Newsletter of the Marin Audubon Society. Vol. 69, No. 01 **September 2026**

The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

SPEAKER SERIES

Free and Open to the public

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 7:00 PM

Bringing Birds to the Garden: California Native Plants for the Win

With Benny Isaac Jacobs Schwartz

Birds by BIJS

Townsend's Warbler

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

California is home to more than 5,000 native plant species and over 700 recorded bird species, yet habitat loss, development, and invasive plants threaten this biodiversity.

This presentation will explore the relationship between native plants and birds—and how home gardens can help restore habitat. Participants will learn how native plants provide food, shelter, and nesting opportunities, along with practical guidance for planning, planting, and maintaining a garden suited to local conditions.

The program will also introduce birds commonly found in California yards, parks, and open spaces. Attendees will leave with useful tools and inspiration for creating landscapes that support birds and other wildlife.

Benny Isaac Jacobs Schwartz is the founder of BIRDS by BIJS, a bird-guiding company and lifestyle brand connecting people with nature through birds. With more than 15 years of experience as a naturalist, expedition leader, and international bird guide, he has led birding adventures across North and South America. He is also an educator and photographer.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8 7:00 PM

The State of San Francisco Bay's Birds

With Julian Wood, Point Blue Conservation Science

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Annual Report for FY 2025-26

Doug Waterman

Newly Acquired Greater Bahia Expansion Parcel

The past year has been successful beyond expectations – rewarding, challenging, and lots of work. Perhaps our most spectacular accomplishment was the purchase of 323.28 acres of diked baylands that we will now begin to work on to restore to tidal marsh. And we've had many other impressive accomplishments. We've been awarded major grants, managed projects to expand shoreline habitats, advocated for habitats, and continued our educational activities while maintaining habitats on the properties we own. We've done all of this with our volunteers and the contributions of both time and money from our members and donors.

We've continued our education about birds and the natural world through 10 Speaker Series programs and 46 field trips, Christmas Bird Counts in our newsletter, The Rail, and, new this year, an internship program. In all, volunteers contributed a total of 48,781.5 hours on Marin Audubon activities, including our Volunteer Work Days, the Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas 2, Marin Baylands Advocates, and the Southern Marin Christmas Bird Count.

We are grateful to our members, donors, and volunteers for making these successes happen and, most importantly, for joining us in protecting and improving habitat. We literally couldn't do what we do without you. We are an all-volunteer organization, hiring contractors only when we need their expertise and physical help in maintaining our properties.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING 2025/2026

GRANTS AND BEQUESTS

Prominent grants from state agencies and bequests have made possible the major project described below. The SF Bay Restoration Authority (SFBRA) grant has provided most of the funding for the Tiscornia Project so far, along with a grant from the Ocean Protection Council. The SFBRA is providing funding for current planning necessary to get to construction of the levee improvements and ecotone slope. We have been selected for an EPA grant that will provide most of the funding needed to complete the last phase of the project: the gravel and cobble beach to prevent the marsh's edge from continuing to erode and also provide habitat. We are waiting to hear whether we made it through the second phase of the application process. A grant from the Marin Community Foundation will fund specific tasks essential for improving the levee. The State Coastal Conservancy provided most of the funds for our acquisition of the 323.23 acres of diked baylands as well as for the Regionally Advancing Living Shoreline project.

We've also been fortunate to have received bequests from Maureen Groper, John Crawford, and Audrey Myers. The Groper bequest provided the rest of the funding for the bayland purchase and will help us fund the preparation of a restoration plan for the newly

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

President	Barbara Salzman 924-6057
Vice President	Doug Waterman dglswtrmn@gmail.com
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At-large Director	Lowell Sykes 388-2821
BAAC Reps	Barbara Salzman 924-6057 Doug Waterman newsletter@marinaudubon.org

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

As we begin our 2026–27 fiscal year, I am reflecting on our very successful past year, in spite of the attacks on our environment from Washington and on CEQA from the legislature in Sacramento. We are proud of our accomplishments, which are outlined in our Annual Report. For the coming year, much of our work is clear. We have responsibilities for habitat restoration, enhancement projects, on our new property as well as our old ones. And we expect there will be new challenges: coping with the continuing and the unknown government attacks on our natural resources and possible weakening of the critical environmental protections provided by CEQA. As we've proven so far, our Board is resilient and motivated. With your ongoing support, we'll meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities.

