

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8 7:00 PM

The San Francisco Bay State of the Bird
With Julian Wood



Julian Wood

Ridgway's Rail in Spartina

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

Learn how the San Francisco Bay State of the Birds (www.sfbaystateofthebirds.org) tracks bird trends as a sign of habitat health. Because birds tend to be sensitive to habitat changes and respond quickly, they are great indicators of overall habitat health. The SF Bay State of the Birds website reveals timely insights that guide restoration and management across San Francisco Bay. Built for land managers, funders, scientists, and community leaders, it delivers frequent updates to advance conservation goals.

Julian Wood is the San Francisco Bay Program Leader at Point Blue Conservation Science and works to advance wetland-dependent bird conservation by leading innovative research and monitoring projects that inform on-the-ground restoration and management.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12 7:00 PM

Acorn Woodpeckers
With Walt Koenig

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The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Vote No On Proposition 45

In November, voters will have the power to stop the dismantling of the California Environmental Quality Act, the landmark legislation that for 40 years has provided California citizens with the essential information to protect their environmental resources and their health.

Vote NO on Prop. 45 because:

- Prop. 45 takes away the public's ability to be informed about the damaging impacts of a long list of potentially harmful projects.
- Prop. 45 weakens protections for clean water and clean air.
- Prop. 45 puts the public health at risk.

Prop. 45 is backed by the California Chamber of Commerce and PACs representing some of the state's biggest corporations, oil companies, for-profit utilities, and industrial developers. They are spending millions of dollars to support it. Data centers and other

polluting projects could be built without the essential environmental review now provided by the California Environmental Quality Act. Prop. 45 would open diked baylands and other habitats to developments such as a battery storage facility along SR 37. Without CEQA, The public would not know about the impacts of such projects.

The nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office estimates that implementing Prop. 45 could cost more than \$100 million per year. Taxpayers would be stuck with cleanup bills for spills and health problems from pollutants. More asthma and more emergency room visits could be expected.

At this time when federal protections are being weakened and eliminated, it's critical that the California Environmental Quality Act remain in place.

VOTE NO ON PROPOSITION 45.

BCDC Set to Reclassify Sediment

The Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) has initiated a process of changing its policies for the classification of sediments dredged from the Bay from a waste to a benefit. The new policies are intended to make sediments more available to beneficial reuse to restore wetlands.

Until the 1970s, sediments dredged from the Bay were simply cast back into the Bay in another location. Even though the sediments made the water more turbid, they were still available to restore wetlands naturally. In response to concerns that dredging and the disposal of the dredged sediments were adversely impacting bay resources, the Long Term Management Strategy for the Placement of Dredged Material in the Bay Region (LTMS), and subsequently the Dredged Material Management Office (DMMO), established a Management Plan designed to reduce in-bay disposal. To do so, the Plan put

limits on disposal: 40% of dredged material for beneficial reuse, 20% in-bay, and 40% to an ocean disposal site that is approximately 55 miles west of the Golden Gate. As a result of these limits, sediment in the Bay was significantly reduced.

Since the Management Plan was implemented, it has been realized that the Bay needs sediment. Ongoing treatment of dredged material as a waste, along with other human activities, has contributed to the loss of wetlands. Suspended sediment supply is insufficient to restore subsided areas, maintain necessary elevation for marsh, and keep pace with sea-level rise. San Francisco Estuary Institute's *Sediment for Survival* report (2021) estimates that between 450 and 650 metric tons of sediment and soil are necessary to preserve, restore, and maintain habitat and adapt to rising sea levels through 2100.

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

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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

Fall change of seasons brings cooler temperatures (sometimes), and the air smells and feels different – like fall. The fall change also brings migration. We'll be seeing migrating birds passing through, and our overwintering birds will be returning.

We're thrilled to announce that MAS has been awarded two grants: A major one of \$2 million from the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) was approved by the OPC Board on September 18, to complete the Tiscornia Marsh Project, and another from the Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission to purchase plants for Bahia. Our enthusiastic gratitude goes to these funders for supporting the Tiscornia Marsh Project and our ongoing enhancement of upland habitats at Bahia. The OPC grant, together with the EPA grant, will assure that the Tiscornia marsh restoration is completed.

Proposition 45 is a significant threat to California's natural resources. If it passes, California's landmark environmental law, the California Environmental Quality Act, which has served to protect California's natural environment for almost 70 years, will be decimated. See page 1 for more information, and **Vote NO on Prop. 45**.

Many of our Board members are learning how to navigate Neon One, a software platform that helps nonprofits manage donors and improve and manage operating systems. We are looking forward to having it help us manage our member and donor lists more efficiently.

MAS needs a Secretary – see page 3

Another reminder about yard cleanup. Now is the time to trim your shrubs, trees, and grasses. Nesting season is over, so there is no danger of disturbing nests or young.

