

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 7:00 PM

Vagrancy in Birds

By Daniel Edelstein



Alan D. Wilson

Black and White Warbler

Register for this month's program on the MAS website's Speaker Series page.

Do you chase rare birds that accidentally occur in our area outside of their normal migration range? If so, you enjoy finding vagrant birds, a phenomenon many Marin County birders pursue at the Outer Point within Point Reyes National Seashore and other California coastal areas. This presentation will highlight the reasons for vagrancy in birds, noting how birds navigate during migration and reasons for their orientation errors that result in their unexpected presence primarily from mid-August through October in west Marin County. In addition, the discovery of vagrancy at the Outer Point by Rich Stallcup and David DeSante will be discussed, along with the role vagrancy may play in colonization and eventual speciation of birds.

Daniel Edelstein is a freelance Consulting Biologist (who is a Certified Wildlife Biologist Asc.) who has led birding tours for more than 25 years and presented public birding presentations in more than 20 states. Daniel's web site – WarblerWatch.com – hosts several birding handouts and his warbler-centric blog – WarblerWatch.blogspot.com – has hosted warbler articles since 2007. He has also taught diverse adult birding classes at various organization.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 7:00 PM

Chasing America's Raptors

By Scott Harris

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The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Annual Report for FY 2023-24

MAS's fiscal year 2023-24 has been busy, productive, and challenging. We continued to work to expand our field trips and protect and improve habitats. Through our Conservation Committee we address regional and local conservation issues and concerns, and through our Property Management Committee we focus on enhancement and stewardship of our lands and restoration of habitats. We advance knowledge of birds by sponsoring the Breeding Bird Atlas and Christmas Bird Counts, broaden the understanding of the natural world through our programs and advocacy work, and participate in equity programs with multicultural communities.

During the past year, we continued our established activities and major projects. While we hire experts to help with our programs and, specifically, our restorations, we are an all-volunteer organization.

In all, 441 volunteers contributed a total of 11,983 hours working on Marin Audubon activities. This includes hours the Breeding Bird Atlas and Marin Baylands Advocates contributed. We thank our volunteers for their

contributions to science, understanding of the natural world, and status of birds at this time of climate change and sea-level rise.

MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES

TISCORNIA MARSH RESTORATION AND SEA-LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION PROJECT

We had to delay construction due to an issue PG&E raised about their transmission tower on our property. Our geotechnical engineer is doing modeling to inform the design. Rail surveys this year found a California Black Rail project will restore tidal marsh for endangered and other wildlife using sediments dredged from the Bay, increase flood protection for the community by improving the levee to stabilize the shoreline and upgrading the public trail, and improve public access by helping to connect visitors to the tidal marshes and wildlife of the Bay. Our project partner, Multicultural Center of Marin, has continued to conduct outreach to residents about the Tiscornia project and sea-level rise. We completed our grants from the Ocean Protection Council and are now working with funding from our second grant from the

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IN MEMORIAM

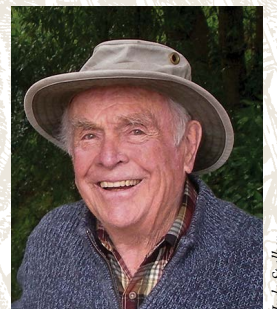
Loyal Martin Griffin, MD 1920 – 2024

Dr. Loyal Martin (Marty) Griffin passed away on May 22nd of this year, just two months shy of his 104th birthday. Marty's accomplishments and contributions to the conservation of the Marin and Sonoma County natural environments were many and significant. He had a strong love of nature from an early age and in 1956 while raising a young family and practicing medicine, he was roped into helping with the campaign to save the northern end of Richardson Bay from development. That success led to the creation of the Richardson Bay Audubon Center and Sanctuary and the Marin Audubon Society and lit a fire in Marty that drove him to fight for the preservation of

wild areas and wildlife throughout the rest of his life.

He was an early board director of the Marin Audubon Society, a co-founder of Audubon Canyon Ranch and the Environmental Forum of Marin; led the effort to halt approved plans for the development of the Bolinas Lagoon and Tomales Bay; served as the

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Jude Stalker

Marty Griffin

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 newsletter@marinaudubon.org
Secretary	Lelia Lanctot 924-6138
Treasurer	Martha Jarocki 461-3592
Conservation	Roger Harris 510/710-9120 Barbara Salzman 924-6057
Field Trips	Doug Waterman newsletter@marinaudubon.org Alison Pence 254-4451
Membership Chair	Bob Hinz 383-8688 Contact Bob for membership problems or questions.
Outreach, Website	Elyse Omernick outreach@marinaudubon.org
Speaker Series	Mike Anderson 990-9784
Special Projects	Jude Stalker 680-6291
Nominating	Ellena Ochoa volunteercoordinator@marinaudubon.org
Editor, <i>The Rail</i>	Doug Waterman newsletter@marinaudubon.org
Property Management	Clint Kellner 895-8591
Property Real Estate	James Raives 497-4492
Volunteer Coordinator	Ellena Ochoa volunteercoordinator@marinaudubon.org
BAAC Reps	Barbara Salzman 924-605 Doug Waterman newsletter@marinaudubon.org
At-large Director	Lowell Sykes 388-2821
Position TBD	Michele Miller

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.