Even though our Board did not meet in July, it doesn't mean we've not done anything. Our Board members have been quite busy planning for the coming year. We have continued conservation advocacy and summer maintenance on our properties, prepared our budget, and prepared materials for another audit necessitated by the amount of grant funds we have received. Doug and Alison are planning more field trips, and new Board member Sonali Shah has already scheduled exciting speakers for our Speaker Series. We're working on transferring our data to a new software program, Neon One, that we expect, after a learning period, will enable us to communicate more frequently and effectively with our members and manage our accounting more efficiently. So, we're looking forward to the coming year, to its rewards, changes, and its challenges. If you would like to join us in any of our activities, please let us now.

One conservation issue that is of great concern is Proposition 45, which will be on the November ballot. It may seem early to be talking about the November election, but if this measure passes, the potential impacts on our environment and our lives are so significant that I feel it is essential to provide information at every opportunity. Please read the article on page 6. I'll be sharing information up until November.

Thank you to everyone who contributed in response to our Spring Appeal letter. This appeal is the main source of funding for maintaining and enhancing habitats on our properties. All donations in response to this appeal are committed to benefiting our habitats. We depend on these funds to help us remove invasive, non-native plant species and put in pre-grown native plants to enhance the habitats. If you have not given already, it's not too late. You can still send a donation to us at Post Office 599, Mill Valley, CA 94942.

Congratulations and happy anniversary to Audubon California, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary in September.

THANK YOU, DONORS

Ira Alderson, Daniel Altman, Jeanne Azen, Mariah Baird, Sally Berger, Greg & Giselle Block Nancy Bohnet, Andrew Bollen, Edgar Bowron, Lois Cannady, Robert Casey, Darlene Choy, James Cleaves, Kenneth Cribley, Robert Darcy, Nusi Dekker, Steve Emery, Stephen Fjellman, Kathleen Foster, Peter Fritts, Thomas & Jennifer Gelini, Nancy Jane Gilboy, Paula Granucci, Shannon Griffin, Jeanette Gustafson, Dean Francis Hanson, Margaret Harrington, The Hodge Companies, Stephanie Hom, Joyce Howe, Douglas Howell, Martha Jarocki, Bonnie & Peter Jensen, Denis Jones, Alec Kay, Margaret Candace Key, Kenneth Kitlas, Elizabeth Knowles, Barbara Kriz and Stephen Grayson, Lelia Lanctot, William Legge, Jerry Ludeke, Daniel Mardesich, Margaret Milton, Jeanne Moe, Jean Moore, Ruth & Steve Nash, Samira Nassrah, Meg Newcomer, Robert Newcomer, Frank Noonan, Jean O'Korn & Michael McDaniel, Anne Owen, Thomas Peacock, Alison Pence, Robert Perez, E. Lynn Perry, Phillip Peterson, Stacey Pogorzelski, Jessie Powell, Kels Purcell, Lucien Remy, Susan Ristow, Katherine Rolston, Georg Roth, Anne Ruben, Jeane Scimone, Lisa Shanks, Jane Singer, Jude Stalker, Barbara Sumner, Lowell Sykes, Thomas Taylor, Valerie Van Dahl, Eliza Welch, David Wimpfheimer, Gail Steuart Woolaway

Bequests from Norah E Crawford and Audrey R. Myers

MAS FIELD TRIPS

Open to the public

Trips with participant limits require registration on MAS website's Field trips page. If a trip is full, check back, even on the night before the trip, as cancellations will open new spots. If you want to cancel a trip you registered for, contact newsletter@marinaudubon.org.

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 A FEW MINUTES LATER.

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

Thursday, September 3, 2026
Thursday, October 1, 2026
8:30 AM to noon
With Mark Clark

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

Beginning birders are especially welcome to join leader Mark Clark on our monthly walk around the ponds at Las Gallinas. Bird enthusiasts of all levels help each other to find and identify the birds, and there are usually several experienced birders to assist. On our walk we'll be looking for waterfowl, waders, songbirds, raptors and swallows. 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: *From Hwy 101, exit at Smith Ranch Rd. Drive east on Smith Ranch Rd toward McInnis Park. Turn left 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.*

FARALLON ISLANDS BOAT TRIP From Clipper Yacht Harbor, Sausalito

Saturday, September 12, 2026
8:30 AM to 4 PM
With Susan Sherman

This trip is sold out. You can join the waitlist by emailing *newsletter@marinaudubon.org.*

Join us for a day of seabird and marine mammal watching as we head out to the Farallon Islands and offshore waters. Naturalist Susan Sherman will be our guide aboard Captain Christian's power catamaran, *Outer Limits*.

