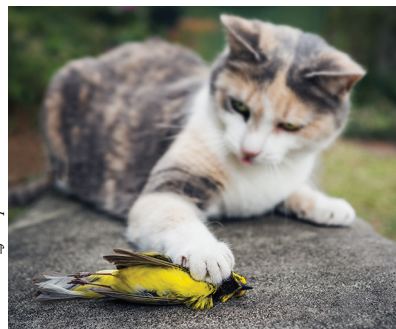


THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8 7:00 PM

**Domestic Cat Management:
Challenges and Opportunities**

By Grant Sizemore



Shutterstock, forestpath

Domestic Cat and Hooded Warbler

Register for the December Speaker Series program on the MAS website [Speaker Series page](#).

Domestic cats (*Felis catus*) can make wonderful pets, but their unrestrained presence on the landscape presents serious challenges. Outdoor cats are introduced predators that inflict serious harm to birds and other wildlife and contribute to a variety of public health risks. Cat management, however, has historically been complicated by unclear authorities, resource limitations, competing priorities, and a tradition of laissez-faire attitudes. This talk will review the wildlife conservation and public health evidence emphasizing the need for owned and unowned cat management and present solutions for cat owners and communities to effect meaningful change that will benefit cats, wildlife, and people.

Grant Sizemore earned B.S. degrees in Zoology and Environmental Science from Miami University in Ohio and an M.S. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation from the University of Florida. He has experience in wildlife conservation research, education, and policy and is currently the Director of Invasive Species Programs at American Bird Conservancy, where he has run the Cats Indoors program for the last 10 years.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER:

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11 7:00 PM

Nature's Best Hope

By Doug Tallamy

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The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Willow Warbler – New to California and Mainland North America!

It had already been an excellent week at Rodeo Lagoon with a lingering Tropical Kingbird and a Vermillion Flycatcher, the latter representing Marin's 4th record. So, spirits were high as I arrived on October 18th at sunrise to clear, warm conditions. After a sea watch from Rodeo Beach, I set off on my usual circuit, heading northwest from the footbridge leading to beach in the direction of the Rodeo Beach Car Park. The coastal scrub bordering the lagoon's outlet channel is always worth a look for migrant passerines, and this day was no exception yielding a couple of Fox Sparrows. Out of the side of my eye I detected a small warbler-like bird jump up, flycatching before dropping out of sight. It reappeared but flew away from me, disappearing into Coyote bushes and all I managed to detect was a pale supercilium. I immediately thought of Palm Warbler, a scarce but expected migrant out here

Thankfully, the warbler reappeared, and I was confronted by a small and rather plain drab warbler, olive-buff above, very pale-yellow underparts, and no discernible features other than that striking supercilium. This was no Palm Warbler, and the adrenaline quickly kicked-in as I realized I had discovered a species of Old World Warbler. At first I was lulled into the assumption that I had found a rare Dusky Warbler, the only Old World Warbler species to have been recorded in California to date, although the green olive tones seemed too bright for Dusky.

The first order of business was to try to get photos to document the sighting. Second, was to text a few local birders to alert them of my find. I headed home mid-morning to download and review my photos, sharing these with Derek Lecy, who immediately posted them on the Telegram Bay Area Rare Bird Alert site for comment. As I further reviewed, I realized that



William Legge

Willow Warbler

the features of my warbler were inconsistent with Dusky Warbler, the pale-yellow-green plumage, long wing primary projection and its flycatching behavior. In the hour that followed, social media discussion helped narrow down the identification to Willow Warbler, a species new to California and mainland North America, although the species has been recorded from St. Paul and St. Lawrence Islands off Alaska.

Willow Warbler is a highly migratory species that breeds from Western Europe to Siberia and winters in sub-Saharan Africa, so this individual was well off course. Thankfully the Willow Warbler put on good show and remained remarkably loyal to an accessible 300-yard stretch of coastal scrub and willows bordering the northwest side of Rodeo Lagoon over the following six days enabling over 500 birders to catch-up with it, some who had traveled from Texas and the Midwest to see it!

Chairperson Needed for Field Trips

See "The President's Letter" on page 2 for more information.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Phone numbers are in the 415 area code unless otherwise noted. Questions? Please contact the appropriate Board member.

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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

Our Nominating Committee is beginning its work. If you participate in our field trips and speaker series, if you like what we do: our advocacy, habitat acquisition and restoration, **We need you!** We are interested in volunteers to help with Field Trips. Contact a member of our Nominating Committee: Doug Waterman, Lelia Lancot, or Martha Jarocki, (contact information is in the column to the left and email addresses are on our website) to express your interest and for more information.