Novato Creek Baylands Strategy

Prior to the mid-1980s, the Novato Creek Baylands covered approximately 8,070 acres at the downstream end of Novato Creek. But they've been dramatically reduced as a result of diking and filling beginning in the second half of the 19th century. Now they've been reduced by half. More than 4,000 acres of undeveloped, diked baylands exist along Novato Creek—representing one of the largest tidal wetland restoration opportunities remaining in the San Francisco Bay Area.

With two other bayland strategies (for Sonoma Creek and the Petaluma River) completed, it was about time a strategy was devised to address restoration of the Novato Creek Baylands. Further impetus for producing a strategy for Novato Creek was the rising sea levels and increasingly intense storms threatening the aging flood-protection system, causing repeated flooding of State Route 37 (SR 37).

With the support of an EPA grant, a project team consisting of representatives from the County of Marin, San Francisco Estuary Institute, Environmental Science Associates, San Francisco Estuary Partnership, and Marin Audubon Society set to work to produce a strategy for restoring the Novato Creek Baylands. The first task for the team was to agree on three goals for the Novato Creek Bayland Strategy (the "Strategy"):

- **Goal #1:** Restore tidal ecosystems to the maximum extent possible, including subtidal habitats, mudflats, marshes, and

adjacent upland transition zones.

- **Goal #2:** Increase the resilience of the Novato Creek Baylands and upstream areas to flooding under current and future climate conditions to benefit people and wildlife.
- **Goal #3:** Build community and Tribal needs and priorities into the Strategy and restoration.

The Strategy, produced by the team, is a roadmap for reconnecting the diked and isolated lands to the tides, increasing habitat connectivity and values, and reducing upstream flood risk. It is a long-term plan to restore one of the largest remaining diked bayland landscapes in San Pablo Bay.

The process for developing the Strategy included extensive collaboration with agencies, landowners, infrastructure operators, community representatives, and Tribal partners. With their input, the Strategy identifies restoration approaches that align baylands habitat expansion, flood-risk reduction, and infrastructure resilience. Restoration designs were developed on a Landscape Sale and Project-Level Scale.

LANDSCAPE ALTERNATIVE

The Landscape Alternative maximizes the area of restored tidal habitat to include lands both north and south of State Route 37 (SR 37) that bisect the baylands. It connects to natural upland transition zones on the unfilled/undeveloped diked areas. Two alternatives were

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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, October 1, 2026

Thursday, November 5, 2026

8:30 AM to noon

With Mark Clark

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

On this trip we especially welcome beginning birders to join Mark Clark, along with bird enthusiasts of all levels, on our monthly walk around the ponds at Las Gallinas. With fall migration underway we'll be looking for waterfowl, waders, songbirds, raptors, rails 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. There is a portable restroom in the parking area for public use.

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.

DEER ISLAND OPEN SPACE AND SIMMONS SLOUGH

Novato

Sunday, October 11, 2026

8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

With Sarah Reid, iNaturalist Ambassador

Registration required. Registration opens on October 1 at 8 AM on the MAS website's [Field Trips page](#). Trip limit is 12.

Join us on our walk along Deer Island Open Space trails with iNaturalist Ambassador Sarah Reid, who has experience with California Academy of Sciences, Sonoma Land Trust and Regional Parks. Her goal is to support new and existing users of the iNaturalist platform in learning how to record, identify and explore biodiversity in their local regions.

Alison Pence, Marin Audubon Field Trip Co-Coordinator, will help lead with introductions to eBird and Merlin for new users. The second stop on the trip will be to Simmons Slough, a Marin Audubon Property

and site of the new nestbox project.

DIRECTIONS: Take 101N, exit at 460A to CA 37 toward Vallejo, continue 2.3 mi. on CA 37E and turn left at the Atherton Ave exit, continue 1.5 mi. and turn left on Olive Ave, after 0.7 mi turn left on Deer Island Lane for 0.2 miles to the Deer Island Open Space entrance and trailhead. From the north, take Atherton Avenue and turn right on Olive Ave to Deer Island Lane.

Parking lot only holds a few cars, more parking on Deer Island Lane.

Meet at the trailhead at 8:30 AM.

RODEO LAGOON, MARIN HEADLANDS

Wednesday, October 21, 2026

7:30/8 AM to noon

With William Legge and David Wiechers

Registration required. Registration opens on October 11 at 8 AM on the MAS website's [Field Trips page](#). Trip limit is 15.