The Rail is published ten times a year by the Marin Audubon Society on 100% recycled paper; edited by Doug Waterman, newsletter@marinaudubon.org, 506-4675; assisted by other members of MAS; and designed by Studio NaCl (www.studionacl.com).

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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

Most of this issue of *The Rail* we're proud of our accomplishments and hope you, our members, are too. We ended the year in sadness with the passing of Dr. Marty Griffin, who died in May after a lifetime of service to the natural environment and the people.

As we begin our fiscal year 2024-25, we are looking forward to finalizing the acquisitions of several small parcels in the not too distant future. Our plans for the coming year include more field trips. Thanks to the help of our newest Board member and our new Field Trips Co-chair, Alison Pence is planning more exciting field trips.

We will continue with our sponsorship of the Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas, which is in its final data collection year before the data analysis begins. Just getting underway is the Novato Creek Baylands Strategy, and conservation challenges continue with the funding problems for the Farallones and MMWD's Recreation Pilot Study.

Undoubtedly, there will be new opportunities and challenges in the coming year that will come up. One challenge we unfortunately are having to deal with is the misrepresentation of MAS positions on the anchor-outs on Richardson Bay. We've been working on trying to correct harm to our reputation (see article on page 6). We'll be ready to meet any other challenges ahead.

A warm welcome to our new Board member, Michele Miller. Michele is an employment attorney and lives in San Rafael. She has served on Boards for local organizations and she'll fit right in with ours because she is an avid birder.

We also welcome new field trip leader, Mark

Clark, for our monthly trips to the Las Gallinas Ponds. Mark knows the Ponds and their wildlife well. He has been birding at the ponds for many years on trips with the Chilvers and by himself.

We sincerely apologize to many of you who have been unable to sign up for membership on our website. We know many have made repeated efforts to sign up through PayPal. We've had to have our PayPal connection adjusted five times over the last two months and we're happy it is currently working smoothly. To those who have had problems, we are sorry for your frustrations and thank you for your persistence.

I was honored to be among 16 Marin organizations invited by the Board of Supervisors President, Dennis Rodoni, to speak in celebration of Biodiversity Month. It was indeed impressive to hear from the representatives of the groups the many ways they further biodiversity to the benefit of all of us in Marin County. With everyone's support, the Board of Supervisors approved a Proclamation celebrating Biodiversity.

During the next few months, our Board will be doing homework intended to make the rest of the year run smoothly. We're currently preparing our budget, reviewing and updating our Policies and Procedures, and looking at ways to improve efficiency.

We welcome and urge members to join us during what promises to be an exciting year, by volunteering on our work days to be a part of what we do to benefit our wildlife and our environment. We invite you to join us on our field trips and at our speaker series programs.

Marty Griffin

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chair of the Environmental Health Committee for West Marin, as a member of the Marin County's Environmental Quality Committee and as a board director of the Marin Municipal Water District.

While living in Sonoma County he not only owned and operated the Hop Kiln Winery and served as the Public Health Director at the Sonoma State Hospital but also worked diligently to Save the Russian River from the destructive practices of the gravel mining industry there. He founded the Russian River Task Force, the Russian River Environmental Forum, co-founded the Friends of the Russian River

and together with his wife Joyce, established the Griffin Russian River Riparian Preserve.

In his later years he was a key force in the battles to protect the Drakes Estero Marine Wilderness and more recently, the natural resources of the Point Reyes National Seashore.

The list of his attributes and accomplishments is so much longer. Much of his fascinating history is memorialized in his book "Saving the Marin-Sonoma Coast" and on his website: www.martingriffin.org.

Marty's actions have forever protected thousands of acres of native habitat to benefit wildlife and enrich the lives of people. He inspired so many to continue defending the natural world in whatever way they can.

MAS FIELD TRIPS

Open to the public

MAS is providing a full schedule of free field trips for the 2024 season.

Advance registration is required for most of our trips, nearly all which have size limits to prevent overcrowding. Registration will open 10 days prior to the trip date on the Marin Audubon website's Field Trips page.

Trips can fill up quickly. If a trip is closed when you try to register, use the "contact organizer" and request to be put on the waiting list. **If you are unable to attend a trip you signed up for, use "Contact Organizer" to cancel so that someone on the waiting list will have an opportunity to attend.**

In some instances, trip signups aren't available precisely at 8 AM but it doesn't mean the trip is full. Please try to register again 2 or 3 minutes later.

THE PONDS AT THE LAS GALLINAS VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT (LGVSD)

San Rafael

Thursday, September 5, 2024 and

Thursday, October 3, 2024

8:30 AM to noon

With Mark Clark

No registration required. All participants are welcome to join this trip.