You will be receiving our winter appeal letter in early December. All Donations to our winter appeal go to support Marin Audubon's operations, Field Trips, Speaker Series, Advocacy, and other programs. (Our Spring appeal is dedicated to supporting our properties). Do give generously to support our work. We are an all-volunteer organization with no office or overhead. One hundred percent of your donation goes to support our programs.

Regarding our lawsuit, we've been property owners for more than 20 years now and this is the first time we have found it necessary to defend our property rights. Hiring an attorney was not a decision made easily, but we felt we needed to do defend our property rights even though it is considerably increasing our financial obligations. It's not easy owning properties.

We're saddened by the unexpected loss of two people who have been so important to our bird populations and environment, Joan Lamphier and Dave DeSante. Their deaths reflect the fragility of life and the importance of living every moment and making every minute count (see pages 6 and 7 for more).

And a note on Conservation Advocacy articles this month. Usually, I include a "You can do" paragraph. I like to encourage everyone to participate in the processes of protecting habitats because comments from members of the public are so valuable. For this month's projects, however, the review periods were either too short or otherwise out of sync with our newsletter publication deadlines.

A few words about the finding of a Willow Warbler by William Legge. William's recount is interesting in a number of ways. It is an example of the tremendous diversity of bird species it is possible to encounter in Marin's varied habitats. It seems almost anything can turn up! It also shows how using the process of collaborative elimination helped identify a new species of bird to this area. It no doubt helped that William is a native of England, has experience with Old World Warblers and has seen Willow Warbler many times in the UK, but a different subspecies. The Western

European sub-species are a little brighter than the sub-species of Willow Warbler that breeds in Siberia and William's suspects the individual he found at Rodeo Lagoon is almost certainly from Siberia (sub-species 'yakutensis'). William's perseverance at his 'local patch' certainly paid dividends and hopefully encourages others to adopt a local patch and systematically record their sightings. Hooray to William for making this impressive find.

I hope you take time to get out and enjoy our overwintering waterfowl, shorebirds and wading birds either at one of our field trips or on your own. It's such an enjoyable and challenging time for us in the Bay Area – with an abundance of birds and rain transforming brown hills to green and restoring vegetative habitat. It's also a time to take care of yourselves, prepare for the flu and expanded COVID by getting vaccinated.

Have the Happiest of Holidays.

2022 MARIN CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Three Christmas Bird Counts will be held in Marin this December.

Thursday, December 15

Cheep Thrills CBC covering North Marin and extending into Southern Sonoma County. Contact Susan Kelly at s.kelly@sbcglobal.net.

Saturday, December 17

Point Reyes CBC covering West Marin including Tomales Bay and the Point Reyes National Seashore. Contact George Curth at george@hogislandoysters.com.

Saturday, December 31

South Marin CBC covering much of East Marin and extending west as far as Bolinas and Stinson Beach. Contact Ed Nute at smcbc.marinaudubon@gmail.com.

THANK YOU, DONORS

Rosalinda Astarai, Brevity Fund, Burkhard Braun, John Cammidge, William Clarke, Jim Crumpler, Ruth Dundas, Bonnie Edwards, Margaret Fawcett, Lewis Fredrickson, Elizabeth Gluck, Robert Gonzalez, Mark Hansen, Thomas Heinz, Thomas Hendricks, Linda and Peter Hoch, Angela Kerby, Lois Lane, Katherine Look, Denise Loomis, Jim MacDonald, Sarah Martin, Ruth & Steve Nash, Frank & Lois Noonan, Philip Nonneman, William Richardson, Marianne Riser, Anne Ruben, Lorri Sawyer, Jill Sideman, Sandra Slichter, Larry Smith and Grace Rogers Lowell Sykes, Nancy Warfield, Donna L Williams Charitable Gift Fund, Christine Wood.

In memoriam

Ruth Dundas in memory of Len Blumin

MAS FIELD TRIPS

Open to the public

MAS is mounting a full schedule of field trips for the 2022-2023 season. While most trips are limited and require registration to allow for social distancing due to Covid-19, we have one open trip this month and are planning to schedule others.

THE PONDS AT THE LAS GALLINAS VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT (LGVSD), San Rafael

Thursday, December 1, 2022 and

Thursday, January 5, 2022

8:30 to 11:30 AM

With Sande and Bob Chilvers

All participants are welcome to join this trip.

No registration required.

Join old friends and meet new ones on our regularly scheduled walks on the first Thursday of the month at Las Gallinas. With fall migration just about over, we might see more waterfowl and spot interesting species, so come assist in our search. We welcome bird enthusiasts of all levels. We all help each other to find and identify the birds, and there are usually several experienced birders to assist.

