



# the Quail

Mount Diablo Audubon Society

P.O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053

[www.diabloaudubon.com/index.php](http://www.diabloaudubon.com/index.php)

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## San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex

From remnant sand dunes to tidal salt marsh, from rocky, offshore islands to verdant seasonal wetlands, the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex is a collection of seven National Wildlife Refuges (NWR) administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)—Antioch Dunes, San Pablo Bay, Marin Islands, and the Don Edwards NWRs in the San Francisco Bay Area, the Ellicott Slough and Salinas River NWRs in the Monterey Bay Area, and the Farallon Islands. These refuges are devoted to preserving migratory birds, endangered species, and other fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats. The refuges also offer wildlife-dependent public uses including hunting, fishing, wildlife photography, nature observation, interpretation, and environmental education. Despite booming industries and growing populations in one of the largest urban areas in the country, these National Wildlife Refuges preserve incredibly diverse and healthy ecosystems. Our guest speaker, Anne Morkill, will provide

an overview of each of the refuges' unique natural and cultural history and discuss how today's challenges of urbanization, invasive species, and climate change are being met through habitat restoration and public engagement.



Anne Morkill received a B.S. in Wildlife Biology from Colorado State University (1986) and a M.S. in Zoology from the University of Wyoming (1990). She started her professional career with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department in 1986. Joining the US-



*Osprey with fish. Photographed at Lafayette Reservoir by Kai Mills.*

FWS first in 1990, she worked as a Refuge Biologist for the Alamosa-Monte Vista NWR in south-central Colorado. In 1992, she moved to Alaska to work as a Wildlife Biologist for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and later rejoined the USFWS as Assistant Refuge Manager for the Arctic NWR and subsequently as Deputy Refuge Manager for the Alaska Maritime NWR Complex based in Homer, Alaska. In 2006, Anne moved to her home state of Florida to work as Project Leader for the Florida Keys NWR Complex. In 2012, Anne returned west to manage the San Francisco Bay NWR Complex. Anne currently resides in San Leandro with her partner Harry and dogs Molly and Daisy, and they enjoy exploring the diverse natural, historical, and culinary venues that abound in the San Francisco Bay Area.

### BIRDING INFORMATION

Kai Mills from our Young Birders Club will share photos and talk about some of his recent sightings.

### Meeting Schedule

The next general meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be **Thursday, September 4**, in the Camellia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farm, Walnut Creek.

7:00 PM Birding Information

7:25 PM Announcements

7:40 PM Refreshments,\* raffle

8:05 PM Speaker: **Anne Morkill**

*\* Please remember to bring a cup.*

Thursday, October 2: Marie Read

Birds of the Mono Lake Region

## President's Corner

By Jimm Edgar

I love to read newspapers. I subscribe to four daily papers including the New York Times. It is a daily ritual for me to get up, retrieve my papers and sit in my chair with our cat Frida on my lap and read the papers. I always look forward to Joan Morris' column as she often gets questions about birds. I send her questions from time to time also. The New York Times had a great article a couple of weeks ago, July 27 to be exact, about the actress Jane Alexander and the fact that she is an avid bird watcher. (I am not a big movie buff so I am not sure I have ever seen Jane Alexander in a film.) It was a well written article and talked about many of the places to bird in and around New York City. Fun reading.

Speaking of Joan Morris, she is seeking input on the issue of keeping your cat indoors or not keeping it indoors. Our Mount Diablo Audubon chapter has taken a pretty strong position and advises not letting your cat outside. As you know studies have been done that probably over two billion birds are killed a year by cats. Seventy percent are killed by feral cats, but people's house cats kill the other 30%. If you have an opinion let Joan know your thoughts.

As most of you know I was asked a couple of years ago to serve on the Audubon California board of directors. The board meets four or five times a year for two to three days. We meet all around the state to see what is happening with habitats and

birds. I have decided to resign from the board. It has taken more time than I realized and there are other folks in the wings to serve. I will submit a letter of resignation soon. It has been a great experience to see what Audubon California is doing in our state.

We are back in business at Mount Diablo Audubon. Our first meeting is coming up and it proves to be a great season again. Our program chair, Ariana Rickard, has put together a lot of great programs. Lots of field trips are scheduled and our board of directors is working hard for the chapter. I hope you will get to the meetings and go on a field trip.



## One More for Your Life List

By Steve Glover

The annual American Ornithologists' Union Checklist Supplement, published online on July 30th, includes a revision of the taxonomic status of the "large rails," which we have traditionally called the Clapper and King Rails.