Join William and David for this fourth 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.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Halla Ayla, Lewis Berkhout, Tom Bertino, Gene Brown, Susan and James Burke, Arianna Carey, Maria Chiaia, Joseph Ciatti, Ronald Durand, Elizabeth Elm, Julia Faucett, Robert Ferretti, Paulette Foster, Alice Fredericks, Jason Freidenfelds, W Gere, Wally Graham, Carol Graves, Stephen Holets, Jennifer Jarvis, Judith Less, Maryline Lewett, Vicky Loel, Mary Majoulet, Bridger Mitchell, Shahla Motamedi, Fran Mueller, Michael and Robyn Papanek, Margaret Pierattini, Lorraine Raggio, Robert Reilly, Edward Reither, Grace Rogers, Alexander Ross, Lisa Schallenberger, Jessie Schroeder, Rodney Seeger, Sally Shepard, Janice Tunder, Elizabeth Watts, Linda Werner, Katherine Young, Laura Zahradnik

MAS NEEDS A SECRETARY

Let us know if you are interested in helping MAS by taking notes at our Board meeting. Contact Barbara Salzman, 425/924-6057 or Doug Waterman, dglswtrmn@gmail.com.

BOO ON LARKSPUR

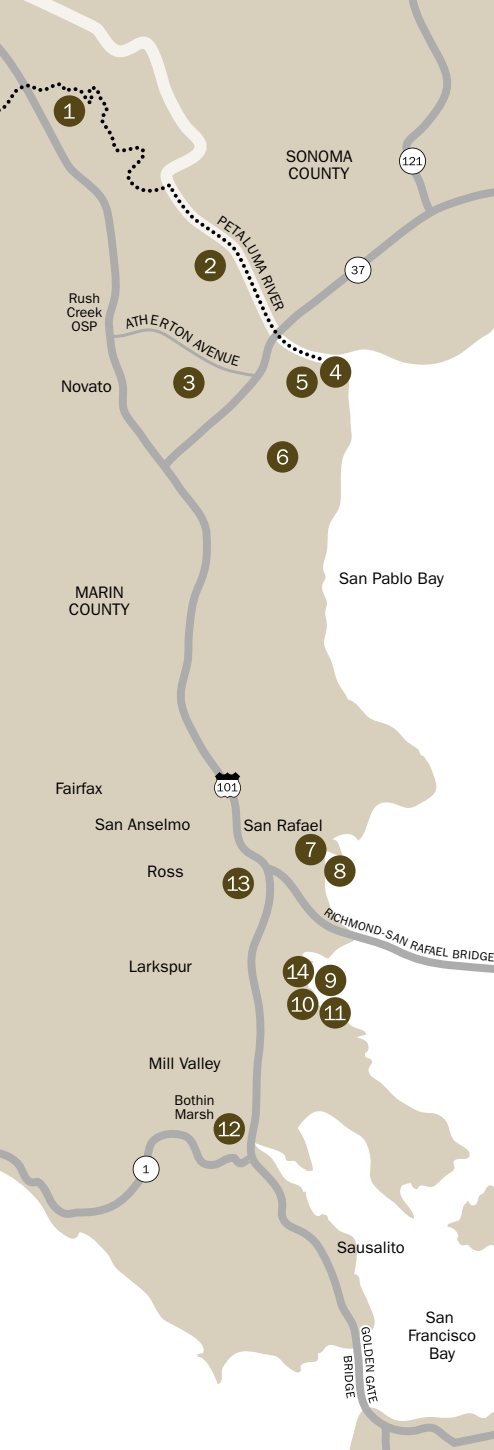
Unfortunately, the City of Larkspur has chosen to go to a wetland mitigation bank in Sonoma County to compensate for filling wetlands some years ago for the Expanded Bon Air Bridge.

Are You a Chapter-supporting Member?

If you are a National Audubon Society (NAS) member, you are, thereby, also a member of the Marin Audubon Society (MAS), the local chapter of NAS and you might expect that your membership dues for NAS are shared with our chapter. Although chapters do receive a base amount from NAS, it is based on the membership dues collected by each chapter more than 20 years ago. It has no relationship with current dues paid or collected.

MAS depends heavily on Chapter-supporting Memberships and donations to fund our local activities, *The Rail*, habitat improvement on our properties, monthly speakers, legal expenses and more.

So, we encourage NAS members to join MAS, also, as a Chapter-supporting member. Please support what MAS does right here in Marin.



MARIN AUDUBON PROPERTIES

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

BDCD

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New policies intended to ensure that dredged sediments are not dumped as a waste but are beneficially reused, are being considered by the Commission. A number of policies to support beneficial reuse are proposed: In-bay disposal projects must ensure, among other things, that the potential for adverse environmental impact is insignificant; water quality and circulation are maintained; development of land-based stockpile sites is encouraged; and collaboration from local governments is fostered. Because the timing of dredging and beneficial reuse projects rarely coincide, there is a need for uplands to stockpile dredged sediments; some policies encourage the establishment of sites where sediments can be stockpiled.

Policy recommendation: "Beneficial reuse of dredged sediments ... is the preferred alternative to the dumping of dredged sediment as a waste at aquatic disposal sites or in the ocean. ... Dredged sediment shall be beneficially reused if beneficial reuse is reasonably capable of being done. Dumping of dredged sediment at aquatic disposal sites in the Bay or ocean should be reduced to minimize the waste and unreasonable use of dredged sediment."