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101, exit at Smith Ranch Rd. Drive east on Smith Ranch Rd toward McInnis Park. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks and drive about 0.5 mile through the LGVSD gates and into the parking lot at the end of the road. Meet the group by the bridge just past the parking lot. There is an outhouse in the parking area for public use.

BAHIA, HORSESHOE POND AND RUSH CREEK

Birding in Marin, Season 7 – Trip 12

Saturday, December 3, 2022

8:30 AM to mid afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Registration opens November 24 at 8 AM on MAS website's Field Trips page. Trip limit is 15. No drop-ins, please.

MAS acquired and restored to tidal action the diked bay lands adjacent to the residential Bahia neighborhood. As the ebbing tide exposes the mudflats to thousands of shorebirds, while on the flood tide hundreds of ducks and some gulls float, forage and loaf about. The oak-wooded ridge stretching from Hwy 101 to Bahia, also saved from development by MAS, holds **Oak Titmice**, **White-breasted Nuthatch**, **Hutton's Vireo**, at least four woodpecker species and many sparrows in the winter.

Horseshoe Pond (Homeowners Lagoon) at the southeast end of Topaz is a great place to look for wintering ducks. **Goldeneyes**, **Scaup**, **Canvasbacks**, **Buffleheads**, and **Mergansers** seem to like it and it has been Marin's best place for **Barrow's Goldeneyes** the last few years.

After lunch we plan to look at the nearby Rush Creek area from the Binford Road which parallels Hwy 101 north of Atherton.

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101 in north Novato take Atherton Avenue east, take the Y left onto Bugeia which becomes Bahia Dr, near the end at the bottom of the hill take a right onto Topaz, follow Topaz to its end and park.

CORTE MADERA ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

Corte Madera

Sunday, December 4, 2022

9 AM to noon

With Bryan Flaig

Registration opens November 24 at 8 AM on MAS website's Field Trips page. Trip limit is 20. No drop-ins, please.

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 winter residents. We'll walk along the east side of Shorebird Marsh (pond), observing the wide variety of ducks, gulls, and wading shorebirds that frequent the area this time of year.

Restrooms are available at nearby stores (Trader Joe's), 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.

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 southside of World Market.

CORTE MADERA ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

Corte Madera

Saturday, December 10, 2022

9 AM to noon

With Bryan Flaig

Registration opens on Thursday, November 30 at 8 AM on MAS website's Field Trips page. Trip limit is 20. No drop ins, please.

For description see field trip (above) for Sunday, December 4.

STINSON BEACH/BOLINAS

Bolinas-Stinson Elementary School

Birding in Marin, Season 8 – Trip 1

Saturday, January 7, 2023

8:30 AM to mid afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Registration opens on December 28, 2022 at 8 AM on Marin Audubon website's Field Trips page. Trip limit is 15. No drop-ins, please.

A healthy happy New Year to you all. 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 CBC, Southern Marin Christmas Bird Counts, show this to be most species rich, birdiest, area in Southern Marin county. These habitats include the 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 over 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 open shores. Can we find 100 species today?

Thanks can be given 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 county and around Bolinas Lagoon. Dr Martin Griffith was instrumental in saving Bolinas harbor from a hotel and yacht club destination and he 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. We strive to help all of our participants to see or hear all of the birds that we encounter but that is a goal not quite a reality. Let's go birding!

DIRECTIONS: We will meet at 8:30 at the Bolinas-Stinson Union Elementary School at 125 Olema-Bolinas Rd in Bolinas. From the south, head north on Hwy 1. Turn left at Bolinas-Fairfax Rd/Fairfax-Bolinas Rd. Turn left onto Olema Bolinas Rd. Turn left to stay on Olema Bolinas Rd. After 0.2 miles the school will be on your right. From the north, head south on Hwy 1. Turn right onto Olema Bolinas Rd. Turn left to stay on Olema Bolinas Rd. After 0.2 miles the school will be on your right.

MAS SUED BY PIERCECO

San Rafael real estate company PierceCo Properties has petitioned Marin Superior Court to quiet title to paper streets and drainages in an old subdivision in the Cal Park neighborhood of unincorporated San Rafael. Marin Audubon owns a diked bay-land parcel in this old subdivision. PierceCo owns most of the parcels in the subdivision that date back to 1907.

We have had to hire an attorney to protect our access rights. If we did not act through the court, PierceCo would take title to the undeveloped streets. At the direction of the court, our attorney has contacted owners of other undeveloped parcels in the subdivision to determine their interest in joining us in our court action. Notices have also been published in the Marin Independent Journal.

