarch butterfly life history, causes of the current population crisis, the roles for community scientists and how we each can help offer a safer healthy future for this amazing butterfly.

Mia Monroe is a volunteer for Xerces Society and has helped coordinate the Western Monarch Count for its entire 25 years! She is also a National Park Service ranger, on the steering committee of OneTam and participates in the Marin Monarch Working Group.

Ed Nute, Marin Audubon Society board member, took the initiative to offer monarchs more chances for survival at MAS properties at Deer Isle and Bahia by establishing a milkweed meadow. He will share the amazing experiences he and other volunteers have had as they grow up a successful monarch nursery amidst drought, pests and more!

**NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER:**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 13 7:00 PM

**Birds of New Mexico**

By Rich Cimino

Note new start time!

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# The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

## Last Chance to Restore the Farallon Islands



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**Aulon Island of Aulon Arch, Great Arch Rock and Sugarloaf, as seen from Southeast Farallon Island.**

The California Coastal Commission has finally scheduled the Consistency Determination hearing on the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Plan to eradicate introduced house mice from the Farallon Islands. The hearing will be December 17 to 19 – we don't know on which day yet, and won't know until the agenda is published the first week in December. The Commission needs to hear that the eradication plan is consistent with the Coastal Zone Management Program because it will restore the ecosystem of the Farallones. A goal of the Coastal Act is "...protecting, enhancing and restoring coastal environmental quality and resources..." Achieving this goal is virtually certain because the Service's Plan has been used to remove rodents successfully from more than 600 islands worldwide.

Implementing the Plan is essential to restore the ecosystem of the islands for the many pelagic birds that nest on them, as well as for the endemic Farallon salamander and daisy. Ashy Storm-petrel populations are in significant decline and are a particular concern.

The Service's eradication plan:

- Is a one-time-use (two closely-spaced applications) of brodifacoum which is vastly different from the chronic use of rodenticides on the mainland.
- Would have no lasting effects on bird populations as the impacts would be short term, to individual birds. The limited impacts will be significantly outweighed by the project benefits.
- Is based on exhaustive studies and analyses of potential adverse effects and alternatives, which informed the choice of aerial distribution of brodifacoum.

MAS is opposed to the commercial and private chronic use of the rodenticides. However, this one-time, controlled use for conservation purposes – using a formulation specially approved by the EPA and the state of California for conservation purposes – is essential to restore the ecosystem of the islands.

Opponent's recommendation of a contraception chemical would not work because:

- Such a chemical has only been tested and approved for rats, not mice.
- The chemical for rats is delivered in

*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
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Contact Bob for membership problems or questions.	
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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](http://www.marinaudubon.org)

Members can receive *The Rail* electronically instead of a hard copy by emailing [membershipsecretary@marinaudubon.org](mailto: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

As COVID impacts lessen, but continue, we're pleased our field trips are going so well but apologize for those who are not able to attend due to trip limits. We're planning on reassessing the number of attendees allowed in January. We will be continuing our Programs on Zoom.

Our Board has decided to stop posting on and to sever ties with Facebook. We don't think it would be responsible for us to continue to use Facebook for our purposes because our ongoing use would or could send a message that MAS supports their operating principles and decisions. While we have used this platform to share information about our work and about the good we do for our community, the recent publicity that has revealed Facebook's operating principles, or lack thereof, such as allowing biased, hurtful and false postings, is disheartening. These postings have been damaging to young people, contributed to public health misinformation, political and social unrest, and are not in accord with the values we hold and support.

We're working on our winter appeal letter, but it will probably be the beginning of December before it is mailed. Marin Audubon conducts two direct-mail fund appeals every year. Our spring mailing is devoted to supporting our properties, while we depend on our winter appeal to support our programs and operations. We hope you will give generously to support us.

I see in the IJ that the former sewage ponds along the Tiburon shoreline are being sold and it is anticipated that they will be filled. That's bringing back memories. One of our first projects was enhancing the vegetative habitat of these ponds. That enhancement was funded by the Coastal Conservancy in one of our first grants thirty or so years ago. Too bad they will not be retained as fresh water habitat.