MAS supports changing BCDC policies to facilitate beneficial reuse. In addition to the policy above, we will be supporting Proposed policy #8 "...Pilot projects to test innovative techniques for beneficial reuse such as nearshore placement and water column seeding may be authorized if the project is found to be consistent with applicable policies in the Bay Plan." The experience at our Bahia Restoration Project was that the +/- 200-acre diked bayland restored to marsh naturally in approximately 15 years because it is located near the mouth of the Petaluma River, where there was a high level of sediment coming from upriver and the Delta. The in-bay disposal site is also nearby, just off the mouth of the Petaluma River. Our two new properties are also in that area and could be good candidates for beneficial re-use of dredged sediments either deposited naturally after sediments are deposited nearby, or transported and off-loaded onto the site manually.

Either way, our new diked-baylands properties are good candidates for beneficial reuse of sediments. Although we do not know the current elevation of our new properties, they have been grazed for many years. It is expected they are subsided and will need sediments to bring them up to the elevation for marsh plants to grow again.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Find additional information on the project webpage (www.bcdc.ca.gov/programs/sediment-management/sediment-for-wetland-adaptation). Comment at the Public Hearing on Bay Plan Amendment (BPA) 1-26 on **October 15, 2026**, at the hybrid commission meeting, beginning at 1 PM. Written comments should include "BPA 1-26" in the subject and can be submitted:

- Via email to publiccomment@bcdc.ca.gov
- Via mail to San Francisco Bay Conservation & Development Commission, 375 Beale St., Suite 510, San Francisco, CA 94105
- Orally at the commission meeting, either in person at the above address or virtually via the Zoom link found in the Public Hearing Notice, which will be emailed to interested parties and posted on the Commission's website (www.bcdc.ca.gov/event/october-15-2026-commission-meeting) in early October.

MARIN WATER UPDATES ROAD AND TRAILS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) has begun the formal process of updating its 2005 Road and Trails Management Plan (RTMP) by initiating the required process of soliciting comments from the public (called "scoping") on matters to be addressed in the Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report Update (DSEIRU).

Whether it can really be considered an RTMP Update is questionable because the 2005 RTMP did not address recreation, and the primary focus of this update appears to be on e-bikes. The Project Description in the Notice of Preparation (NOP) states that the project "would address current and long-term recreation use management associated with road and trail facility improvement needs, and environmental protection of Watershed resources." Proposed access changes are extensive and include "designation changes, new trail construction, major system road and trail reroutes, road-to-trail conversions, and non-system route adoptions and reroutes." The NOP focuses on recreational use of trails and roads.

The description of the project sounds more like a plan to expand access and use to include bikes. There are references to restoration and protection of a large area of habitat with minimal human-trail impacts. This Watershed Protection Area is identified as an area to be preserved with no trails and minimal human impact. This seems to be offered as compensation for the trail designations. We applaud protecting a large habitat area with

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Marin Water Updates

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limited disturbance from people, but saving an existing habitat area does not excuse impacts to other habitats. MMWD is responsible for the protection of the entire watershed. There is no mention of wildlife throughout the entire NOP or the potential impacts on it.

MMWD TRAIL USE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Multiuse: Grassy Slope Overlook, Pine Mountain, Rocky Ridge, Pumpkin Ridge (alternating days for hiking and biking), Concrete Pipeline Road, and Deer Park accessible;

Hiking/Biking: Redwood Grade, Kent Lake, Oat Hill and Old Vee, West Peak to Rocky Ridge (downhill only for bikes), North Ridge, Three Peaks, Deer Park Area, and New Paradigm;

Hiking/Biking and Multiuse: Ridgecrest Boulevard, East Peak for Lake Lagunitas (downhill only for bikes);

Hiking/Equestrian: Sunnyside, Sky Oakes accessible (trail and roads), Bon Tempe to Liberty Gulch accessible (trail and roads);

Hiking: Paradigm, Rocky Ridge; and

Management Approach: Lagunitas (no bikes on weekends).

Trails designated for bikes would be usable for both regular and e-bikes. Trails designated as accessible means made accessible to the handicapped. This may require widening, vegetation removal, and grading.

We want the DSEIRU to describe current conditions in the watershed, specifically the vicinity of the affected trails, habitats, vegetation, and wildlife; the potential for these resources to be adversely impacted by the expanded trail use; and an analysis of the potential impact of construction and expanded use of the proposed trails. E-bikes and regular bikes should be evaluated separately. Explanations should be given as to why the recommendations for each trail were made. We have questions about non-system or illegal trails (built by people)—why those proposed to be legalized are so and what oversight, monitoring, and enforcement are planned. Proposed mitigation, beginning with avoidance, should be described and evaluated as to adequacy.