We will get a close-up look at the islands and hear about their interesting natural and human history. This is a trip that both experienced and first-time birders and nature lovers enjoy.

The trip costs $165. A detailed trip description can be found on Marin Audubon's website's Field Trips page.

RODEO LAGOON, MARIN HEADLANDS

Wednesday, September 23, 2026
7:30/8 AM to noon
With William Legge and David Wiechers

Registration required. Registration opens on September 13 at 8 AM on the MAS website's Field Trips page. Trip limit is 15.

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 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: *On Hwy 101 and take the last Sausalito exit just before the Golden Gate Bridge. At the exit stop sign, turn right and go under the freeway, then follow the road down to the left. Within 300 feet turn left at the sign to the Marin Headlands (This is the only available left turn before you begin the descent into Sausalito). You should see the tunnel with the five-minute light. Proceed through the tunnel on Bunker Rd to the Rodeo Lagoon Parking Lot at the end. Meet by the bridge over the channel to the beach or join MAS birders with scopes along the nearby beach area.*

VAUX'S SWIFTS AT MCNEAR BRICK AND BLOCK San Rafael

Wednesday, September 23, 2026
5:30 PM to sunset
With Rich Cimino

Registration is required for this trip. Registration opens September 13 at 8 AM on the Marin Audubon website's Field Trips page. Trip Limit is 12.

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

Watching thousands of swifts as they descend into the stacks just before night-fall is an unforgettable sight. At the peak of migration, as many as 19,000 swifts have been counted in one evening. However, keep in mind that the number of swifts varies greatly from night to night and can range from a few hundred to thousands.

Sunset on the evening of our visit will be at 7:05 PM. 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 on arriving on time to be ready. Bring scopes, binoculars, and, if desired, folding chairs for your seating comfort. Please stay with our group and do not enter any of the private areas on the property.

Upon arrival, meet inside the yard by the office building on the right side of the parking lot, where you will be checked in from the registration list.

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.*

ALL HANDS ECOLOGY'S CYPRESS GROVE RESEARCH CENTER Marshall

Tuesday, September 29, 2026
8 to 11 AM
With David Lumpkin

Registration is required for this trip. Registration opens September 19 at 8 AM on the Marin Audubon website's Field Trips page. Trip Limit is 10.

Join avian ecologist David Lumpkin, for a field trip to his work location, All Hands Ecology's (formerly known as Audubon Canyon Ranch) 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, the occasional vagrant passerine, and an influx of interior breeders not seen in the summer. Other migrating shorebirds may be seen as well as the usual mix of coastal prairie species. Rain does not cancel.

DIRECTIONS: *Address for All Hands Ecology'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.

Annual Report

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acquired properties. A portion of the Crawford and Myers bequests will fund the ongoing needs of our properties as well as contribute to the MAS endowment fund. MAS maintains an endowment that is dedicated to protecting wildlife habitat as well as serving our emergency needs.

And we've received small grants from the Marin County Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and RHE Charitable Foundation, both going to support improving vegetative habitat at Bahia.

ACQUISITION OF THE GREATER BAHIA BAYLANDS EXPANSION PROPERTIES

Thanks to a $2,000,000 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy and the bequests from Maureen Groper to Marin Audubon Society and Marin Baylands Advocates, we are now the proud owners of 323.28 acres of diked baylands along the Petaluma River. Escrow closed on June 12, 2026. Both organizations committed their bequests to acquiring these 323.28 acres. Now we begin the challenging task of preparing a plan to restore as much of the properties as we can to tidal marsh. This means we need sufficient funds to design, permit, and construct a marsh restoration project. And we are beginning the process of changing the designation from Agriculture to Open Space under the Williamson Act, and eventually removing the property from the Williamson Act, which is a 10-year process. Restrictions on the funding from the Coastal Conservancy do not allow agricultural uses. The properties are located between Rush Creek Marsh and Gnoss Field Airport. Their restoration to tidal marsh will fill a major gap in the marsh corridor along the Petaluma River.

TISCORNIA MARSH RESTORATION AND SEA-LEVEL RISE ADAPTATION PROJECT UPDATE

We've had to delay construction again this year, and we're now working to begin in spring or late summer of 2027, depending on whether Ridgway Rails are found in the marsh. Our first delay was in redesigning the project to address concerns from PG&E. After reducing the size of the restored wetlands and the coarse beach, we had to revise and resubmit all of our regulatory agency permit applications. And that's where we are now—waiting for our last few revised permits to be issued. But we've had other tasks to complete, not the least of which has been the raising of funds (see Grants and Bequests) to cover construction of the cobble beach.