Organizing for our Southern Marin Christmas Count which will be held this year on January 1st. It's certainly not the most convenient day, our usual day is the Saturday between Christmas and New Year's but every so often our day falls on New Year's or Christmas Day. If you are interested in joining a team contact Ed Nute at [smcbc.marinaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:smcbc.marinaudubon@gmail.com). See below for more information.

**It's winter and it's time to prune and plant your garden plants here in the west.** To avoid risks to nesting birds by pruning vegetation in the spring, get all of your trimming and cutting before nesting season. It's also the best time to plant, now that we've had so much rain and the ground is saturated.

We're thrilled about the rain and our plants are habitats are looking happy. We're hoping the rain continues.

On behalf of the Marin Audubon Board, a Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving and entire Holiday season. Do get out and enjoy our overwintering birds during the holidays.

## Marin County Christmas Bird Counts

### Point Reyes Christmas Bird Count

**Saturday, December 18, 2021**

The 50th Point Reyes Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, December 18, 2021. The Point Reyes count welcomes participants of all ages and skill levels. For complete information about the count register at [www.pointreyescbc.com](http://www.pointreyescbc.com).

### Cheep Thrill Christmas Bird Count

**Thursday, December 16, 2021**

The resurrected Cheep Thrills CBC, will be conducted for the 9th year on December 16, 2021. For more information, visit <https://cheepthrillscbc.blogspot.com>.

### South Marin Christmas Bird Count

**Saturday, January 16, 2022**

After last year's hiatus due to COVID-19 the 2021 South Marin Christmas Bird Count will take place on New Year's Day, Saturday, January 1, 2022. To sign up, please contact Ed Nute, co-compiler, at [smcbc.marinaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:smcbc.marinaudubon@gmail.com). There will not be a compilation dinner after the count.



## 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.

### JEAN AND JOHN STARKWEATHER SHORELINE PARK

#### San Rafael

Thursday, December 9, 2021  
11 AM to 1 PM

With Rich Cimino and Janet Bodle

Join Rich and Janet for an easy bird walk on level ground during the incoming high tide high tide. We will bird the shoreline of San Pablo Bay watching for shorebirds on the rocks and diving ducks, loons, and grebes on the bay. We will also bird the fresh water ponds (Spinnaker Lagoon) looking for wintering dabbling ducks, warblers, White-crowned Sparrow. Bring your scope, water, and snacks. No restrooms are available at the bird walk. Meet in the parking lot for the Jean and John Starkweather Shoreline trailhead. Heavy rain will cancel.

Registration opens On Monday, November 29 at 8 AM on MAS website's Field Trips page. Trip limit is 20 **fully-vaccinated** participants. There will not be a waiting list. No drop ins, please.

**DIRECTIONS:** From the north, take Hwy 101 to the Bellam Blvd exit. Turn left on Bellam then right on East Francisco Blvd, which parallels I-580. Head east (toward the Richmond/San Rafael Bridge for about 1-1/2 miles. You will see a Bay Café sign at the Bay Park Center. Turn left on Pelican Way then right to the trailhead parking area. From the south you can take the exit to the San Rafael Bridge getting off at the last Marin exit, the San Quentin exit. For GPS, use the Bay Café address, 2165 Francisco Blvd, San Rafael.

### COSUMNES RIVER PRESERVE Galt

Saturday, December 11, 2021  
1 PM to 5:30 PM

With Kurt Rademacher

At the junction of the Great Central Valley and Delta, the Cosumnes River Preserve is a 46,000-acre conservation project acquired and jointly managed through the collaboration of a number of conservation organizations and agencies. Here, the last undammed river on the west slope of the Sierra still routinely floods up in winter, fostering bountiful habitats of wetlands, savannah and riparian forest for wintering birds. **Greater** and **Lesser Sandhill Cranes** are a highlight of our tour, and we'll end up at Staten Island for sundown to witness the spectacle of some 15% of the Pacific Flyway's cranes noisily settling down for their nightly roost.

Come prepared with warm clothing for changeable weather including rain and mud for "Crane-down."

Registration opens on Wednesday, December 1 at 8 AM on MAS website's Field Trips page. Trip limit is 15 **fully-vaccinated** participants. There will not be a waiting list. No drop ins, please.