The Cal Park flatlands are now quite far from the Bay, the flatlands were diked off for Highway 101 and other development. As with other undeveloped sites that formerly were tidal marsh, the undeveloped area of Cal Park is seasonal wetlands. San Francisco Bay seasonal wetlands provide important habitat for waterfowl that spend the winter in the Bay area. The water source for seasonal wetlands is winter rain either falling directly or as runoff from the local watershed.

COUNTY HOUSING AND SAFETY PLANS REVIEWED

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Housing and Safety Elements of the Countywide Plan has been open for public review during much of November. The Housing Element, a required element in general plans, has been revised to address requirements in two state laws, SB 9 and SB 35. As *The Rail* goes to press, we are formulating our comments. So far, we've found the EIR to be well done but there are some gaps and we have questions and concerns that we will request be addressed.

The state has assigned a specific number of housing units to jurisdictions that have to prove they can accommodate them. They've done this by identifying properties and assigning a specific number of housing units to each. Marin is required to produce 3,569 housing units. The Community Development Agency (CDC, formerly Planning Department) has prepared a list of sites, called Proposed Project Sites, to accommodate the required number of units, plus additional "buffer" sites to make up the difference if Proposed Project Sites are

not developed. However, the county has identified what appears to be an excessive number of buffer sites – more than 10,000. We wonder why they have identified so many more properties than they need to? We will also ask how the number of units assigned to each site was determined?

The EIR is a Programmatic EIR meaning that it has general, high-level analysis. Individual sites and projects would need to occur later, when a specific project is proposed by property owners. The level of later environmental review is yet to be decided (EIR, Negative Declaration, and Categorical Exemption). It would be determined by the CDA, and would vary according to the site. The EIR does not address the process that would be followed in reviewing the Proposed Project Sites. Would housing Proposed Project Sites be given any special consideration?

We also have questions about biological impacts. The EIR indicates that the presence of sensitive resources, wetlands in particular, have been considered when assigning the number of housing units to properties. However, there are sites that support wetlands that are on the Proposed Project Sites list and have been assigned a number of units that, in our opinion, would exceed the number that could be accommodated on the non-wetland sections of the sites. In addition, to sustain wetlands, protection of uplands adjacent to wetland habitats, recognized as an important part of wetland habitats, as well as water quality and quantity, also need to be considered. Some examples are parcels at CalPark neighborhood of unincorporated San Rafael that is diked seasonal wetlands (including a property MAS owns) and 300 Olive in unincorporated Novato, that is almost half wetlands and is the water source for Simmons Slough property. Why such sites are even on the Proposed Project Sites list should be addressed. We advocate that they be removed.

The Safety Element addresses threats to the safety of residents: flooding, earthquakes and wildfires. We are concerned that some of the policies proposed to address wildfire would impact habitat and wildlife, specifically removal of understory vegetation.

We will be submitting these comments and others by the deadline of November 21.

PLAN TO LIMIT TOURIST AIR FLIGHTS OVER NATIONAL PARKS

In compliance with the National Air Tour Management Act of 2000, the National

Park Service has prepared a Draft Air Tour Management Plan that covers GGNRA, Muir Woods National Monument, Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNSS) and San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park. The objective of the Plan is to mitigate or prevent significant adverse impacts, if any, of commercial air tours on wildlife, habitats, and on the experience of visitors. The rules will apply to all commercial air tours flying below 5,000 feet above ground level, where the purpose of the flight is sightseeing. Regulation of low flying aircraft to protect native wildlife and visitor experience is long overdue.

Under the Plan, 2,548 commercial air tours would be authorized. Of these, 143 fixed wing aircraft could fly over PRNSS, but no helicopter tours would be allowed. No air tours would be authorized over Muir Woods. Tours would have to follow specified routes, generally fly no lower than 1,000-2,000 feet above wilderness areas, and 1,000 above Alcatraz and seabird nesting colonies, and marine mammal haul outs. Noise levels cannot exceed current levels and flights would be restricted to 9 AM to 30 minutes after sunset. Additional morning flight hours would be added as an incentive for commercial tour operators who adopt quiet technology. The number of tours each day would be restricted and movements would be tracked by technology required to be in each plane. Operator education and reporting twice-a-year would be required.