The revised project will improve the levee, including the addition of an ecotone slope, stabilize existing tidal marsh, and restore tidal marsh for endangered and other wildlife habitat. The project features will function together in multiple layers to improve flood protection and create a complete tidal marsh habitat, while reducing wave activity, adding an ecotone slope, and resurfacing the public trail.

REGIONALLY ADVANCING LIVING SHORELINES

This exciting project is underway with three teams of consultants working to develop plans for living shoreline projects on sites in Marin, the East Bay, and San Francisco. The Marin sites are addressing shoreline erosion along the Corte Madera and San Rafael shorelines and, hopefully, at the Estuary and Ocean Science Center (EOSC) in Tiburon using living shoreline designs. For each of the sites, the project will produce designs that can be implemented to reduced shoreline erosion using features that encourage colonization by wildlife and vegetation. The designs will also be models for encouraging living shorelines in other projects by making it easier to use them. Grant funding from the State Coastal Conservancy is providing most of the support for the project, and the Conservancy is functioning as a manager for all of the projects. Volunteers helped us to enhance uplands adjacent to tidal marshes at each of these sites.

NOVATO CREEK BAYLANDS STRATEGY

MAS was part of a team that developed conceptual designs for the Novato Creek Baylands. The team, which included the Environmental Science Associates (ESA), San Francisco Estuary Institute, SF Estuary Partnership, and Marin County Department of Public Works, prepared a visionary plan to restore the baylands in the lower Novato Creek watershed to tidal marsh. The strategy divided the lower watershed into discrete project areas where restoration projects can be implemented individually and combined to restore all of the currently diked baylands in the lower Novato Creek watershed. The strategy, funded primarily by the USEPA, is now complete and on our website.

ENHANCING OUR HABITATS

Stewardship We have active habitat enhancement programs on five of our properties. Our volunteers conducted regular Volunteer Work Days at Triangle Marsh and our property adjacent to the Ecological Reserve in Corte Madera. Work days were also carried out on our property at Bahia in Novato and the Redwoods in Mill Valley. At all of these uplands adjacent to baylands, volunteers helped to enhance uplands adjacent to tidal marshes. In Northern Marin, at Simmons we installed sheet-mulch to control invasive Harding grass and restore native habitat and at Bahia we removed invasives, and planted natives. In Corte Madera, we both removed invasive plants and installed natives to enrich adjacent upland; habitat and seasonal wetlands.

Internship This year we initiated an internship program for high school students. Students from Tamalpais and Terra Linda High Schools through the Jewish Family Service, and Archie Williams High School SEA_DISC Academy participated (see page 7 for more information).

Elyse Omernick

Northern Spotted Owls

PROTECTING HABITATS AND SPECIES

Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) Docent

We continued a docent program near NSO nests in Central Marin, in partnership with the Marin County Open Space District. Information packets were sent to residents within a quarter mile of NSO nests explaining the life cycle and status of NSOs and advising on how to protect them. We continued to advocate for protection of NSO in the face of other threats and submitted a "friend of the court brief" (see below).

Legal guidance has been important throughout the year in steering us through the maze of old easements and inadequate information on the deeds of the property MAS just acquired, and with the following activities:

Marin Water (MMWD) Lawsuit Representatives of MAS, the California Native Plant Society, and the Marin Conservation League attended four of the eight quarterly stakeholder meetings required by the settlement of our lawsuit meetings.

Barred Owl Management Plan Lawsuit MAS joined, as an amicus ("friend of the court"), legal action in support of the USFWS's Barred Owl Management Plan, which is designed to protect the NSO. The suit to negate the Management Plan was brought by animal rights groups aiming to defeat its use.

Air Tour Lawsuit The court decided on our suit to protect wildlife in five Bay Area National Parks from the impacts of overflights of aircraft for tourists. (See update on page 6.)

FISCAL SPONSORSHIPS

MAS is the fiscal sponsor for two entities: the **Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas 2**, now in its sixth year, focused on preparing for the final report on breeding birds in Marin, and the **Marin Baylands Advocates**, our partner in acquiring baylands for the last 30+ years and central to our recent acquisition.

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Christmas Bird Counts MAS sponsored three Christmas Bird Counts: provides funding to support the Cheep Thrills (Novato area), Point Reyes Counts, and funds as well as organizes the Southern Marin Christmas Count. Survey data is compiled and analyzed by the National Audubon Society to identify trends in bird populations across the nation.