**DIRECTIONS:** We'll meet at the Cosumnes River Preserve Visitor Center parking lot at 13501 Franklin Blvd, Galt. Allow about two hours from Central Marin via Hwys 37, 80 and 12 through Rio Vista to I-5, then north to Twin Cities Rd. exit. (Or you can take I-80 to Sacramento, then south on I-5 to Twin Cities Rd. exit.) On Twin Cities Rd. proceed east briefly to turn right on Franklin Rd about 1.7 miles to the parking area.

### STINSON/ BOLINAS

#### Birding in Marin, Season 7, Trip 1

Saturday, January 8, 2022

Meet 8:30 AM at the Stinson Beach parking lot

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Bob and I are pleased to share the bird rich Stinson Beach/Bolinas birding area with you. Coupled with non freezing winter weather and many diverse habitats the Christmas Bird Counts (CBC), show this to be most specie rich, birdiest, area in southern Marin county. These habitats include ocean, beaches, rocky shores, a large lagoon with acres of mudflats, Douglas Fir and Redwood forests, Alder riparian, parking lots, residential and more. The CBC data show an average of more than 125 species winter in this area. Plus many of these birds, like ducks, gulls and shorebirds, are rather easy to see as they float about on the water or walk along the shores. Can we find 100 specie today?

Thanks can be given today to the founders of Marin Audubon and some conservation minded elders for the parks, open space, public access, and wildlife habitats in much of the country around Bolinas Lagoon. Dr. Martin Griffith was instrumental in saving Bolinas harbor from a hotel and yacht club destination and is commemorated at the heron and egret rookery that we will pass along the east side of the lagoon.

So start your year list if you haven't already. Bob is adept with eBird and will help by providing a list of the birds that we encounter today. We strive to help all of our participants to see or hear all of the birds but that is a goal, not quite reality. Let's go birding!

Registration opens Wednesday, December 29 at 8 AM on MAS website's Field Trips page. Trip limit is 15 **fully-vaccinated** participants. There is no waiting list. No drop-ins, please.

**DIRECTIONS:** We'll meet at the Stinson Beach parking lot. From Hwy 101, take exit 445B for CA-1/Shoreline Hwy toward Mill Valley/Stinson Beach. At the Y, turn left to stay on CA-1/Shoreline Hwy. Turn left onto Stinson Beach Federal Park. Turn right into the parking lot.

### CORTE MADERA ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

#### Corte Madera

Saturday, January 8, 2022  
9:00 AM to noon

With Bryan Flaig

This trip is perfect for beginning birders looking to learn how to identify waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as experienced birders interested in honing their skills,

Corte Madera Ecological Reserve contains a variety of birding habitats, like tidal ponds, pickleweed marshes and a high tide refuge purchased by Marin Audubon in 2016. Much of the area has undergone extensive restoration for rare and endangered saltmarsh species.

On this field trip, we will hike a short distance to explore the marsh at high tide, searching for elusive Ridgway's Rails and seasonal migrants. Later, we will walk to the shorebird overlook on the west side of the tidal pond, spending the majority of our time observing the wide variety of ducks, gulls, and wading shorebirds that frequent the area in winter. Expect high tide around 9 am.

Bryan Flaig has been monitoring bird activity at Corte Madera Marsh nearly every week since 2019 and recently completed Golden Gate Audubon's Master Birding Program.

Restrooms are available at nearby stores, but not on the marsh. Bring binoculars, scopes, layers, water, and snacks. Plan for a 1.5 to 2 mile walk on flat terrain. Light rain does not cancel the trip.

Registration opens on Wednesday, January 5, 2022 at 8 AM on MAS website's Field Trips page. Trip limit is 15 **fully-vaccinated** participants. There is no waiting list. No drop-ins, please.

**DIRECTIONS:** Corte Madera Ecological Reserve is located behind Trader Joe's in Corte Madera. Meet in the parking lot behind the store, accessed by the driveway on the south side of World Market.

## CONSERVATION

Marin Audubon Conservation Committee reviews critical issues related to wildlife habitats and comments to cities, agencies, and other jurisdictions. To attend, phone Barbara Salzman at 415/924-6057.

### Farallon Islands, *continued from page 1*

drinking water, which rats regularly use. Mice get most of their dietary water from food and would not eat a contraceptive bait regularly enough for it to be effective.