Wildlife that depend on these federal habitats are abundant and of diverse species. Distance restrictions will protect the marine mammals hauling out or pupping, endangered Snowy Plover, seabird breeding colonies, and special status terrestrial species including Northern Spotted Owl and Peregrine Falcon. Visitors wishing to have a quiet experience in nature will also benefit. The wilderness area at PRNSS is important habitat for Northern Spotted Owl, and marine mammals and pelagic bird nesting colonies along coastal cliffs. Harbor seals and other marine mammals are sensitive to visual and noise disturbance which can lead to mammals flushing into the water. Noise reduction and a 1,000 foot distance restriction will protect colonial nesting species, Common Murre and Brandt's cormorant, that are also sensitive to noise and visual disturbance and could abandon nests when disturbed. Alcatraz Island supports an important seabird nesting colony.

Conservation continued on page 5

2022 Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas Annual Report

by Diana Humple and Daphne Hatch

In November, we unexpectedly said goodbye to a core member of the Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas II team, Joan Lamphier (see obituary below). While absorbing this loss, and reflecting on how much she contributed to the momentum of the Atlas – she was on the Steering Committee, a regional coordinator, and a block leader – we finished the Atlas's second annual report, which was nearly complete at her passing. It is dedicated to Joan.

We hope you will read the report (<https://marinaudubon.org/birds/marin-county-breeding-bird-atlas>) to learn what we've done, what everyone's efforts are producing, what we are learning, and even how you might contribute. We also share the next steps for the project, for the 2023 breeding season (the third year of data collection) and beyond. As part of this, we outline what volunteer help we are looking for: skilled birders to collect data, plus people to help with volunteer recruitment, fundraising, data, and a few other things. Interested?

The report also provides a number of results to date. Only two years into this multi-year effort, preliminary results give indication of distributional changes since the original Atlas (Shuford 1993). This includes, for example, the expansion of certain species (e.g., Pygmy Nuthatch, Nuttall's Woodpecker), and breeding records for others that were not found during the original effort (e.g., Bald Eagle, Wild Turkey). We are keen to fill in the data gaps in the next two years, to recruit more skilled

birders, and for those already participating to consider if they can take on another block.

Another update this year was the overhaul of the web-based Data Explorer, thanks to the handiwork of Will Wiskes, GIS Analyst for the project.

Some of the new ways to visualize the data are visible in this report, and to see more, we encourage you go to the Data Explorer section of our website (link in second paragraph) to look at any species of conservation or personal interest to you, to explore the Atlas results more broadly, and to see what blocks are available.

The report is a testament to everyone who has participated, in a myriad of ways, in this effort so far, and we are grateful to the many who made the Atlas effort possible this year and continue to contribute to its success. Instrumental in that, of course, was officially coming under the non-profit sponsorship of the Marin Audubon Society this year. Also instrumental was the energy and dedication of our recently departed friend, Joan Lamphier.



Becky Matsumoto / MCBBA2

Least Bittern Fledgling at Las Gallinas Wildlife Pond

Joan Lamphier, 1942-2022



Joan Lamphier unexpectedly passed away on November 8, 2022, at the age of 80. A mover and doer in the conservation and birding community, she was a force in the

revival of the Marin County Birding Atlas, which just completed its second successful year. The MCBBA2 updates the first county breeding bird atlas that was started some forty years ago and charts the status and distribution of nesting birds in the county. This was just one of many projects where her dedication and competence, not to mention her delightful presence, will be sorely missed by her wide circle of friends, especially in west Marin where she had lived for a long time.

With a master's in urban planning from U.C. Berkeley, Joan had a distinguished

career specializing in environmental review. Joan founded the planning firm of Lamphier-Gregory and, after "retirement," continued to work in the field. Working throughout northern California, she consulted on major infrastructure projects. Through that work, she developed a deep understanding and knowledge of native habitats and special-status species.

Besides being an active member of MAS, Joan was on Project Coyote's advisory board. She was a hawk watcher for the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory and a beach watcher for the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. As a docent for the Point Reyes National Seashore, she helped interpret and protect their growing Harbor Seal and Tule Elk populations. At the Audubon Canyon Ranch, Joan worked on waterbird and heron nesting surveys. Joan had a passion for applying long-term scientific data for conservation purposes.

Conservation

continued from page 4

TENNESSEE VALLEY HABITATS RESTORATION

The National Park Service has released an Environment Assessment addressing removal of the 12-16 foot earthen dam near the ocean to eliminate the threat of dam failure. The dam removal project will do much more than remove a safety risk. The project will restore habitat by realigning the creek, restoring floodplain habitat, removing the remnant structures from the Bettencourt Ranch, removing invasive plants, and creating three ponds for the endangered red-legged frog that had been created by the dam.

Along with expressing our enthusiastic support for restoring floodplain, wetland and endangered species habitat, we raised questions about how many of the highly-invasive eucalyptus trees would be removed and about the revegetation plan, which is not well described.