We welcome bird enthusiasts of all levels, especially beginning birders, to join leader Mark Clark on our monthly walk around the ponds at Las Gallinas. On our search we'll be looking for waterfowl, waders, songbirds, raptors, rails and swallows. With fall migration underway we are likely to spot some interesting species, so come assist in our search.

The packed dirt paths around the ponds are wide, flat and easy to navigate. Heavy rain cancels.

DIRECTIONS: 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 a portable restroom in the parking area for public use.

RODEO LAGOON, Marin Headlands

Wednesday, September 11, 2024

7:30 AM to noon

With William Legge and David Wiechers

Registration required. Registration opens September 1 at 8 AM on the MAS website's Field Trips page.

Join William and David for this third fall migration field trip at Rodeo Lagoon. This is their long-time "patch," which never seems to disappoint birders with daily variations in species and a good chance of an unusual sighting. On this trip, our group will be targeting **Parasitic Jaeger**, migrating shorebirds and scarcer migrant passerines. We will begin the morning with a Sea Watch from Rodeo Beach at 7:30 AM. Those arriving later may join us at 8:15 AM for a circuit of the lagoon. A brief mid-morning 'coffee-stop' is planned at Headlands Center for the Arts and it would be appreciated if participants come willing to contribute via the onsite 'tip-jar' as a thank you to the Headlands Center for the Arts for accommodating our group. This field trip is less suitable for beginners.

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 signal 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.

VAUX'S SWIFTS AT MCNEAR BRICK AND BLOCK

San Rafael

Friday, September 13, 2024

6 to 7:40 PM depending on the weather

With Rick Cimino

Registration required. Registration opens September 3 at 8 AM on the MAS website's Field Trips page.

Join other MAS members for an evening opportunity to witness **Vaux's Swifts** during their fall migration through Marin, which occurs in September and October. Dan McNear of McNear Brick and Block has kindly allowed Marin Audubon to access this remarkable site where decommissioned smokestacks provide an important communal roosting place for the swifts.

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

Sunset on the evening of our visit will be at 7:09 PM, so plan on arriving on time to be ready. If the weather on the day of our trip is particularly cool or windy, the swifts are likely to enter the stacks early, so plan accordingly. Bring scopes, binoculars, and, if desired, folding chairs for your seating comfort. It can be chilly at dusk. Please stay with our group and do not enter any of the private areas on the property. Use soft voices and be sure to respect the privacy of local residents.

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

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH'S CYPRESS GROVE RESEARCH CENTER, Marshall

Tuesday, September 17, 2024

8 to 11 AM

With David Lumpkin

Registration required. Registration opens September 7 at 8 AM on the MAS website's Field Trips page.

Join avian ecologist David Lumpkin, for a field trip to his work location, Audubon Canyon Ranch's Cypress Grove Research Center. All levels of birding enthusiasts are welcome on this easy two-mile walk.

Sightings on our walk to and along Tomales Bay at this time of year may include ocean birds if conditions are right (Jaeger's come down the bay chasing the migrating terns around then), the occasional vagrant passerine, and an influx of interior breeders not seen in the summer. Other migrating shorebirds and waterbirds may be seen as well as the usual mix of coastal prairie species. Rain does not cancel.

DIRECTIONS: Address for Audubon Canyon Ranch's Cypress Grove Research Center is 20545 State Hwy 1, Marshall, CA 94940.

Going north on Hwy 1, look for a green metal gate (which will be left open) on the Tomales Bay side and a Cypress Grove sign. The gate is roughly a 1/2-mile north of Hog Island Oysters in Marshall (and the turnoff to the Marshall-Petaluma Rd.) and well before Nick's Cove. Drive down the dirt road to where it splits, bear left, and park at the visitor parking lot.

ABBOTTS LAGOON AND THE INVERNESS TENNIS AREA

Birding in Marin, Season 9 – Trip 10

Saturday, October 5, 2024

8:30 AM to mid afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Registration required. Registration opens September 25 at 8 AM on the MAS website's Field Trips page.

Abbotts Lagoon on the Pacific Coast in the Point Reyes National Seashore is one of Marin's premier birding locations, sporting an eBird sum of 283 species. Fall migration south along the coast brings many birds to this area. Some that we hope to see include **Ferruginous Hawk, Baird's and Pectoral Sandpipers, Red-necked Phalaropes, Lapland Longspur, Horned Lark** and **Pipits**. Hundreds of ducks of a dozen species, geese, herons, Peregrines and Ospreys are also likely visitors. Plus, you get some exercise; out and back is about 2 miles (some in sand). Pack a lunch for a picnic on the beach and bring a couple of layers for the fresh ocean air and help us spot a rarity.

After leaving Abbotts Lagoon, we plan to stop along Tomales Bay near the Inverness Tennis club to look for Pine and Alder woodland birds. A surprising number of species have been seen here and there is a nice little beach where we usually find several kinds of gull.