The King Rail has been split into two species: The familiar King Rail of the eastern U.S. retains its English and scientific names (*Rallus elegans*), while populations in Mexico's interior and western coast are now known as "Aztec Rail" (*Rallus tenuirostris*).

Of greater interest to California birders is a three-way split of the Clapper Rails. The Clapper Rails on the east coast (including Texas) have retained the name Clapper Rail but the scientific name is now *Rallus crepitans*. Our local Clapper Rails are now known as Ridgway's Rail and have been given the scientific name *Rallus obsoletus*. So if you have seen a Clapper Rail back east and a Clapper Rail in California, pat yourself on the back (or clap!)—your life list grew by one without leaving the house! The third species, the Mangrove Rail (*Rallus longirostris*), is confined to coastal South America.

Ridgway's Rail includes three known subspecies, each of which occurs in California: The "Light-footed Rail," of the form *levipes*, is found along the Pacific



PALO ALTO BAYLANDS, PHOTO BY ELLIS MYERS

Coast from Santa Barbara County south to extreme northern Mexico. The "Yuma Rail," of the form *yumanensis*, is found in freshwater marshes in southeastern California, including at the Salton Sea and along the Colorado River. The "California Rail," of the form *obsoletus*, now occurs only around the shores of San Francisco, San Pablo and Suisun Bays, though it formerly ranged at least as far south as Morro Bay and as far north as Humboldt Bay. This is the subspecies one would see (with patience or a very high tide) at the Palo Alto Baylands or at Meeker Slough in Richmond.

For many, the new name Ridgway's Rail will take some getting used to. However, we might all take comfort in the fact that Robert Ridgway, one of America's greatest ornithologists, finally has an English bird name to his credit!

## Welcome New Members

Thomas Flaherty	Clayton
Bob Hislop	Concord
The Reese Family	Pleasanton
Grace Mannell	Danville
Joe Schellenberg	Concord

## Please Note

The General Meeting for January, 2015, will be on the second Thursday, January 8, and not on January 1, New Year's Day.

Q

This is a somewhat secretive bird of the grasslands, and as grasslands become shopping centers and housing developments, it has become a species of special concern in California. It is listed as endangered in some other states.

Unscramble these letters, or turn to Page 6 to learn more.

AAEGHOOPPPRRRRSSSW

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The big event of the period was the finding of Contra Costa's first Red-necked Stint by Logan Kahle at the West County Wastewater Ponds in Richmond on 7/20. Many people saw the bird before it left in a few days. LK, BD, JS, RCu, TL, CS, GC, DM, MR, CD, LH, MP, DS, AL

The Arctic and mountain migrants have started to return with some early shorebirds and warblers arriving.

Up to 7 **Brant** have been near the viewing platform along Meeker Slough in Richmond since 8/3. LK, MP, CD, CS, AL.

A **Cackling Goose** was at Clifton Court Forebay 7/31. AL.

A pair of **Cinnamon Teal** made a brief stop at Heather Farm pond 6/18. HH, FS.

On 7/13, AL saw a **Common Goldeneye** at MacNabney Marsh. This is an uncommon occurrence in July in Contra Costa County.

On 8/6, AL saw a **Horned Grebe** at Mallard Reservoir near Brentwood for a first August CoCoCo record.

Two **Least Bitterns**, 1 adult, one juvenile, were at Dow Wetland Preserve 7/14. AL. LK saw a juvenile **Least Bittern** there 7/20.

HH, JR, FS saw nesting **Green Herons** at Heather Farm pond from 7/3 and beyond. There were three juveniles. MS saw two adult and two juvenile **Green Herons** at the greenery on either side of the dam at Lafayette Reservoir 7/6.

SO saw two **Golden Eagles** over Inspiration Point in Tilden RP 7/4.

**Black Rails** were seen or heard in several locations. AL saw one at Bay Point Regional Shoreline 6/29. and two at Iron House Sanitary District 7/10. LK had one there 7/20. On 6/30, C&TW had one at the Martinez Regional Shoreline. Many others saw or heard them at Martinez Shoreline until 7/21. JG, PC, RC, JRo, CR, LR, AL, DW

MP saw a **Wandering Tattler** at Point Molate 8/3.

Submit Contra Costa County sightings to [mbstern2@yahoo.com](mailto:mbstern2@yahoo.com) or (925) 284-5980 or send to [EBB Sightings@yahoogroups.com](mailto:EBB Sightings@yahoogroups.com). If you report sightings to eBird, please also send to Maury Stern.

On 7/22, LK and AL saw an adult **Pectoral Sandpiper**. Usually the juveniles arrive early, but this year a number of adults have appeared around the Bay Area.