- The chemical would have to be delivered in bait stations, which was rejected because many areas are not accessible without risking human safety.
- The disturbance that would occur from the frequent visits, that would be necessary to service the many thousands of bait stations, would cause additional, unacceptable impacts to the rookery.

There is no evidence that a contraception is available, proven, or even feasible, although one has been promised for many years by Dr. Loretta Mayers. Contraception might work to reduce rat populations (e.g., in a food warehouse), but not for eradication, which is what is needed on the Farallones.

Complete eradication of rodents using brodifacoum has been achieved on islands throughout the world, one of them as close as Anacapa Island, part of the Channel Islands, Ventura County CA. We cannot let the ecosystem of the Farallones continue to decline when it has been clearly demonstrated that other island ecosystems have been restored using the treatment proposed by the USFWS.

As to impacts on native wildlife, extensive measures will protect birds and other wildlife. Western Gulls are the primary concern. Implementation will be timed for when the fewest birds are on the islands, various hazing methods will be used to chase gulls from the islands, and carcasses will be removed so they do not attract scavengers.

We've been waiting a long time for this hearing. This is our chance to save the Farallones, the last opportunity for you to make a difference for the Island ecosystem and for its nesting birds. Opponents of the USFWS's plan have been testifying at Commission open time against the USFWS's plan. Commissioners need to hear your support.

#### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

Tell the Coastal Commission the USFWS's Plan to rid the Islands of the non-native house mice, once and for all, is consistent with the Coastal Zone Management Act and the Coastal Zone Management

Program. Tell the Commission in your own words, using any of the information above, that you want the ecosystem of the islands to be restored by removing the introduced house mice.

Way to comment: 1) Send your input to the [farallonislands@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:farallonislands@coastal.ca.gov); 2) Write the Commission at 45 Market Street, Suite 300, San Francisco 94105; or, 3) Attend the December hearing on Zoom and testify. Google "California Coastal Commission" and follow the prompts to sign up. Written comments will be accepted up until 5 PM on December 10, the Friday before the hearing. The staff report will be posted to the Commission's online agenda no later than December 2nd.

For more talking points, check our MAS's past newsletters on our website for articles on the Farallones under Conservation.

### TISCORNIA MARSH PROGRESS

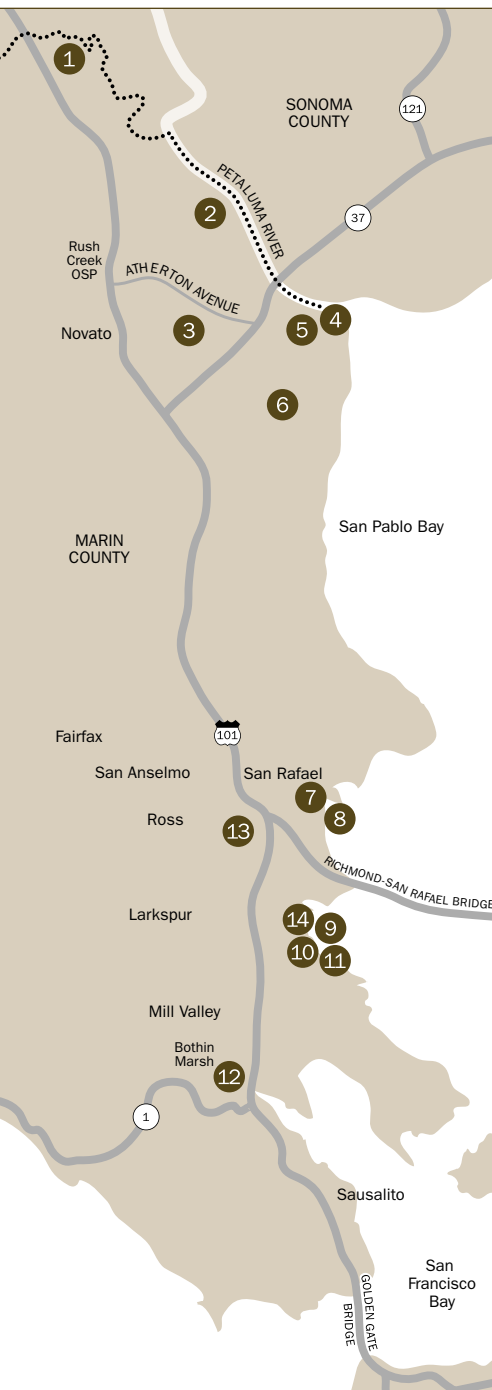
The CEQA hearing on the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for our Tiscornia Marsh Restoration and Sea Level Rise Adaptation Project was held by the Planning Commission in late October. The staff report was positive and we're pleased that the Planning Commission comments were very supportive. Fourteen written comments from members of the community were received, a few raised issues, but all were positive.