EDUCATION/OUTREACH

The Rail, Speaker Programs, and Field Trips continue to be the foundation of our education/outreach program, educating about birds and natural resources. The Rail reports on our programs, bird sightings, conservation, and other matters of Audubon interest. This year we're pleased to have a new education program—an internship program for high school students focused on habitats on our properties.

CONSERVATION

MAS's advocacy focuses on protecting wildlife and its habitats. We comment on proposed development projects and planning and environmental review documents, testify at public meetings, participate in planning processes, and take other actions, such as suing, with the goal of protecting natural resources, wildlife, and habitats.

The nature of our conservation work has changed somewhat over the years. Earlier, when regulatory agencies were establishing permit programs, and CEQA was new, much of our effort was focused on commenting to those agencies and local jurisdictions on individual projects designed to fill-in wetlands. We're now seeing fewer wetland fill projects, perhaps because many wetlands have already either been saved or filled, and perhaps developers have learned that avoidance is the best approach. Another part of the equation is the state housing legislation that was passed in Sacramento. Most housing projects are now approved administratively with little attention paid to natural resources, due to the legislative changes exempting housing and weakening CEQA.

Some of the projects MAS commented on during fiscal year 2025–26 include:

Fire We submitted comments on the Cal Vegetation Treatment Project (VTP) EIR supporting more careful work to limit the loss of understory and avoid other adverse impacts of excessive vegetation removal.

State Route 37 We continued to attend Policy Committee meetings, to advocate for a causeway from Hwy. 121 to Mare Island, and to oppose an "interim" project on fill.

Nicasio Spillway We submitted scoping comments with questions about impacts to vegetation and mitigation. MMWD abandoned the project, likely because of community opposition due to the potential for flooding.

Support for CEQA We joined CEQA WORKS, an organization established to support the CA Environmental Quality Act, and opposed the CalChamber Initiative, now Proposition 45. Many other bills have passed through the legislature to gut CEQA in favor of development (see more on page 6).

Complete Streets Project, Corte Madera Worked to protect MAS's Triangle Marsh property from impacts of this project, namely construction of a ramp from the raised Paradise Drive down onto our property and removal of the parking area. The Town has lowered the height of the road elevation from three to two feet and is removing the slope from our property. Parking will still be lost.

San Rafael Sea-Level Rise Feasibility Project MAS comments on this study included opposition to a barrier across San Rafael Creek because of its many adverse impacts and support for the Tiscornia Marsh project design, which was included in the final Feasibility Study document.

Las Gallinas Cattail Management We participated in several public meetings designed to ensure the cattail removal was minimized. The contractors removed cattails from the wrong areas.

Stinson Beach SLR Adaptation Study Our comments focused on protecting natural resources, marshes, and dunes.

Duxbury Reef State Marine Conservation Area We urged the CA Fish and Game Commission to choose the most protective classification of state Marine Conservation Area to protect this vulnerable reef from the impacts of human activity. The Commission chose a less protective designation.

Oil Drilling We opposed drilling in the ocean off the California coast.

Protecting Trees We commented on various projects to protect native trees, including 800 Corte Madera Avenue, Alto Way at Tam Junction, Calpark in San Rafael, and others.

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Marin Audubon Society
Statement of Financial Position
As of June 30, 2026

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Operating Bank Accounts	398,027
Property Bank Accounts	108,764
Marin Baylands Advocates Bank Account	14,473
Breeding Bird Atlas Bank Account	129,882
Total Current Assets	651,146
Real Property	8,596,967
Endowment & Investment Accounts	2,823,505
TOTAL ASSETS	**$12,071,618**

Marin Audubon Society Statement of Activities July 2025 – June 2026

REVENUE AND SUPPORT	
Donations	1,454,664
Grant Income for Property Restoration, and Enhancement	2,148,258
Membership	37,103
Events and Activities	7,975
Interest and Dividend Income	77,830
Marin Baylands Advocates Income	62,070
Breeding Bird Atlas Income	107,442
TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT	**$3,895,342**
EXPENSES	
Property Restoration, Enhancement, and Management	275,409
Professional Services	104,352
Office Supplies, Printing, and Postage	4,284
Program Expenses	8,547
Insurance	22,337
Property Parcel Taxes	15,135
Permits and Fees	5,306
Contributions	56,500
Copy and Printing Services	31,795
Other General Expenses	5,249
Marin Baylands Advocates Expenses	966,284
Breeding Bird Atlas Expenses	45,769
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$1,540,967**
RESULTS FROM OPERATIONS	**$2,354,375**
Investment Gain – Realized and Unrealized	289,454
CHANGE IN EQUITY	**$2,643,829**
TOTAL EQUITY – BEGINNING OF YEAR	**$9,427,789**
TOTAL EQUITY – END OF YEAR	**$12,071,618**