We're preparing our comments as we go to press. We have joined with the CA Native Plant Society in hiring experts to inform those comments.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Although the comment deadline will have already passed by the time this newsletter reaches you, the most important opportunity for input is on the DSEIRU document itself. We expect it to take about a year to be completed and will report on our final comments.

Novato Creek

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developed to deliver adequate tidal flows to the heavily subsidized diked basins.

The Landscape approach enables restoration of the diked bayland north of SR 37, including Marin Audubon Society's Simmons Slough property at Olive and Atherton Avenues and the Novato Sanitary District spray fields along SR 37. However, restoring these baylands depends on the elevation of SR 37 and the SMART rail line onto causeways.

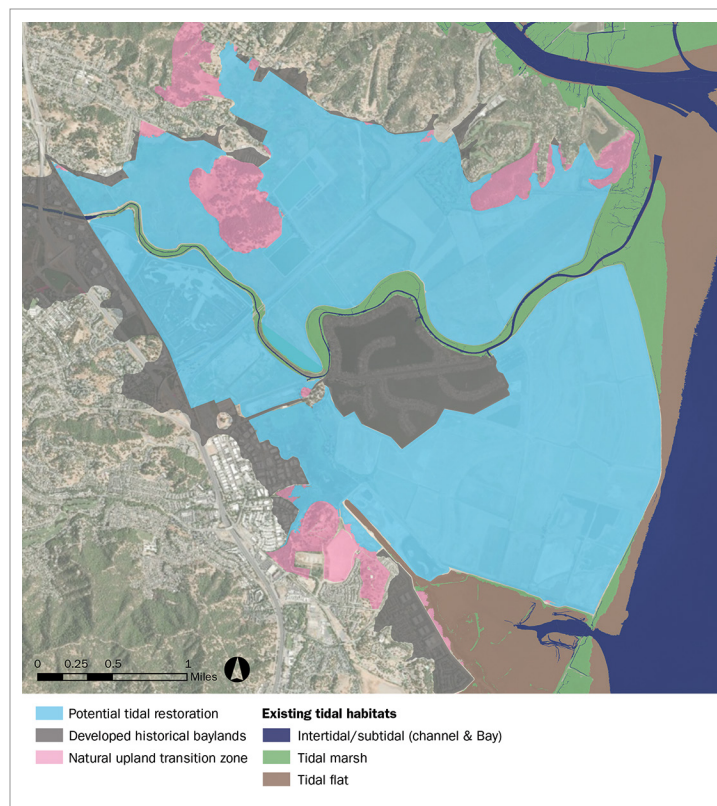
Construction of a causeway on piles for the entire length of SR 37 needs to occur first in order for adequate hydraulic connection to provide adequate tidal flow to the north. Simmons Slough is currently too narrow to convey adequate flows.

There are plans to raise SR 37 on a causeway from Highway 101 to just beyond Novato Creek. Caltrans plans show a causeway extending to the Petaluma River, but there is no certainty when funds would become available to construct this segment, or if they ever will be. Other infrastructure constraints that must be dealt with to expand tidal water to the north include PG&E lines; North Marin Sanitary District facilities; underground pipes conveying sewage, water supply, and natural gas; and flood control infrastructure.

Restoring the diked baylands both north and south of SR 37, the ultimate goal of the Strategy, is to provide the maximum habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, and endangered species and provide flood benefits by restoring the natural ecosystem.

PROJECT-SCALE ALTERNATIVES

The Strategy also developed project-scale restoration alternatives that are stepping stones to expanding to the north. These alternatives were created by dividing the diked lands south of 37 into four segments that can be restored to tidal action individually, as funding and opportunity arises in the short term. Over time, the diked segments can be combined to restore larger areas and eventually all of the existing baylands north and south of SR 37.



Maximum potential area of restoration in the Novato Creek baylands.

Exceptions that can be implemented in the near term are the restoration of the Deer Island Basin. Restoration of the lands adjacent to Deer Island is possible because the water source for this area is Novato Creek. Restoration of these baylands would connect the marsh habitat to the natural uplands of Deer Island, which would have flood-reduction benefits. And actually happening now is restoration of the Marin County-owned Duck Ponds that are adjacent to Deer Island.

Using a variety of levee design features, setback and ecotone slopes to protect adjacent lands, levee breaches, and dredging to create varying channel widths to facilitate the flow water through the sites, four restoration alternatives were studied. The preferred alternative includes the beneficial features of all of the other alternatives. This alternative consists primarily of Marin County-owned spray fields south of SR 37, and also includes a former antenna field currently owned by the State Lands. It also expands the restoration to the southwest to include a large portion of the bayland west of Novato Creek, and the Deer Island baylands that extend to the north along Novato Creek. The preferred alternative is the eventual

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HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

It will be the last chance to remove *Salsola soda* (Russian thistle) and *Dittrichia graveolens* (stinkwort) before the seeds mature and disperse. On our Corte Madera properties *Salsola* is still abundant, but *Dittrichia* is now quite scarce. *Dittrichia*, though, grows nearby on road shoulders and in other gravelly areas.