The next steps will be the consultants responding to written comments, certification of the EIR and approval of the project by the Planning Commission. These actions are expected to be taken at a Planning Commission hearing in early January.

At the same time, our engineers are working on scheduling soil borings on the edge of the marsh in order to get more specific data about the substrate to better inform construction of the coarse beach structure to contain the sediments. A barge will be needed to bring in the boring equipment. We've had a delay in scheduling, however, because most or maybe all of barges in the state have been in occupied in Huntington Beach working to contain the oil spill.

We're still waiting to hear about our grant application to the Ocean Protection Council. We should be hearing soon. The Council meets to approve the staff recommendations on December 7.

*continued on page 5*



#### MARIN AUDUBON PROPERTIES

1. Petaluma Marsh Expansion Site	180 acres
2. Bahia	60 acres
3. Simmons Slough	144 acres
4. Norton Avenue Pond	4 parcels
5. Black Point Parcels	many parcels
6. Arroyo San Jose	2 parcels
7. Tiscornia Marsh	20 acres
8. Tidelands and Murphy's Rock	34 acres
9. San Clemente Creek Tidelands	4.34 acres
10. End of Channel Drive	?? acres
11. Triangle Marsh	31 acres
12. Arroyo Corte Madera del Presidio	2 acres
13. Cal Park	<1 acre
14. Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Expansion Site	5.2 acres



## Tiscornia Marsh

*continued from page 4*

### MEASURE A – UP FOR RENEWAL

This is a critical time for Marin County Parks and Open Space. The current 10-year old Measure A that has made possible many benefits to county parks and open space, will expire in March 2022 and will be on the ballot for renewal in June 2022. Measure A has been funding enhancement and restoration of open space lands, resource staff, environmental education, agriculture easements, and purchase of lands with natural resource values. Residents of cities have also benefitted from the 20% going to local parks. Marin Audubon Society supports renewal of Measure A, but with a different allocation of the funds generated.

This renewal is an opportunity to bring the tax up to date and refocus the Measure to meet current environmental needs. It is an opportunity to enhance and provide essential protection for natural resources that support humans and wildlife, and that are threatened by climate change.

Ten years ago, few people were talking about climate change. Today we know climate change is causing extreme weather, heat that melts glaciers and increases sea level, more frequent and intense weather systems, floods, fire, and drought.

Measure A and Marin County Parks hold a key to activities that will make a critical difference in this climate crisis. The Open Space District (OSD) owns and manages thousands of acres of natural habitats, and as we frequently say, the diverse habitats on these properties provide us with many essential services.

Climate change can be addressed by limiting the production of carbon and also by removing carbon from the atmosphere. Both approaches are needed. Natural vegetated lands provide that service. Native habitats support natural resources that benefit wildlife, biodiversity and people in many ways. Vegetative habitats, oak and redwood woodlands, grasslands, chaparral, and riparian are essential habitats for wildlife. They also provide clean air, improve water quality, stabilize streambanks, provide opportunities for scientific study and recreation and inspiring landscapes. And they sequester carbon thereby diminishing the impacts of climate change.

Baylands, fresh water wetlands and tidal marshes are special habitats that are essential to protect shorelines, support fish, shrimp, migratory and resident birds, and other aquatic species. They provide the first line of defense against shoreline erosion and sea level rise that are the result of climate change. Marsh plants also absorb pollutants, sequester carbon, clean waters, produce oxygen, and at the same time provide us with places to recreate and be

inspired.