COMMUNITY SCIENCE PROJECT

Volunteers Needed at the South Marin CBC!

Please join Marin Audubon as a team volunteer or count area leader for the annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC), the nation's longest running community science bird project. Audubon's CBCs started on the East Coast in 1901 and Marin Audubon's South Marin CBC started in 1978. The counts are conducted every year from mid-December to early January in approximately 2,100 count circles across the USA as well as in other countries. Data from the counts are analyzed by National Audubon and is critical for the identification of bird species in decline, as well as those expanding territories.

We need volunteers on Saturday, December 31, 2022 for the South Marin area CBC. Some birding experience is preferred, and if you are an experienced birder we are in need of a couple of count area leaders. Volunteers will be assigned to help out a count area team. In addition to being part of this important tradition, it is a great opportunity to get outside to see some interesting birds and beautiful locales.

If you are interested in participating please contact Ed Nute at smcbc.marinaudubon@gmail.com.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

We will be doing some weed control by digging weeds, especially the Harding grass, and then sheet mulching in preparation for planting a year from now if not this winter. Sheet mulching is very effective at stopping weeds, even Harding grass. The main planting is done at both Triangle Marsh and the Ecological Reserve addition but we are looking to add some diversity to the species and to replant some patches where weeds have become dominant.

Act locally and join us on a workday. Being there and being active would be good for your mood as well as the landscape. Marin's wild plants and animals need your help. We all make a difference.

Volunteer Workdays

Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: December 3

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 10

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, VOLUNTEERS

Annette Anzalone, Rich Cimino, Bob Hinz, Martha Jarocki, Kent McDonald, Ed Nute, Lowell Sykes



Spotted Towhee

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

BAHIA

With the November rains we no longer need watering for our levee plants planted last year. A grant from the RHE Foundation was a great help maintaining our plants through the summer.

Through October and November, STRAW (Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed) will have brought ten grade school classes to plant native plants: San Geronimo Open Classroom, Hidden Valley Elementary, Oak Elementary Old Mill, Strawberry Point Elementary, four classes from Lynwood Elementary, La Tercera and Ross Elementary School. Along the eastern peninsula, the youngsters have been planting native species that are intended to provide high tide refuge habitat for the endangered Ridgway's Rail and other native species that inhabit the adjacent tidal marsh. We are happy to have STRAW and all of the classes partner with us to create habitat.

TISCORNIA MARSH RESTORATION

Our public meeting on October 19 attracted 58 attendees. Multicultural Center of Marin Executive Director, Douglas Mundo, welcomed attendees, as did Supervisor Dennis Rodoni who also served as moderator. ESA engineers



Lara Stagner

STRAW volunteers at Bahia planting site

Dane Behren presented the project, including updating public access components, moving the outer trail to restore the diked marsh to tidal action, and placing benches and signage. ESA engineer and Pablo Quesaro presented the schedule. San Rafael Chief engineer April Miller and Senior engineer Joanna Quark presented the city's projects that surround our project: Canal Street parking, park and soccer field, trash capture facility, and dredging of the canal. Attendees had questions about the Tiscornia project area as well as the city projects.

ESA engineers and other staff are continuing to prepare applications for permits from regulatory agencies. We are aiming to submit applications at the end of November.

MARIN BIRDLOG: OCTOBER 2022

By Noah Arthur

The rare bird bonanza that began in September continued full force into October this year, with this probably being the best month in recent memory for rarities in Marin. Oct. 1st brought a **White-winged Dove** (EC) and a **Northern Parula** (MS) to the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse, along with a wave of more regular Outer Point vagrants. Two new **Blackburnian Warblers** also turned up on the 1st, one at the Lighthouse (GL) and one at Drakes (MS). The best warbler on the 1st appeared at the most unexpected of places: a **Bay-breasted Warbler** foraging coyote bushes along the trail to Abbotts Lagoon (ST).

Elsewhere on the 1st, the Stinson Beach Post Office riparian continued its recent good run with a **Yellow-green Vireo** (LC), and a **Blackburnian Warbler** was at Rodeo Lagoon (LN).

The rarest shorebird of the month came on the 2nd in the form of a **White-rumped Sandpiper** on Bolinas Lagoon, along with a **Baird's** sidekick (MD).

The wave continued on the 2nd, including a **Sage Thrasher** along the Lighthouse road (LS), **Orchard Oriole** at Spaletta Ranch (EMs), and **Ovenbirds** at Nunes (DS), Lighthouse (DK), and Mendoza Annex (EM). The Lighthouse also had a **Vesper Sparrow** (EM & DS), and rare for the Outer Point, at least 2 **Spotted Towhees** (EM & DS). A female **Black-throated Blue Warbler** showed up at Mendoza (DS), joined in the afternoon by a **Bay-breasted** and a **Magnolia Warbler** (AB).