JA and LK found about 100 **Wilson's Phalaropes** and two **Red-breasted Phalaropes** at the Waterbird Way ponds just over the hill from McNabney Marsh on 7/20. There were four **Red-breasted Phalaropes** there on 7/23. MP.

About 150 **Elegant Terns** were roosting on Brooks Island on 7/30. KF.

MH saw 20 **Purple Martins** fly over the Heather Farm pond on 7/5.

JH, T&DB, and BL saw **Phainopepla** behind the Boundary Oaks driving range from 6/21 to 6/25. They have bred in that area most years.

MM had a **Western Tanager** in her yard 8/1 in Moraga and P&NS had one at their birdbath in Antioch 8/4.

**Hermit Warblers** were at the Orinda Connector Trail 7/20, LK, and 2 females were at the Valle Vista Staging area 8/12. JC.

A **Chipping Sparrow** was at the Iron House Sanitary district 7/20.

LK saw eight **Blue Grosbeaks** at the Iron House Sanitary District 7/20.

*"A man who never sees a bluebird only half lives."*

—Edwin Way Teale

JA Jeff Acuff, T&DB Tom and Diane Bennett, GC Graham Chisholm, PC Pamela Clark, RC Robert Clark, RCu Rob Cullison, CD Cedric Duhalde, BD Bob Dunn, KF Kathy Francone, JG Jeannine Gendar, MH Mike Hall, HH Hugh Harvey, JH Joel Herr, LH Lisa Hug, LK Logan Kahle, TL Tom Liguori, AL Albert Linkowski, BL Betty Lobos, DM Dominik Mosur, MM Mimi Myers, SO Sue Oeser, MP Michael Park, BP Bob Power, MR Mark Rauzon, JR Jean Richmond, CR Carol Rose, LR Larry Rose, JRo Jim Rowath, FS Fred Safier, P&NS Paul and Nancy Schorr, DS Dan Singer, CS Catherine Spaulding, JS John Sterling, MS Maury Stern, DW Dan Wenny, C&TW, Chris and Teri Wills.

## Buy a Duck Stamp!



The new 2014-2015 Federal Duck Stamp is now on sale. The 81st Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, as it is formally known, features a pair of Canvasbacks painted by wildlife artist Adam Grimm of Burbank, S.D. Last fall, a panel of five judges chose Grimm's art to grace the stamp from among 202 paintings at the Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest.

Each year, beginning in 2007, Mount Diablo Audubon Society has encouraged all birders to purchase a Federal Duck Stamp and has made it easier for members by purchasing a quantity so that you can buy one at the regular meeting in September. We appreciate the efforts of member Don Lewis in expediting this sale. Or you can buy one at the Post Office or at sporting goods stores. The cost is \$15, regardless of where you buy. The stamps are also available for purchase online and at National Wildlife Refuges. Visit [www.fws.gov/duck-stamps/stamps.htm](http://www.fws.gov/duck-stamps/stamps.htm) for more information.

Waterfowl hunters age 16 and older are required to purchase and carry a current Federal Duck Stamp. Conservationists, birders, stamp collectors, art lovers and many others also buy the stamp as an investment in wetlands conservation for future generations. Ninety-eight percent of the proceeds from the \$15 duck stamp go to the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, which supports wetland acquisition for the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Since 1934, Federal Duck Stamp sales have raised more than \$850 million to acquire and protect more than 6 million acres of wetlands habitat on hundreds of National Wildlife Refuges across all 50 states and U.S. territories. A current Federal Duck Stamp is also good for free admission to any refuge that charges an entry fee. More than 560 refuges offer unparalleled outdoor recreational opportunities, including bird watching, photography, fishing, and hunting.

# Field Trip Schedule

By Hugh Harvey

## September

- 4 Thursday ..... Jewel Lake
- 13 Saturday ..... Antioch Dunes
- 20 Saturday ..... Rio Lindo Academy, Healdsburg
- 27 Saturday ..... Outer Point Reyes

## October

- 4 Saturday ..... Hawk Hill
- 7 Tuesday ..... Hayward Shoreline/Winton Avenue
- 11-12 Saturday/Sunday ..... Monterey Pelagic and Land Birds
- 22 Wednesday ..... Berkeley–Emeryville Shoreline
- 25 Saturday ..... Abbott’s Lagoon

## November

- 18 Tuesday ..... McNabney Marsh/Mountain View Sanitary
- 22 Saturday ..... Charleston Slough/South Bay
- 29 Saturday ..... Limantour

Our Mount Diablo Audubon Chapter is a conservation organization. As such, we encourage members to consider meeting at the carpool point to pick up or ride with others. It is important that given the cost of gasoline, those who ride with others offer to pay some of this cost. Don't forget about any bridge tolls or park entry fees on some of our longer trips. Carpool location: **Sun Valley**—Southwest corner of the Sun Valley Mall parking lot at Willow Pass Road and Contra Costa Boulevard in Concord.