Some folks see open space lands only as places that have to be maintained and that cost money. We can think of no higher purpose or better use for the public funds Measure A will generate than purchasing natural habitats that will contribute to the cumulative efforts worldwide to address climate change.

Reports from recent polls indicate a preference for funding to go to wildfire prevention. While we understand concerns about fire, we have to question the use of funds from a park measure for fire prevention. This is the only measure to support open space and parks. On the other hand, there is \$25 million available on an annual basis to fight fire in Marin County at this time. The fire prevention ballot measure passed two years ago yields about \$19 million annually for fire prevention. In addition, One Tam has secured funds and the Marin County Board of Supervisors contributed funding for a program involving the Marin Sonoma Conservation Corps and several universities.

The funds raised by Measure A should go for acquisition of habitats for wildlife, public use for recreation, maintenance and enforcement including staffing for open space lands, and funding for city parks.

We recommend that the Open Space District educate the public about the critical interconnections between acquired and protected lands, the many biological and physical benefits these lands provide and their importance as one more step in controlling climate change. Additional funding for land acquisition and restorations will bring many benefits today and is an investment for our future.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Tell the Open Space District and Board of Supervisors you want an increased percentage of Measure A funds for acquisition and habitat restoration. There is a comment form in the following message where you can record your feedback: [www.parks.marincounty.org/about-us/measure-a](http://www.parks.marincounty.org/about-us/measure-a). We urge that you check your preference for wetland restoration and sea level rise, biodiversity and write in habitat acquisition which is not even listed.

Or go online to the Marin Board of Supervisor's comment and send your input to the Board or to your Supervisor.



**A view of the Bahia uplands. Measure A contributed to the purchase of the Bahia wetlands and uplands (now part of the Rush Creek Preserve).**

#### THANK YOU, DONORS

Deborah Ablin, David W. Allen Family Trust, Janet Allen, Rosalinda Astarai, Holly Bacuzzi, Bowen Charitable Fund, Burkhard Braun, Deborah Brown, Robert and Elza Burton Family Trust, John Cammidge, William Clarke, Gail Cushman, Lynne Dixon, Mary Eastman, Bonnie Edwards, Jane Evans, Margaret Fawcett, Frost Family Sustainability Fund, Mark Hansen, Peter and Linda Hoch, Christina Jaqua, Martha Jarocki, John Klobas, Reed and Glenna Letsinger, Katherine Look, Denise Loomis, Carolyn Lown, James MacDonald, Sarah Martin, Melissa Meith, Richard and Anne Miller, Pamela Picard, Steven Popper, William Richardson, Marianne Riser, Jillian Robinson, Edith Simonson, Larry Smith, Natalie Shapiro, Kandice Strako, Lowell Sykes, Tara Taupier, Brittmarie Thorner, Charles Vadalabene, Donna L Williams Charitable Fund, Hilary Winslow

#### WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Nancy Ash, Juliana Bonicalzi, Dianne Carniglia, Robert Caufield, Cecilia Christensen, Candice Crider, Alison Deal, Kerstin Edgerton, Jeff Gottesman, Susan Hoyt, Sue Jordan, Z Evan Long, Donna Matcovich, Julia Mayne, Claudia McCain, Mary McDevitt, Olga McKenna, Erica Newcome, Helen Pacula, Steven Popper, Suzanne Queen, Nicole Vallee, Carleton Watson, Evan Weissman, Hans Wichmann, Thell Wong

#### BENEFIT MAS

Make your next Amazon order through AmazonSmile and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to MAS. For information, visit <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/94-6076664>.

## HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The abundant early rain has made planting possible this month, but it has also given the non-native species a boost in their winter growth. At Triangle Marsh we will be planting two new species, Marsh Baccharis and Narrow-leaf Milkweed, in its landscape. At the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve project, we will be removing non-native plants that endanger the thousands of native plants that were planted in recent years.

Rain cancels our workdays. Act locally and join us on a workday; it would be good for your mood as well as the landscape. California's wild plants and animals need your help. We all make a difference.

### Volunteer Workdays

#### Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: December 4

**Note:** Because the first Saturday of January is New Year's Day and also the day of the Southern Marin Christmas Bird Count, it will not be a work day at Triangle Marsh.

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: December 11, January 8

Meet at the end of Industrial Way near Trader Joe's in Greenbrae.