NO ON PROPOSITION 45

In the June issue of *The Rail* we wrote about the major legislative effort (300 bills) to eviscerate the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the attempt by the California Chamber of Commerce to qualify a petition for the ballot. In the name of CEQA reform, the Chamber was successful in securing enough signatures to qualify what is now called Proposition 45 for the November 2026 ballot. Prop. 45's official title is "Modifies Environmental Review for Certain Projects."

"Certain Projects" is a complete misnomer as its provisions extend across eight categories of projects, spanning nearly all significant development in the state. It would cover projects in energy and water infrastructure, public safety and public health, transportation, housing and mixed use (with no restriction on scale or location), broadband internet, education facilities, methane gas pipelines, stand-alone power plants, and other ancillary components that might be necessary to support covered projects.

In case some of these categories are unclear, the eight categories would include data centers, CO2 and methane gas pipelines, landfill gas facilities, fossil fuel power plants, highway expansion projects, dams, forest clear-cutting, industrial facilities that emit toxic chemicals, and large-scale sprawl development in forest and flood zones. Actually, the only projects Prop. 45 specifically excludes are jails and detention centers, new oil and gas production facilities, nuclear facilities, high-speed rail, and the Delta Water Conveyance Project. These are the only types of projects that would require a full environmental review using today's standards.

Prop. 45 would:

- Limit environmental review to whether a project complies with existing laws, which will not cover the full extent of environmental impacts.
- Override existing environmental laws—it states that it "shall be controlling over any conflicting law."
- Make it harder for the public to comment on projects.
- Grant developers a new right: to sue governments that deny or place conditions on their projects.
- Allow developers to consider only one "less harmful" alternative of their own choosing to be analyzed in an EIR, instead of the "reasonable range" of alternatives currently required.

Prop. 45 would remove the core purpose of CEQA – to disclose the adverse impacts of a project to the public – and replace it with a document that ensures developers have their way at the expense of public health, public safety, and our natural resources. ***Vote NO on Prop. 45 on the November ballot.***

AIR TOUR SUIT

Unfortunately, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals denied our motion to enforce and issue the mandate to implement its original 2024 decision. Our attorneys from Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) had argued that the voluntary agreements with air tour operators did not comply with the court's previous decision requiring compliance with NEPA for the Air Tour Management Plan (ATMP). While the court did not give any reasoning, it apparently agreed that the FAA and NPS could comply with its prior decision by entering voluntary agreements instead of doing NEPA for an ATMP. This means that the voluntary agreements, which actually allow more flights than the ATMP the earlier court vacated for lack of NEPA compliance, will stay in force. At least they are better than the amount that had been previously allowed under interim operating authority before we sued, but certainly not what we had hoped.

We are disappointed with the result, but our attorneys made a good case. Now we need to keep alert for incidents of non-compliance with the restrictions in the voluntary agreement. Let us know if you witness low-flying aircraft disturbing wildlife in any of the Bay Area National Parks, and we'll see if our attorneys can do something to require compliance.

Annual Report

continued from page 5

The Ivy at Corte Madera (assisted living development project) We commented to protect the Black-crowned Heron roost and public accessibility to the pond.

Army Corps of Engineers, Public Notices We commented on notices for 404 permits for the Novato Creek Bridge and State Route 37. The Corps issues 404 permits for projects proposing to fill wetlands and has a process that provides for public comment. We addressed the need for mitigation for any fill permitted to benefit local resources instead of allowing use of a mitigation bank where compensatory wetlands would be far from SR 37.

Bowman Canyon We prepared comments on the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration advocating measures that would better protect natural resources on this special site.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The two late summer annual "weeds" are now large enough to come into view before they bloom in September and October. We don't want that to happen so we will be pulling them. It's an easy job that we have done well enough in recent years to reduce their numbers to near zero in some places.

The usual invasive perennials won't be ignored, and after digging or cutting them now, they won't be growing back for months if ever.

Some natives, for example, coyote brush, Pacific aster, hayfield tarweed (nicer than its name!), and western goldenrod (*Euthamia*), are all blooming now.