We also will be cutting off nonnative bristly oxtongue which is still flowering and dispersing seeds. Harding grass is, of course, the other nonnative to be removed, especially where it is near native plants or where we will be planting soon.

On the brighter side, some natives, e.g., gumplant, Pacific aster and coyotebrush, are still blooming.

If you appreciate our birds or native plants, volunteer on a workday to give them a boost. It is your environment, too. Please help improve it.

Everyone is welcome. We have the tools and gloves.

Volunteer Workdays

Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera:
First Saturdays: October 3, November 7

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

Corte Madera Ecological Reserve:
Second Saturdays: October 10, November 14

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, Jakub Coltun, McKenzie Fletcher, Parker Grant, Ron and Belle Guelden, Bob Hinz, Martha Jarocki, Eric Meyer, Bella Miranda, Alison Pence, Reece Ryan, Lucy Sesko, Sonia Suzuki, Lowell Sykes, Jude Stalker

THANK YOU, DONORS

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Bequests by John H. Crawford and Audrey R. Myers

Habitat Stewardship

MAKING PROGRESS ON THE INVASIVE SEA LAVENDER PROJECT

By Jude Stalker

For those that have been helping with (or just following) the Marin Audubon Society (MAS) Invasive Sea Lavender Project, you know that it has been ongoing for several years.

The story of the invasive sea lavender removal in Marin County began in 2007 when European sea lavender (*Limonium duriusculum*) and Algerian sea lavender (*Limonium ramosissimum* subsp. *provinciale*) were discovered growing in several marshes of the San Francisco Bay, including in relatively small patches at a few Marin County shoreline locations. The assumption has been that they were planted as horticultural plants and spread to other tidal marsh locations.

The discovery of these species raised alarm and concern for the health of the salt marshes in the San Francisco Bay. Although the small purple flowers of these perennial plants are quite attractive, each plant can produce hundreds of seeds each year that eventually carpet the surrounding area with new seedlings. Left unmanaged, these "carpets" can displace vast areas of the upper tidal marsh zone native plant species including marsh gumplant (*Grindelia stricta*), the native sea lavender (*Limonium californicum*), salt grass (*Distichlis spicata*), alkali heath (*Frankenia salina*) and others that provide essential habitat services for native animal species including the endangered Ridgway's rail (*Rallus obsoletus obsoletus*) and salt marsh harvest mouse (*Reithrodontomys raviventris*).

The seeds of these invasive plants also travel with the tides to colonize new shoreline areas.

At MAS, we knew that if we did not take action early on and try to manage the invasive sea lavender species in the few Marin County locations where they were known to be growing, they would expand further and potentially move into MAS tidal wetland restoration and preservation properties.

We performed surveys along the Marin shorelines, searched parcel maps to identify the property owners, obtained permission to remove the plants, launched a volunteer recruitment and coordination program and got to work removing much of the plants from where we found them. This work has continued annually since 2011.

Through the years, MAS has worked with the coordination and support of the Bay Area Early Detection Network, California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC), Marin County Parks, Caltrans, the Boyer Lab at SFSU and many property owners, managers and community

volunteers. In 2023 MAS started contracting with professional crews to remove the invasive sea lavender from more heavily infested locations in Marin.

In 2016 Cal-IPC initiated the implementation of a Bay-wide effort to remove invasive sea lavender and began supporting the MAS efforts by contracting with crews to remove the invasive sea lavender species from some of the Marin County locations each year. Cal-IPC has also contributed grant funding to the MAS effort for the past two years.

Together, we have been able keep the Marin County infestations managed – although not eliminated – without the use of herbicides.

In most locations where we have been persistent and consistent with removal each year, we see a reduction in plant numbers.

Most of the infested areas are along the southern Marin shoreline (Sausalito, Marin City, Mill Valley and Tiburon) with some areas in the Corte Madera Marsh Ecological Reserve and on the jetty at the Loch Lomond Marina in San Rafael.

New, previously undetected infestations have been discovered in the past couple of years. One is along the southern shoreline of the Bolinas Lagoon on the Seadrift property. We were able to secure permissions and bring in a contract crew to remove all the invasive sea lavender plants there for the past two years.

The other location is along the public shoreline in Mill Valley behind the Piatti restaurant and Ferrari dealership. The property owner there is very cooperative and allowed MAS to bring in contractors this year to remove most of the plants.

We hope to go back soon with volunteers to finish the job.

One property manager has chosen to fund the removal efforts on the marina property that he manages, and a local volunteer is managing the invasive plants on the houseboat community property where she lives.

MAS is committed to keeping this effort going strong until others can step in and take over the management of the invasive sea lavender at the various properties in Marin County.