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, Ilkcan Cokgor and Aydin Ulubay, Bob Hinz, Linda Nicoletto, Ed Nute and ten volunteers for the Monarch Butterfly project

## 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>.

## HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

### BAHIA

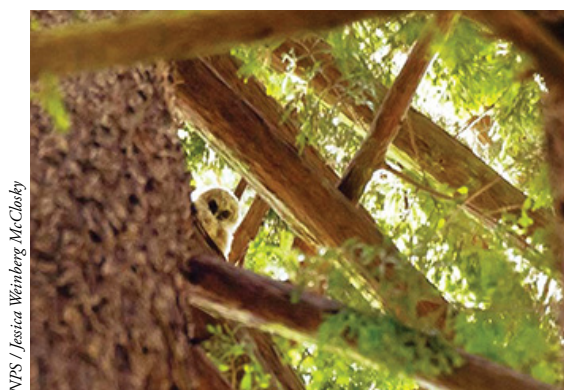
Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed (STRAW) are preparing a portion of the East Peninsula for school classes to install native plants. We have contracted with STRAW to install native plants to create a vegetated transition zone habitat next to tidal marsh along the Petaluma River. This vegetated upland will greatly enhance the habitat values of the existing marsh and ensure a complete habitat by

providing cover for endangered Ridgway Rail and threatened Black Rails. Other species that nest and forage in the adjacent upland transition zone, San Pablo Song Sparrow and Salt Marsh Common Yellowthroat, will also benefit.

STRAW has long experience revegetating lands adjacent to marshes. So far, to prepare a patch for planting, they've removed weeds and brought in mulch for the plants. We expect the first plants will be installed this month.

## Owl Habitat Protected By WAN Conservancy

By Sara Wan



NPS / Jessica Weinberg McCluskey

**A juvenile Northern Spotted Owl peers down through a coast redwood forest.**

The WAN Conservancy (Western Alliance for Nature) is pleased to announce that it has acquired over 34 acres of undeveloped forest land in Ross and San Rafael. There are 3 properties. One is on Upper Toyon road, 10 Acres. The second is at the end of Sentinel in San Rafael, 7 acres. The two areas are tied together by a 36 acre San Rafael open space area allowing these properties to increase the open space area and connect them through public trails. In addition, the new open space area will be specifically protected for wildlife and habitat in the Preserve the Conservancy is creating. The 3rd parcel is 17.9 acres in the Dominican area adjacent to the Dominican open space area of 437.5 acres which will also become a part of the Nature Preserve Complex.

Our interest in the area was piqued when we learned of the existence of a Northern Spotted Owls nest on one of the properties. Protecting Nature, both Flora and Fauna, is the reason our Conservancy exists. We are delighted we can join the Marin community with these acquisitions and hope to work with you in upcoming months and years. For more information on our history and work visit [www.wanconservancy.org](http://www.wanconservancy.org).

## Join Our Team!

Marin Audubon Society has open seats on its Board of Directors that offer a rare opportunity to benefit local wildlife while enjoying an interesting activity in the company of like-minded avid conservationists. Here are some positions needing help.

### Field Trips

Organize one or two field trips of your choosing each month September through May. Great job to share with a friend.

### Education

Work with diverse communities and ages on fun activities that inspire a love of learning and of the natural world. Use your creativity.

### Special Skill

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# MARIN BIRDLOG: OCTOBER 2021

By Noah Arthur

October, the second month of fall vagrant season, generally plays second fiddle to September in our area but also brings some unique late rarities.

The month started off with an extremely rare sparrow for the Outer Point, despite being one of the most ubiquitous birds elsewhere: a **California Towhee** at the Lighthouse on the 1st (SG). Also on the Outer Point on the 1st, a bright female **Orchard Oriole** was at Nunes Ranch (CS).

A very late record – the third latest for Marin – an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at Carson Ridge on the 3rd, along with three Lawrence's Goldfinches and the first

on the 9th (JP & DF). Another **Lawrence's Goldfinch** showed up on the 10th, this one at Las Gallinas (MK). The third rare woodpecker for the Outer Point this season, an **Acorn Woodpecker**, was at the Lighthouse on the 11th (KL).