DIRECTIONS: From Point Reyes Station on Hwy 1 go just south of town, right turn onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd, follow that thru Inverness up over Inverness ridge into the Point Reyes National Seashore then go north on Pierce Point Rd. The Abbotts Lagoon parking lot is on the left, in about 3 miles. Carpool if you can, allow 1.5 hours from San Rafael.

THANK YOU, DONORS

Bud Alderson, Richard Bass, Edgar Bowron, Deborah Brown, Greg Costopoulos, Nusi Dekker, Ross, Flewelling Jennifer Gelini, Francine Goodman, Ann Sheree Greenbaum, Roger Hooper, Terri Hollowell, Bonnie & Peter Jensen, Barbara & Jim Kautz, Marli Krushkhova, Kathleen Lewis, Mary Love, Ron & Amanda Mallory, Daniel Mardesich, Bonnie Marks, Peter Mason, Bob Miller, Ruth Neuweiler, Frank Noonan, Earle Owen, Steve Piatek, Leslie Plant, Madeleine Provost, Meg Rosegay, Charlotte Scherman, Jill Sideman, David Sexton, Meryl Sundove, Inta Vodopals, Brenda & Victor Wong

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Robert Dimond, Harry Fussganger, Pat Akay, Peppi Anderson, Robert Arrick, George Barnard, Joan W. Basore, Lee Battat, Jean Baylo, Samantha Beers, Laura Bernstein, Carin Bildt, Donna Borok-Moss, Amanda Busch, Jeanette Carr, Lewis J. Carver, Michael Charlos, Mark Clark, Mary Cochran, Lucrecia Coomber, William & Cynthia De Prado, Christine Debusna, R. C. Demartini, Kristi Edwards, Erica Engstrom, Peter Fritts, Beverly Garine, Kristin Halligan, Janie M. Harrison, Lois Hirsch, Jerry Hiura, Vicky Y. Kang, Daniel Kennedy, Patrick Kerlake, Robert Klein, Graziella Lafite, Jana Sequoya Magdaleno, Diane Marchant, Elizabeth A. McQuiston, Felix Le Merle, Larry W. Meredith, Janet Miller, Charlene Modena, Alison Pence, Gail Penfield, Raymond C. Reis, Paul A. Satt, Sondra Schonwasser, Michael Scott, Robert Secher, Olivia Shaver, Anita Silva, Marilyn South, Linda Spence, Karl Spiller, Christine Sugrue, Margret P. Symons, Ginger Tai, Judi Tawney, Dorothy Thomas, Van Heusden, Vera Weill-Halle, Sydney Weisbach, Wildcare, Mike Winston, Marian Yee

DONATE YOUR CAR TO MAS

Looking for deductions on your 2023 taxes? You may qualify for a write-off if you donate your unwanted car, truck, motorcycle, RV, or boat.

It's easy, just contact CARS. They will pick up your car, sell it, and after paying their costs, give the rest to Marin Audubon Society.

If you would like to donate your car, follow this Marin Audubon Society link <https://careasy.org/nonprofit/Marin-Audubon-Society> to the CARS website where you can start the vehicle donation process or call 855/500-7433.

Annual Report

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San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority; we are planning to begin construction next winter.

NOVATO CREEK BAYLANDS STRATEGY

Received funding from the EPA and is now up and running, guided by the San Francisco Estuary Institute and Partnership, the Marin County Public Works, and Marin Audubon. Work has begun on developing alternatives for restoring the diked baylands in the lower Novato Creek watershed.

ENHANCING HABITATS

Over the last 30 years, MAS has acquired and maintains 525+ acres of tidal marsh, diked baylands, and associated uplands that provide habitat for wildlife and benefits for people.

- **Stewardship** We conducted Work Days at Triangle Marsh and Corte Madera Ecological Reserve, in Corte Madera, where volunteers helped to enhance uplands adjacent to tidal marshes. We actively manage our Simmons Slough property, on Atherton Avenue in unincorporated Novato, where we maintain milkweed and pollinator plants to support monarch butterflies and remove invasive plants to restore habitat for native waterbirds. At Bahia we both removed invasive plants and installed native plants to enhance levee habitat and seasonal wetlands. We also removed invasive plants from our Black Point properties.

Grants from the Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission, California Alpine Club Foundation, and RHE Charitable Foundation help us restore habitat at Bahia.

- **Limonium Removal** In partnership with the California Invasive Plant Council, MAS volunteers and a crew hired by MAS removed the invasive species *Limonium latifolium* from some private properties along the Sausalito waterfront and at the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve.

MORE PROTECTING HABITATS AND SPECIES

- **Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) Protection Program** We continued outreach to residents within a quarter mile of NSO nests by mailing packets containing information about NSOs, their biology, and ways to protect them. We strengthened our partnership with the Marin County Open Space District by conducting a docent program at selected NSO nest sites.
- **Legal** We engaged legal counsel to advise and represent us on issues related to two of our properties: 1) Calpark, in unincorporated San Rafael, where our countersuit against the property owners' suit to quiet title paper streets in this 1972

subdivision is close to settlement; and 2) Star Storage (formerly Deer Island), where new owners of the adjacent property raised issues about easements affecting our Simmons property in unincorporated Novato. Negotiations have stalled due to lack of response from the new owners.