If you are interested in helping with the management of the Project, would like to donate funds toward the cost of removal of the invasive *Limonium* by contractors or have any questions, please contact Jude Stalker (MAS board member and invasive *Limonium* Project Program Coordinator) at judestalker@gmail.com.

If you would like to volunteer your time to help remove invasive sea lavender, please contact Ellena Ochoa (MAS Volunteer Coordinator) at volunteercoordinator@marinaudubon.org.

Marin Birdlog: August 2026

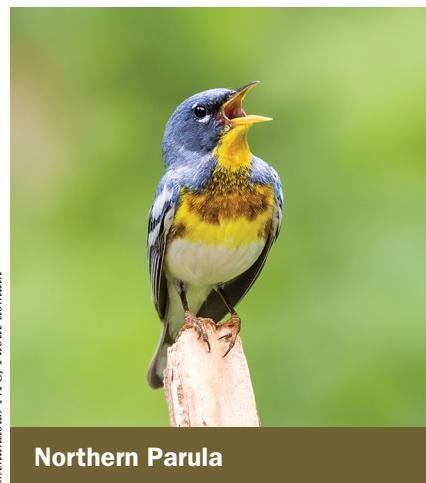
By Noah Arthur

August is the middle of fall migration for shorebirds in Marin, with ever-increasing numbers of juveniles fresh off the tundra. Songbird migration is also getting underway, and the first rarity of this August was a **Bank Swallow** at Las Gallinas on the 3rd (AT & AL). Rare on the Outer Point, an American Crow flew over Drakes Beach on the 5th (DS). Out offshore, a boat trip turned up a **Scripps's Murrelet** among many other pelagic birds (group checklist).

An unusual record for this time of year, a juvenile **Townsend's Solitaire** was at the RCA trees on Point Reyes on the 7th (AH). Another very unseasonable find on the 7th was **5 Greater White-fronted Geese** at Abbotts Lagoon, along with **3 Pacific Golden-plovers** which are a much more expected rarity for August (AD).

As expected, the Super El Nino has begun pushing tropical seabirds north of their normal ranges. The first to hit Marin was a stunning adult **Nazca Booby** on an offshore buoy out west of Muir Beach on the 8th (group checklist). Still very rare in Marin, though apparently increasing, a juvenile **Royal Tern** was with Elegants on Limantour Beach on the 9th, plus a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** with Westerns (MK).

Also on the 9th, a **Ruddy Turnstone** was at Abbotts and the **Pacific Golden-plover** flock there had increased to 4 (EC). A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** joined the Abbotts shorebird party the next day (JW). Out offshore, a pelagic trip on the 10th turned up a **Black Tern** and **Manx Shearwater** in southern Marin waters (group checklist).



Northern Parula

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A random pond near Fallon featured a **Solitary Sandpiper** on the 11th (LM), and Limantour Beach yielded a **Ruff** on the 12th (LS). Also on the 12th there was a single **White-faced Ibis** at Hamilton Wetlands (MK).

A push of inland birds toward the coast occurred mid-month. On the 14th a **Lawrence's Goldfinch** turned up on Angel Island (JWo), and a **Nuttall's Woodpecker** at Nunes Ranch (EM), the latter very rare for the Outer Point. More Outer Point rarities came on the 15th, including a **Swainson's Hawk** over Drakes, **Northern Mockingbird** at Junior Mendoza, and **Red Crossbill** at Mendoza (BB & EM).

On the 16th a **Solitary Sandpiper** showed up at Rodeo Lagoon (WL). On the 18th a **Northern Mockingbird** was at the Fish Docks (KN), and a very early **Ruby-crowned**

Kinglet at Drakes (AM). On the 19th, a **Yellow-breasted Chat** turned up at the New Willows (CC).

The season's first push of eastern vagrants hit Marin on the 21st, with a **Northern Waterthrush** at Rodeo Lagoon (DW & WL), an **Eastern Kingbird** at Mendoza Ranch (CC), a male **Orchard Oriole** at Fish Docks (DS), and best of all an immature **Painted Bunting** at Mendoza (MB).

On the 22nd a **Prairie Falcon** flew over Hawk Hill (AW & JJT), and yet another Outer Point **Northern Mockingbird** was at Mendoza (LN & MD). On the 24th, another Scripps's Murrelet was found on a pelagic off Marin (group checklist), and the long-returning **Yellow-crowned Night-heron** was found again in Sausalito (group checklist). Very unusually early were **6 Golden-crowned Sparrows** along Palomarin Trail on the 25th (BA). Two **American Redstarts** also showed up on the 25th, one at Rodeo Lagoon (CC) and one at Muir Beach (BB). An **Eastern Kingbird** turned up at Rodeo Lagoon on the 26th (CC), and a **Northern Parula** at Muir Beach on the 28th (LC).