If you appreciate our birds or native plants, volunteer on a workday to give them a boost. It is also an opportunity to learn more about a native habitat of your county and be a part of improving it.

Everyone is welcome. We have the tools and gloves.

Volunteer Workdays

Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera: First Saturdays: September 5, October 3

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 12, October 10

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

For up-to-date information, contact Martha Jarocki, 415/461-3592 or marthajarocki@gmail.com.

Bahia, Novato:
If you'd like to help, please contact Jude at judestalker@gmail.com.

Thank You, Stewardship Volunteers
Annette Anzalone, Isabel Dawson, Julia Ferraro, Ron and Belle Guelden; Bob Hinz, Martha Jarocki, Simon Kolek, Yona Luttwak, Eli Malz, Eiden and Zadie Metcalf; Ellena Ochoa, Alison Pence, Jordan Rinker and Jean Schulz; Jaden Selvig, Abigail Slatter, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, Esme, Eve and Kurt Weinsheimer; Elizabeth Zapata and student volunteers from Tamalpais and Terra Linda High Schools

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Thomas Bottalico, Jennifer Chinlund, Sheila Deering, Loretta Gargan, Matias Gersberg, Alec Kay, James Kelly, Neil Kran, Jocelyn McFaul, Ann Murphy, Gail Napell, Peter F. Norman, Christopher Ohland, Kels Purcell, Laura Quintana, Mary Ann Quirke, Esther Raiger, Elizabeth L. Raisbeck, Magali Sanscartier, Meryl Schneider, Corey Wilson

Marin Birdlog: May 2026

By Noah Arthur

Early May is the peak of spring migration in Marin, with common migrants passing through in big numbers and rarities starting to trickle in. The first eastern warbler of the season touched down on Pt. Reyes on the 3rd, an adult male **Black-and-white Warbler** at Nunes Ranch, along with a **Myrtle X Audubon's Warbler** hybrid at Mendoza (CC).

Extremely rare here in the spring – and looking very different from the familiar fall juvenile plumage – a **Baird's Sandpiper** turned up at Abbotts Lagoon on the 6th (NS). Also on the 6th was a **Yellow-breasted Chat** at Muir Beach (CC). Becoming rarer by the year in Marin, a **Loggerhead Shrike** was in the grasslands near Valley Ford on the 7th (LH). A very late **Red-breasted Sapsucker** was at Inverness on the 8th (KS), and a **Swainson's Hawk** drifted over Bel Marin Keys on the 9th (MK).

Elegant Terns were reported in exceptional numbers all over Marin throughout the month, and up to **3 Parasitic Jaegers** off Rodeo Beach on various days were likely in the area due to the Elegant incursion (WL).

A nice little push of inland birds on Pt. Reyes on the 11th included **Townsend's Solitaires** at Mendoza Ranch and Barries Bay, and an **Acorn Woodpecker** showed up at Nunes Ranch (CC). A classic spring rarity, a male **Indigo Bunting** was at Rodeo Lagoon on the 11th (WL & DW).

On the 12th a pelagic boat in Marin waters had two unusual visitors in the form of a **Mourning Dove** and a **Eurasian Collared-dove**, as well as a **Ring-billed Gull** which is also rare offshore (WL). A very late **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was singing on Mt. Tam on the 15th (DA & KS). A flock of 20 **White-faced Ibises** was on the move south over Tomales Bay on the 19th (NW).

The 19th also began an awesome incursion of rare passerines on the coast, with a **Northern Parula** and **Willow Flycatcher** (rare in spring) at Pt. Bonita (CC), an **Ovenbird** at Muir Beach (DH), and a **Great-tailed Grackle** at the Pt. Reyes Fish Docks (BB). The next day brought a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at Spaletta Ranch (CC), and very late **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** at New Willows (CC). One of the rarest birds of the month was also found on the 20th on Pt. Reyes, a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** hawking the fence lines near E Ranch (TB), subsequently seen by many other birders.

The following days on the Point produced only a **Tennessee Warbler** in the New Willows on the 21st (CC), and an adult male **American Redstart** at the Lifesaving Station Cemetery on the 22nd (CC). Elsewhere on the 22nd, a **Summer Tanager** was calling in Stinson Beach (EM).