The 3rd brought a few more new rarities to the Outer Point, including a flyover **Lawrence's Goldfinch** at the Lighthouse (MD), **Bobolink** at the New Willows (NW), **Ovenbird** at the Fish Docks (LC), and **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at Nunes (MD).

Another nice late shorebird came on the 5th, a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** at Abbotts Lagoon (MB), joined by a **Baird's** the next day (?). A **Prairie Warbler** was at Rodeo Lagoon on the 5th (WL).

One of the rarest birds of the month and year came on the 6th, a **Mississippi Kite** on the wing over Bolinas, held up by a fog bank just to the south (SH). Also on the 6th, a **Black Swift** flew over Hawk Hill with **White-throateds** (MF), and a **Prairie Falcon** was harassing other raptors at Spaletta Ranch (AP). An **Ovenbird** at Nunes on the 7th (GP) was probably a new individual.

The long-staying **Marin Black Vulture** put in an unusual Outer Point appearance on the 9th,

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Birdlog

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flying by Fish Docks (RB). Yet another mega-rarity came on the 10th, a very confiding **Smith's Longspur** at Abbotts Lagoon (TF).

A push of rare Interior Western vagrants hit in the next couple of days, including a **Sage Thrasher** at Marta's Marsh on the 10th (AM), **Lewis's Woodpecker** at Mt. Tam on the 11th (JP), **Green-tailed Towhee** at the Nike Missile Site near Rodeo Lagoon on the 11th (AR), and yet another **Sage Thrasher** along Pierce Point Rd. on the 12th (CH & DS).

Two more mega-rarities came on the 12th, one from east and one from north, a **Wood Thrush** banded at Palomarin and an **American Tree Sparrow** at Abbotts Lagoon (RL). Then the Interior Western push continued on the 13th with a **Vermilion Flycatcher** at Rodeo Lagoon (WL) and **Hammond's Flycatchers** at Muddy Hollow (?) and Rodeo Lagoon (NO). Also on the 13th, a **Vesper Sparrow** was at Abbotts (AM), and a **Nelson's Sparrow** was at Marta's Marsh (BB).

On the 14th, a **Blackburnian Warbler** was at Point Bonita Lighthouse (LC) and a male **Black-throated Blue Warbler** was at Nunes (MD). But the best bird on the 14th was a **Plumbeous Vireo** at the Fish Docks (MB).

One of the best warblers of the month, a **Black-throated Green Warbler** flew in to the Fish Docks on the 15th (EMs). Very rare for the Outer Point, a **Northern Mockingbird** was at the Fish Docks on the 16th (CC), and also on the 16th two **Grasshopper Sparrows** turned up at Abbotts (ET), a **Yellow-shafted Flicker** was at Hawk Hill (?), and a late **Western Kingbird** was near the Fish Docks (BC & SG). A pelagic trip on the 16th picked up **Guadalupe Murrelet** and **Short-tailed Shearwater** in Marin waters.

The rarest Marin bird of 2022 appeared at Rodeo Lagoon on the 17th, where a *Phylloscopus warbler* was initially identified as a Dusky, but turned out to be a much rarer **Willow Warbler**, a first record for California (WL).

The 17th also produced a **Hammond's Flycatcher** at Muir Beach (AM) and a male **Black-throated Blue Warbler** at Fish Docks (DS). A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was at Fish Docks (DH) and a **Band-tailed Pigeon** flying west at the Lighthouse (EM) on the 18th (DH). Yet another **Vesper Sparrow** at Rodeo Lagoon on the 19th (RC), and another **Bobolink** at Abbotts Lagoon on the 19th (DHR). Getting very late, a **Black-headed Grosbeak** was singing along Redwood Creek on the 20th (GP).

In what has become an exceptional season for the species, another **Black-throated Blue Warbler** turned up on the 22nd, this one at Rodeo Lagoon (RU & NB).

The **Yellow-crowned Night-heron** returned to Sausalito on the 23rd (SS). Also very rare on the 23rd, a **Dickcissel** flew over Hawk Hill (EG).

Yet another stupendous mega-rarity appeared on the 24th, this time a **White Wagtail** at Las Gallinas (MSt). A **Magnolia Warbler** was also at the Lighthouse on the 24th (WVD).