And on the 30th another early **Greater White-fronted Goose** was with Canadas at Mill Valley's Bayfront Park (SM), and a **White-winged Scoter** was with Surf Scoters off the Fish Docks (BB).

OBSERVERS AND ACRONYMS: AT: Alexander Tey, AL: August Linton, DS: David Sexton, AH: Aaron Haycraft, AD: Adam Donkin, EC: Elliot Chasin, MK: Matt Keller, JW: Jim White, LM: Liam Moeller, LS: Lucas Stephenson, EM: Eddie Monson, BB: Brian Browne, JWO: Jonathan Woon, WL: William Legge, KN: Kurt Niznik, AM: Alex Mortimer, CC: Connor Cochrane, DW: David Wiechers, DS: Dan Singer, MB: Mark Butler, AW: Ashley Wright, JJT: JJ Thomas, LN: Larry Nigro, MD: Molly Donahue, BA: Bob Arrigoni, LC: Lucas Corneliussen, SM: Sarah Mannell



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Novato Creek

continued from page 5

restoration of all of this area.

The preferred project-level alternative eliminates the need to maintain nearly 17,000 linear feet of aging, non-engineered berms that divide the county spray fields into segments. These low berms are susceptible to overtopping and are expensive to maintain. The Novato Creek channel is widened to provide sufficient conveyance to avoid flood impacts and excavated within the spray fields to convey tidal flows to a future restored area. Simmons Slough is enlarged in preparation for restoration of the diked baylands to the north. A standard levee is constructed along the entire length of the SMART railway and SR 37, and is aligned south of the PG&E transmission lines to protect this infrastructure from flooding. This levee would be removed if an expanded landscape-scale levee with wetland-upland transition zone is established.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Strategy envisions "that the future Novato Creek baylands will have expansive, connected tidal wetland habitats, including marshes and mudflats. Wherever feasible, these tidal habitats will be linked to protected wetland-upland transition zones, uplands, and watersheds, which provide high-tide refuge habitat and space for wetlands to migrate upslope as sea levels rise." By pairing a clear long-term restoration vision with achievable near-term projects, the Strategy establishes a practical pathway for implementation that can begin as soon as project proponents step forward to begin to implement the restorations.

REPORT BARRED OWL SIGHTINGS

Barred Owls have extended their range to the west coast and have been seen in Marin. There is increasing concern about their impact on Marin's Northern Spotted Owl population. Barred Owls are larger, more aggressive and occupy the same habitat type as Spotted Owls. See contact list at marinaudubon.org/2020/09/01/alert-report-barred-owl-sightings.



The Rail

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SAVE THE DATE

November 5 **Field Trip:** Las Gallinas Ponds
8:30 AM *With Mark Clark*

November 12 **Speaker Series:** Acorn
7 PM Woodpeckers
With Walt Koenig

November 21 **Field Trip:** Rodeo Lagoon
7:30 AM *With William Legge and
David Wiechers*

Check website for updates and details



SCAN QR CODE on left with your phone
camera to connect to MAS's website.

SUPPORT MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY — BECOME A CHAPTER-SUPPORTING MEMBER

We invite you to become a Chapter-Supporting member of Marin Audubon Society (MAS) to support our important habitat protection and restoration work, conservation advocacy, our full calendar of birding field trips and speakers and our newsletter, *The Rail*. Marin Audubon is a chapter of National Audubon (NAS). However, becoming a **Chapter-Supporting Member** of MAS is separate and distinct from a membership in NAS. While MAS works with NAS on issues of mutual concern, we are a separate non-profit Section 501(c)(3) all-volunteer organization. Marin-based NAS members do receive this MAS newsletter, *The Rail*, however we encourage all NAS members to also become Chapter-Supporting members of MAS to support our local work. Very little of our funding comes from NAS, and we rely on our MAS Chapter-Supporting members and donors to help us fund our land acquisitions, restorations, habitat protection, conservation advocacy, this newsletter and our local programs.

If you're not already a Chapter-Supporting member, we urge you to join MAS and urge your friends, neighbors and relatives to join us, too.

You can join MAS or make a donation on our website using your credit card or PayPal by going to www.marinaudubon.org. Alternatively, you can join by filling out this form and sending us your payment by mail.

ALTERNATIVELY, IF YOU ARE LOOKING TO JOIN NATIONAL AUDUBON FOR THE FIRST TIME.

MAS will receive 100% of your initial membership if you enter **MAS's chapter code C04** on your application. To join, go to www.audubon.org/join.

The best option for the birds: Join MAS **and** NAS.

Join or Donate to the Marin Audubon Society

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

- ☐ Enroll me as a Chapter-Supporting Member
- ☐ Renewal
- ☐ New Member
- ☐ \$25 Annual rate for students (18 years and under) and seniors (65 and over)
- ☐ \$35 Basic
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- ☐ \$1,000 Benefactor
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Marin Audubon Society
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