We are awaiting a decision from the court in the Air Tour lawsuit, which seeks to require the US Department of the Interior to produce an environmental assessment of the impacts of tourist planes and helicopters flying over the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Point Reyes National Seashore, and Muir Woods National Monument. We are represented by the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility.

SPONSORSHIPS

MAS is fiscal sponsor for the Breeding Bird Atlas 2, which completed its fourth year of gathering data on breeding birds in Marin, and for Marin Baylands Advocates, our partner organization in acquiring baylands since we began purchasing properties.

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Christmas Bird Counts We continued to sponsor three Christmas Bird Counts: Southern Marin, Cheep Thrills (Novato area), and Point Reyes. Data from the counts is compiled and analyzed by the National Audubon Society to present trends in bird populations. The Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas conducted its fourth year of gathering data that will be analyzed for Marin County bird population trends.

EDUCATION/OUTREACH

The Rail, Speaker Programs, and Field Trips continued. The foundation of our education/outreach program is our newsletter, *The Rail*, which conveys information about our programs, conservation, bird sightings, and other matters of Audubon interest. Our advocacy focuses on protecting wildlife and its habitats. Our testimony at public hearings educates both decision-makers and the public. Junior Birdwatchers, our bird identification program for elementary school-age children, and was used in several in Marin County schools last year.

CONSERVATION

During the past year, MAS commented on proposed development projects and on planning and environmental review documents, and we participated in public and private processes, all with the goal of protecting natural resources, wildlife and its habitats.

- **Draft Barred Owl Plan and Environmental Impact Statement** We commented in support of the plan to protect the native NSO by allowing property owners to remove the more aggressive, invasive barred

owl, which is occupying the same habitat as the NSO. Barred owl are native to the east coast and are a significant threat to NSO.

- **Tomaes Bay State Park Forest Health and Wildfire Resilience Public Works Plan**
We commented on the plan, expressing concerns about the loss of habitats and failure to demonstrate that sufficient habitat will remain to support the NSO and other special-status species.
- **Tomaes Point Management Plan/Tule Elk Management Plan**
We supported the US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) plan to remove the elk enclosure fence and made recommendations to improve management.
- **Battery Storage Proposal**
After opposing the battery storage project, we attempted to purchase the diked bayland property at the southeast corner of the State Route 37 – Highway 101 intersection. Unfortunately, the owners sold the property to another energy company, so a similar project can be expected.
- **Marin Water (MMWD) Recreation Feasibility Study**
MMWD completed the Recreation Feasibility Study (originally Recreation Plan) in which a pilot study for bike and e-bike use on the watershed trails was proposed. In June, staff presented a list of 20 trails for consideration for inclusion in the pilot study.

- **Farallon Islands**
We continued to advocate for protection of the Islands’ ecosystem, through the USFWS’s Mouse Eradication Plan, by commenting regularly to the Coastal Commission and other actions.

A new threat to the Islands arose with the withdrawal of \$300,000 that has been provided by the USFWS. Loss of these funds would result in a reduced presence of Point Blue scientists on the Islands during no-nesting season. Without a human presence, the Islands’ wildlife would be threatened and research that has been underway for the last 20 years, would be disrupted.

- **Fire Suppression Activities**
We continued to work to limit the loss of understory, caused by the vegetation removal program, and protect wildlife habitat by attending various hearings, board and committee meetings, and commenting on projects. With significant local, state and federal funding available to remove vegetation, the ability to protect habitat seems insurmountable.
- **State Route 37**
Following this issue and advocating for the restoration of the extensive diked baylands has involved participating in public hearings, policy meetings, with elected officials, Bayland Committee meetings, consisting of

environmental representatives, and the Planning and Environmental Leadership (PEL) process.

COMMITTEES TO PROTECT HABITAT

- **Lagunitas Creek Advisory Committee** (a Marin Water committee)
- **Environmental Roundtable**
- **San Francisco Bay Joint Venture**
- **San Francisco Estuary Partnership**
- **State Route 37 Baylands Group**
- **FERN** (Fire and the Environment Resilience Network)

**Marin Audubon Society
Statement of Financial Position
As of June 30, 2024**

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Operating Bank Accounts	293,833
Property Bank Accounts	118,633
Marin Baylands Advocates Bank Account	109,295
Breeding Bird Atlas Bank Account	36,345
Total Current Assets	558,106
Real Property	4,667,993
Investment Account	2,150,556
TOTAL ASSETS	\$7,376,655

Marin Audubon Society Statement of Activities July 2023 – June 2024

REVENUE AND SUPPORT	
Donations	648,258
Grant Income for Property, Restoration, and Enhancement	191,521
Membership	47,826
Events and Activities	7,926
Interest and Dividend Income	70,919
Marin Baylands Advocates Income	19,780
Breeding Bird Atlas Income	28,802
TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT	\$1,015,032