Late and rare, a **Swainson's Hawk** was over Hawk Hill on the 28th (AF). **Lewis's Woodpecker** numbers on Mt. Tam had bumped up to 3 by the 28th. Rare for the Outer Point, an **American Crow** was at the Lighthouse on the 29th (DS).

The month closed out with two more wintry rarities, a flyover **Sandhill Crane** at Abbotts Lagoon (RL & YM) and 2 **Townsend's Solitaires** at their usual spot on Mt. Tam (DH) on the 31st.

Tropical Kingbirds were at Pt. Reyes Hall Ranch on the 1st (JE), trail to Abbotts Lagoon on the 6th (EC), Nunes on the 6th (AP), Bolinas on the 8th (MD), Rodeo Lagoon on the 10th (?), Marta's Marsh on the 14th (MP), Nunes on the 16th (LN), RCA Station on the 15th (LS), Palomarin Trail on the 21st (MM). **Tennessee Warblers** were at Fish Docks on the 1st (ST), Hall Ranch on the 1st (MS), Lighthouse on the 1st (EC), 2 at Lighthouse on the 2nd (DS), Nunes on the 2nd (?), Spaletta on the 2nd (AB), Lighthouse on the 18th (EM). **Clay-colored Sparrows** were at the Lighthouse (AP) and Nunes (?) on the 2nd, road to Lighthouse on the 3rd (NA), Fish Docks on the 6th (MK). **Blackpolls** were at Fish Docks on the 1st (MS), Spaletta on the 2nd (AB), Drakes on the 3rd (LM). **Northern Waterthrushes** were at the Lighthouse on the 2nd (?), Rodeo Lagoon on the 14th (LC). **Black-and-white Warblers** were at the Lighthouse on the 2nd (ES) along with 2 **Chestnut-sided Warblers** (?).

Observers and Acronyms EC: Everett Clark, MD: Mark Dettling, LC: Lucas Corneliussen, LN: Larry Nigro, JE: Jules Evens, ST: Sam Talarigo, MS: Mark Sawyer, GL: Garret Lau, LS: Lucas Stephenson, AP: Adam Panto, EM: Ethan Monk, DS: Dessi Sieburth, EMs: Eddie Monson, DK: Durrell Kapan, ES: Emilie Strauss, NA: Noah Arthur, NW: Nils Warnock, LC: Lucas Corneliussen, AB: Aidan Brubaker, WL: William Legge, MF: Michaela Figari, MB: Mark Butler, MK: Mark Kudrav, SH: Steve Howell, GP: Grayson Poutas, RB: Ralph Baker, LM: Linda Milam, JP: John Paul, AM: Alex Merritt, TF: Teale Fristoe, CH: Chris Hayward, RL: Rachel Lawrence, BB: Bob Battagin, NO: Nadine Ondera, MP: Michael Park, CC: Connor Cochrane, ET: Ella Taraborelli, BC: Betty Cooper, SG: Susan Goodrich, DH: Dan Habig, RC: Rich Cimino, DHR: Derek Hameister, LS: Lucas Stephenson, MM: Mike Mahoney, DS: Dan Singer, RU: Rylan Urban, NB: Nicole Baldwin, SS: Sylvie Silverstein, EG: Eli Gross, WVD: Willem van Dam, MSt: Michele Swartout, AF: Allen Fish, DS: David Sexton, YM: Yvette McDonald, DH: Diana Humple

DAVE DESANTE, 1942-2022



Dave DeSante passed away on October 18, 2022, at age 80. A much beloved conservation scientist and birder, he

passed suddenly and peacefully while doing one of his favorite things - pursuing a sighting of a vagrant bird, which in this case was an ultra-rare Willow Warbler that showed up in Rodeo Lagoon.

Dave had given programs for the Marin Audubon Society, advised on the latest Breeding Bird Atlas, and was a regular on our Christmas Bird Counts. Dave's Ph.D. from Stanford was on the amazing natural phenomenon of migrant bird mis-orientation based on his studies on the Farallones.

Dave founded the Institute for Bird Populations (IBP) in 1989 and was executive director until 2008. He won numerous national conservation awards, including Conservationist of the Year from the Western Chapter of the Wildlife Society, the Chandler Robbins Conservation and Education Award from the American Birding Association, and The Lifetime Achievement Award from Partners in Flight.

Dave was a true visionary whose passion and drive inspired all of us to study and conserve bird populations. He also had a huge and loving spirit, and touched many of our lives in more personal ways. We will miss our friend greatly.

We invite you to leave your remembrances of Dave on the IBP website (tinyurl.com/4w9wxzs5) from where some of this copy was gotten.

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Dickcissel



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- Check website for updates and details

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