The Point Reyes rarity floodgates opened again on the 24th, with a **Yellow-throated Vireo** at Nunes Ranch (LC), flyover **Band-tailed Pigeon** at E Ranch (rare on the Point), **Indigo Bunting** at Lighthouse, **Blue Grosbeak** at Spaletta (SS & JG), **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at Nunes (MZ), and at least **8 Tennessee Warblers** on the Point at various locations (LC, CC, LS, & BB). But the rarest of the rare was a very wet and bedraggled sparrow at the Lighthouse which, as its plumage gradually dried, turned out to be a **Cassin's Sparrow** (EM).

Also on the 24th, a **Northern Parula** was singing in Tennessee Valley (EC & KS).

Back on the Point on the 25th, new arrivals included a **Black-and-white Warbler** at the Lighthouse (SM), **Magnolia Warbler** at Mendoza (LN & MD), and **3 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** at Nunes (DL).

The 28th was one of the best days in recent memory on Point Reyes, with a spectacular array of rarities including a singing **White-eyed Vireo** at the Fish Docks (IS), **Red-eyed Vireo** at New Willows (LC), **Lawrence's Goldfinch** at Lighthouse (BB), **Brewer's Sparrow** at Nunes (MS), **Ovenbird** at Lighthouse (BB), **Tennessee Warbler** at Nunes, **Blackburnian Warbler** at Nunes (EM), **Blackpoll Warbler** at Drakes (CD, JC, & MC), **Black-throated Green Warbler** at Fish Docks (LC & EM), **Northern Parula** at Spaletta (CC), **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at Mendoza (CC), **Indigo Bunting** at the Lighthouse (LC & EM), **Black and White-throated Swifts** over the Lighthouse and Fish Docks (LC & EM), and an unseasonable **Pink-footed Shearwater** off the Lighthouse (CD). Elsewhere, a **Hooded Warbler** was singing at Green Gulch Farm (Muir Beach) (ZD). The tap turned off abruptly the next day, with the only new find on the 29th being a **Tennessee Warbler** at the Fish Docks (RR).

But this memorable May wasn't quite done with us yet. The 31st brought a **Bay-breasted Warbler** at Drakes Beach (FH) a **Black-and-white Warbler** at the Lighthouse (MT), a singing **Northern Parula** at Cypress Grove, and a flock of **9 White-faced Ibis** flew south over Tomales Bay (NW).

OBSERVERS AND ACRONYMS: CC: Connor Cochrane, **NS:** Nat Smale, **LH:** Lisa Hug, **KST:** Kevin Stockman, **MK:** Matt Keller, **WL:** William Legge, **DW:** David Wiechers, **DA:** David Assmann, **KSU:** Kevin Sullivan, **NW:** Nils Warnock, **DH:** Diana Humple, **TB:** Tony Briggs, **BB:** Brian Browne, **EM:** Eddie Monson, **LC:** Lucas Corneliussen, **LS:** Lucas Stephenson, **EC:** Emily C, **KS:** Ken S, **SS:** Sam Schmidt, **JG:** Joshua Greenfield, **MZ:** Missy Zepeda, **SM:** Steve Miller, **LN:** Larry Nigro, **MD:** Molly Donahue, **DL:** Derek Lecy, **ZD:** Zac Denning, **IS:** Ivan Samuels, **CD:** Cedric Duhalde, **MS:** Mark Stephenson, **JC:** Josiah Clark, **MC:** Michael Carozza, **RR:** Ruth Rudesill

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher

Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren, CC-BY-4.0

Student Internships

Last month concluded a six-week internship program through Jewish Family Services with two rising High School seniors from Tamalpais HS and Terra Linda HS. The program included field workdays at Corte Madera Marsh Ecological Reserve Expansion project (CMMERE), Triangle Marsh and the Redwoods, as well as three days of invasive Sea Lavender removal at Loch Lomond. The interns also helped with creating native plant and invasive plant identification cards that we use to educate volunteers at our sites. We had a very informative tour and talk by Catherine Worley at the Watershed Nursery and a great birding field trip at Las Gallinas with Mark Clark. Thanks to Jude, Alison, Martha, Bob and Doug for supporting these efforts!

Another internship program with Archie Williams HS's SEA-DISC academy ended in June, with the participation of three seniors who helped out at most of our regular work days at CMMERE, Triangle Marsh, and a few days at the Redwoods. Brooke, Jaden and Simon were able to use their experiences at our habitat sites to design and conduct their own research projects as part of the school requirement.

The Rail

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October 1 8:30 AM	**Field Trip:** Las Gallinas Ponds *With Mark Clark*
October 8 7 PM	**Speaker Series:** State of San Francisco Bay's Birds *With Julian Wood*
October 21 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.

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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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