EXPENSES	
Property Restoration, Enhancement, and Management	387,881
Professional Services	81,814
Office Supplies, Printing, and Postage	33,222
Program Expenses	15,010
Insurance	10,509
Property Parcel Taxes	11,075
Permits and Fees	898
Website and Social Media	240
Contributions	10,000
Other General Expenses	1,152
Marin Baylands Advocates Expenses	1,976
Breeding Bird Atlas Expenses	19,120
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$572,897

RESULTS FROM OPERATIONS	\$442,135
Investment Gain – Realized and Unrealized	115,698
CHANGE IN EQUITY	\$557,833
TOTAL EQUITY – BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$6,818,822
TOTAL EQUITY – END OF YEAR	\$7,376,655

Volunteers Needed to Count Vaux’s Swifts

September begins the fall migration of Vaux’s Swift through Marin County.

You’re invited to join us for an exciting citizen science opportunity at a two-day workshop!

Marin Audubon Society (MAS) and the Bay Area Vaux’s Swifts Working Group are expanding efforts to count Vaux’s Swifts and are seeking new volunteers with various abilities to join in the effort through this workshop. This is part of a wide effort to understand the largely unknown movement and roosting patterns of Vaux’s Swifts.

Volunteers will engage with knowledgeable Vaux’s Swift counters/members of the Working Group who bring years of experience to share with newly-motivated birders. Volunteers will learn about and participate in refining the methods used to count these congregations of Vaux’s Swifts and plan future counting activities.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 7:00 PM

Meet on Zoom for an overview of the conditions at the overnight roost areas, efforts to count the swifts at this local site, and the various ways you can help. To sign up for this Zoom workshop register on MAS’s website on the Home Page and follow prompts.



Rich Cimino

Vaux’s Swifts circle chimney

Program:

Welcome: Barbara Salzman, President, MAS
Master of Ceremony: Rich Cimino
Presenters: Michael Helms, Rusty Scalf

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 6:00–8:00 PM

A site visit to the Vaux’s Swift migration roost at McNear Brick Yard, San Rafael for on-site experience and guidance from experts.

For more information, contact Rich Cimino via email at yellowbilledtours@gmail.com or text 925/353-0266.

Habitat Stewardship

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Only a few problem plants are significantly growing at this dry time of the year. *Dittrichia* (stinkweed) and *Salsola soda* are two of them; we'll be looking for them. Both are easy to pull. *Dittrichia* might be gone from both Triangle Marsh and the Corte Madera Marsh site, but its seeds can travel far so we will watch for it. Harding grass, fennel and bristly ox-tongue are the other invasives that we always work at holding off, especially near our native plants.

Earn community service hours. Help our native plants reclaim their home. It is an opportunity to learn more about a native habitat of your county and be a part of making it better. Make a difference.

Volunteer Workdays

Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: September 7, October 5

Meet at 10 AM on Paradise Drive between the Ring Mountain Phyllis Ellman trailhead and the Montessori School.

Corte Madera Ecological Reserve:

Second Saturdays: September 14, October 12

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, Annette Anzalone, Bob Hinz, Martha Jarocki, Susan Meffert and John, Eiden & Zadi Metcalfe, Alison Pence, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, and groups from two organizations, Youthfirst and LINC.

INVASIVE SEA LAVENDER REMOVAL VOLUNTEERS

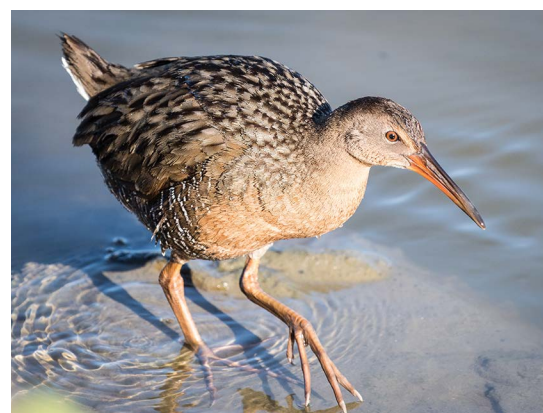
We wish to thank the volunteers who helped with removing the invasive sea lavender this spring and summer.

Debbie Ablin, Mike Anderson, Tana-Isabela Anulacion, Jutta Burger, Elizabeth Brusati, Katharine Cagney, David Cheng, Bob Hinz, Bob Huttar, Ellen Mansbach, Martha Jarocki, Jane and Mark Knowles, Susan Matross, Dana Morawitz, Ellena Ochoa, Alison Pence, Kate Powers, Flinn Moore Rauck, Jude Stalker and Skye Thomson and Eliza Welch

We've been busy maintaining our habitats over the summer. We've hired the Conservation Corps North Bay (CCNB) to continue to remove non-native harding grass from the uplands at the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. At Bahia, we hired Hanford crew to irrigate the native plants that were installed in June and they are continuing to irrigate them throughout the summer. We also hired the CCNB to install sheet mulching at our Simmons property to cover and kill the extensive harding grass on the site, and we continue to water and weed to maintain the native blackberry and milkweed planted there last year.