In a month so far devoid of Eastern migrant warblers (especially surprising after an excellent show of them in September), a **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was at Muir Beach on the 11th (AM), followed quickly by another **Chestnut-sided** at the Pt. Reyes RCA Station on the 12th (RM).

The Sausalito **Yellow-crowned Night-heron** came back for another season, first detected on the 13th (RT). Rare on our coast, a **'Red-winged' Red-winged Blackbird** (not Bicolored) was at Spaletta Ranch on the 13th (MS & LS).

Two **Black Swifts** flew over Hawk Hill on the 14th (RC). Also on the 14th, one of the rarest birds of the season made a brief visit to the Lighthouse: a female **Common Grackle** (RM), surprisingly rare in the West considering its abundance back East.

Two very rare shorebirds showed up on the 15th, an American **Golden-plover** at Abbotts Lagoon (LN) and a

**Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** at Limantour Spit (DW).

The **Black Vulture** flew over Muir Beach on the 15th (JP).

The first rare sapsucker of the winter came on the 16th, a **Red-naped Sapsucker** banded at Palomarin (MN). This was fol-



Dusky Warbler

Thick-billed Fox Sparrow of the season (CS). Another **Lawrence's Goldfinch** flew over the north end of Bolinas Lagoon (EM & MI). Also on the 3rd, a pelagic in Marin waters discovered several **Short-tailed Shearwaters** (SH).

Two unusual hawks on the 4th – a **Harlan's** near Hawk Hill (SC) and a **Broad-winged** at Drakes Beach (MB), were eclipsed by a much smaller and much rarer brown bird found at Corte Madera Marsh in the afternoon: the legendary and sought-after **Dusky Warbler** (AM). An Asian species unrelated to our North American warblers, the Dusky is one of the holy grails of fall vagrant season on the California coast, with most records in the first half of October.

Another rarity for just the Outer Point, a **Nuttall's Woodpecker** was at Mendoza Ranch on the 5th (SHu). Also on the 5th a **Brewer's Sparrow** joined the party at the Dusky Warbler stakeout in Corte Madera Marsh (DS).

Two **Bobolinks** were at the Lighthouse



Common Grackle (female)

lowed quickly by the returning female **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** who arrived back at her favored oak near Marinwood on the 18th (JW) for at least the third winter.



Northern Goshawk

The third really major rarity of the month came on the 17th in the form of a **Northern Goshawk** over Hawk Hill (PC).

A classic October vagrant, a **Vesper Sparrow** was in Sausalito on the 18th (SS). Getting late, an adult male **American Redstart** was at Nunes Ranch on the 19th (EMk). The small late wave of eastern warblers continued with a **Black-throated Blue** and **Tennessee** at the Lighthouse on the 22nd (RM).

Almost annual in Marin recently but still a very rare ghost from the north, a **Snow Bunting** was on Limantour Beach on the 26th (LN). The season's second Outer Point **Pygmy Nuthatch** was at the Fish Docks on the 28th (KS). On the 30th, 5 **Pacific Golden-plovers** were with a **Black-bellied Plover** flock at Drakes Corner (LC, BB, & EM).

The last rarity of the month was a very late **Swainson's Thrush** banded at Palomarin on the 31st.

Observers and Acronyms **SG:** Susan Greef, **CS:** Conor Scotland, **SH:** Steve Howell, **EM:** Eddie Monson, **MI:** Mark Iantosca, **SC:** Scott Carey, **MB:** Marc Blumberg, **AM:** Alex Merritt, **SHu:** Steve Hunter, **DS:** Dan Singer, **JP:** Jeff Perkins, **DF:** Dea Freid, **MK:** Melani King, **KL:** Karen Lakus, **RM:** Ron Mallory, **RT:** Robert T., **MS:** Mark Stephenson, **LS:** Lucas Stephenson, **LN:** Larry Nigro, **DW:** David Wimpfheimer, **JP:** John Paul, **MN:** Maia Nguyen, **JW:** Joyce Waterman, **PC:** Patrick Coughlin, **SS:** Sylvie Silverstein, **EMK:** Ethan Monk, **KS:** Kevin Schwartz, **LC:** Lucas Corneliussen, **BB:** Brian Browne



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