TISCORNIA PROJECT UPDATE

Issues with PG&E continue. The new issue relates to PG&E's moving the second transmission tower, that is on city property and on our project site, without coordinating with MAS until now. In the revised location the tower will straddle an existing tidal channel and pose several potential problems. The channel is likely to widen and shift, a natural process for tidal channels, after MAS restores the wetlands.



Ridgway's Rail

Berky Mansbach, CC-BY-SA 4.0

Tidal channels are the primary habitat for the endangered **Ridgway's Rail** and threatened **Black Rails**. We are concerned and have asked wildlife agencies how the presence of a utility tower over the tidal channel will affect the use of that section of the channel habitat by the two rails. PG&E staff expressed confidence that the tower will not be installed in the channel and will remain stable if the channel shifts with the improvements planned by our project.

MAS Erroneously Maligned in *Bay Nature* Magazine

We were shocked and disappointed to see a prominent statement in an article about the restoration of eelgrass in *Bay Nature* magazine (<https://baynature.org/article/in-the-name-of-eelgrass>) indicating that MAS lied about a recommendation in the "Richardson Bay Proposed Mooring Waterbird Surveys," conducted by Point Blue Conservation Science. The survey report recommends that "anchor-out facilities not be located in any of the five plots." (Plots are areas that were surveyed.) Without checking the source document, the magazine printed the erroneous claim, based on a statement by a Point Blue biologist, that no such recommendation had been made by Point Blue.

To make matters worse, the erroneous statement accusing MAS of lying was pulled out and printed in bold on the first page in the eight-page article. *Bay Nature* chose to emphasize a false statement about controversy, rather than emphasize the benefits and success of eelgrass restoration in the Bay.

We are also distressed that the tone of the article consistently painted MAS as bad guys for advocating the removal of anchor-outs (anchored vessels upon which people are living) and restoring the Bay for wildlife habitat. Our efforts to protect the Bay as a resource for wildlife support the Public Trust Doctrine, which protects California waterways for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of the public.

Living on the Bay benefits only those individuals living there, not the public. The anchor-out vessels cover the waterway and degrade Bay habitats, violating the public trust. The Public Trust Doctrine, which is the foundation of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission's work to protect Richardson Bay, is not mentioned in the article.

Instead of applauding MAS's long-time advocacy to restore Richardson Bay's natural resources, which is now finally happening through the Richardson Bay Regional Agency's process of moving anchor-outs into land-based housing (which MAS supports), *Bay Nature* chose to discredit us.

Integrity and honesty are always at the forefront of our advocacy and other work. We're still concerned about possible damage to our reputation that could impact our effectiveness as an advocate for the Bay habitats and wildlife.

Although *Bay Nature* staff quickly deleted the erroneous statements and added both a correction and an apology to the online version, we are concerned about the influence of the hard copy edition. The next issue will include a retraction and a letter to the editor from MAS. The letter that will be printed has been modified to accommodate some issues raised by *Bay Nature*. We can only hope that is sufficient to reach all who read the original hard copy and remove the blemish from our reputation.

Marin Birdlog: May 2024

By Noah Arthur

This May started off with a bang when a **Black-backed White Wagtail** was found just north of Bolinas on the 2nd, only the fifth eBird record of any White Wagtail in Marin (SE). The same prolific observer also found a **Ruddy Turnstone** at Drakes Beach on the 2nd, in a shorebird flock that also included **5 Red Knots** (SE).

Things began to get interesting on the Outer Point on the 3rd, with a **Lark Sparrow** at the Lighthouse (LC & CC). A male **Blue-winged Teal** was on Horseshoe Pond near Drakes Beach on the 3rd (LC & CC), joined by an unusual off-the-ocean **Long-tailed Duck** on the pond the next day (??). On the 7th, **10** northbound **Aleutian Cackling Geese** flew over Limantour Beach (TN).

A suspiciously late **Red-breasted Sapsucker** was banded at Muddy Hollow on the 7th, possibly hinting at breeding in the North Bay region (AK, LB, & SN). A push of **Black Swifts** moved through Marin on the 9th, including 16 over Sorich Park (DT) and 3 over Corte Madera Creek (CC), plus a **Bank Swallow** at Corte Madera Ridge (BB).

Out at sea on the 9th, the *Sunset Princess* made its way through Marin waters with birders on board finding **3 Laysan Albatrosses**, **9 Leach's Storm-petrels**, and **2 Murphy's Petrels**.

Outer Pt. Reyes was back in the headlines on the 10th with a **Dusky Flycatcher** (DS) and **Hammond's Flycatcher** (CC) hanging together at the Lighthouse, **Northern Parula** at the Lighthouse (DS), at least one **Black-and-white Warbler** at Nunes Ranch (CC), an exceptionally rare (for spring) **Palm Warbler** near Drakes Corner (CC), and a **Purple Martin** over New Willows (CC). On the 11th, another **Outer Point Lark Sparrow** was at Mendoza Ranch (BB).

A subsequent lull ended dramatically on the 16th with the rarest bird of the month, a **Grey-cheeked Thrush** sulking in the 'oven' at the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse (CC), a well-documented first-ever spring occurrence in Marin of this extremely rare **Eastern thrush**. Also on the 16th a singing **Tennessee Warbler** was at the Lighthouse, and **3 Band-tailed Pigeons** (rare for the Outer Point) flew over Nunes (CC).

What would be the season's only major Outer Point vagrant wave really hit its stride on the 17th. The continuing **Grey-cheeked Thrush** was joined by an **Ovenbird** in the 'oven' (BB); a **Black-and-white Warbler** in the New Willows (FF & LK); **Hooded Warbler** at Nunes (??); **Northern Parula** at Fish Docks (LK); and best of all a **Yellow-throated Warbler** at the Fish Docks (EM).

New finds on the 18th included a **Red-eyed Vireo** at Fish Docks (DL); **Northern Waterthrush** at Nunes (??); **Calaveras (Nashville) Warbler** at the Lighthouse (NA); **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** male at Fish Docks (DM) and female at Nunes (NA); and **Indigo Bunting female** at Fish Docks (MS & LS).

Away inland on the 19th, a **Snow Goose** showed up at Hamilton Wetlands (DS).

Back to the Outer Point on the 19th, new rarities included a **Broad-winged Hawk** at New Willows (SE & AK); **Rufous Hummingbird** at Lighthouse (SH); **Northern Mockingbird** fly-by at 'Mendoza Junior' (NA); **Baltimore Oriole** at the Fish Docks (MB); **Ovenbird** at Fish Docks (??); **Nashville Warbler** and **Northern Parula** at Nunes (BB); and perhaps rarest of all for the Outer Point, a **California Scrub-jay** at Fish Docks (AM). On the inner Point, a locally rare **Long-billed Dowitcher** was seen and (more importantly) heard at Schooner Bay (BB).

Things died down on the 20th, with many continuing rarities but the

only new finds being a **Hooded Oriole** at the Lighthouse (CC) and a flyover **Purple Martin** at Nunes (??). The 21st was more productive with a **Townsend's Solitaire** at Fish Docks (BB); **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, **Northern Waterthrush**, and a new **Black-and-white Warbler** at New Willows (CC & LS); and an **American Redstart** at Fish Docks (CC & LS). Elsewhere, a very late **White-throated Sparrow** showed up in a Tiburon back garden on the 20th (CP), apparently having visited sporadically throughout the winter.



Grey-cheeked Thrush

rhoadendrites@gmail.com, CC BY-SA 4.0

A male **Indigo Bunting** was found at Muddy Hollow on the 23rd though (SE). Extremely rare in the spring, a **Baird's Sandpiper** turned up Abbotts Lagoon on the 24th (NC). On the 25th a **Red-eyed Vireo** and **Ovenbird** were at Muir Beach (CC) and a **Purple Martin** flew over Drakes Beach (LR).

Nunes Ranch got a little more action on the 26th with a male **Chestnut-sided Warbler** (CC) and flyover **Swainson's Hawk** (DT, MT, & ET). The 27th produced a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at New Willows and (rare for the Outer Point) an **Oregon Junco** at Mendoza (both CC). Another very late 1st-spring **Short-billed Gull** was at Coast Camp Loop on the 29th (SE), and a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was along Red Hill Rd. on the 30th (ER).

The 31st produced **3 Purple Martins** and a **Grey Catbird** at Drakes and a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at the RCA trees (DM).

OBSERVERS AND ACRONYMS: SE: Sam Eberhard, LC: Lucas Corneliussen, CC: Connor Cochrane, WL: William Legge, DG: Dan Goldfield, DS: DAVID SEXTON, TN: Tom Nemeth, AK: Ananke Krishnan, LB: Larissa Babicz, SN: Sarah Needles, DT: David Tomb, BB: Brian Browne, DS: Dan Singer, FF: Frank Fabbro, LK: Logan Kahle, EM: Ethan Monk, DL: Dallas Levey, NA: Noah Arthur, DM: Dominik Mosur, MS: Mark Stephenson, LS: Lucas Stephenson, MB: Mark Butler, SH: Steve Hunter, AM: Alex Mortimer, CP: Carla Parkinson, NC: Natalie Clark, LR: Levi Rehberg, DT: Dario Taraborelli, MT: Mia Taraborelli, ET: Ella Taraborelli, JB: Junco Bullick, ER: Esme Rosen



Baird's Sandpiper

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The Rail

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- November 2 8:30 AM **Field Trip:** Hamilton Wetlands and Las Gallinas
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- November 6 7:30 AM **Field Trip:** Rodeo Lagoon
With William Legge and David Wiechers

Check website for updates and details

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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.

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