**② Thursday, September 4  
Jewel Lake**

Leader: Maury Stern, (925) 284-5980.

Meet 7:30 AM in Nature Center parking lot at north end of park. From Hwy. 24 in Orinda, go north on Camino Pablo. Turn left on Wildcat Canyon Road. Stay right at the Brazil Building. At the next main intersection, turn right and pass Lake Anza and the Carousel. Or take Fish Ranch Road from the Caldecott Tunnel. Turn right at the top onto Grizzly Peak Road. Turn right and downhill onto South Park Drive and turn left at the bottom onto Wildcat Canyon Road. Short morning walk to look for migrants.

**② Saturday, September 13  
Antioch Dunes National Wildlife Refuge**

Leader: Hugh Harvey, (925) 935-2979.

10:00–11:00 AM. Carpool from Sun Valley at 9:15 AM. The leader will not be attending this trip, but will organize only. This is your chance to visit the only unit of the National Wildlife Refuge system in Contra Costa County. A 1-hour docent-guided tour will introduce us to the history of the only place on earth where we can see Lange’s Metalmark Butterfly. Though the butterfly requires Naked-stem Buckwheat, Star Thistle is the predominant plant. Don't be disappointed if you don't see this butterfly. Don't expect to see flowing sand dunes. After hearing the history, you will understand. May be hot, there is no shade; may be dusty walking along graded fire trails. Bring sun protection and water. From Hwy. 4 in Antioch, exit north on A Street. After about 1 mile, bend right onto Wilbur Avenue. Turn left onto Fulton Shipyard Road and cross the railroad tracks. The entry gate is on the right. We will be



*Antioch Dunes Evening Primrose.  
Beth Branthaver photo.*

**② Saturday, September 27  
Outer Point Reyes**

Leader: David Hutton, (925) 938-4485.

Carpool leaves from Sun Valley at 7:00 AM. Meet 8:30 AM at Bear Valley Visitor Center in Olema. From I-80 in Vallejo, follow SR 37 19.1 miles to Atherton Avenue, exit and turn left, cross US 101 to San Marin Drive and continue about 3 miles. Turn right on Novato Blvd. for 6 miles to stop sign, then turn



*Great Horned Owl at Pt. Reyes.  
Beth Branthaver photo.*

left on Point Reyes–Petaluma Road for 7 miles to another stop sign. Turn right across the bridge, go 3 miles to SR 1. Turn left into Point Reyes Station. After a stop at the Bovine Bakery for coffee and pastries, continue out of town towards Olema, then turn right onto Bear Valley Road. Visitor Center is off Bear Valley. We are hoping for migrants and vagrants. Weather is unpredictable. Bring lunch and liquids.

# The Faces of Rat Poison — *By Lisa Owens Viani*

Watch for RATS (Raptors Are The Solution) this summer in BART stations in the East Bay—Lafayette, Orinda, and Pleasant Hill—thanks to support from MDAS and several other funders. The “Faces of Rat Poison” campaign will also be visible in San Francisco, in BART stations and on the “tails” of 26 MUNI buses. The idea behind the campaign is to show the faces of some of the nontarget animals that are being harmed by rat poison.

Although the state removed some of the worst “second generation” anticoagulant compounds from consumer shelves as of July 1, and the US EPA plans to do the same starting in April 2015, the battle is not over. Plenty of other dangerous products, including several under the *d-CON* brand, remain for sale to consumers. They include the poisons chlorophacinone and diphacinone, “first generation” anticoagulants that have killed many birds of prey and other wildlife, as well as bromethalin, a nerve toxin for which there is no antidote.

Our great challenge moving ahead is that the state and the EPA continue to allow the pest control industry to use the terrible second generation anticoagulants, and agricultural supply stores to sell them in



bulk. The EPA argues that pest control operators “apply the poisons more carefully,” making them safer to use. However, they have admitted that they have no scientific evidence to show that most poisonings are caused by homeowners. A bait box with a poisoned rodent staggering out of it creates a toxic bomb, whether placed by a pest control company, a homeowner, restaurant, or business.

RATS has posted a table of all of the poisons—and their brand names—that will still be allowed for over-the-counter sale at [www.raptorsarethesolution.org/dangerous-rat-poison-products-still-being-sold-over-the-counter/](http://www.raptorsarethesolution.org/dangerous-rat-poison-products-still-being-sold-over-the-counter/) along with their known impacts.

*Lisa Owens Viani is Co-founder and Director of RATS*

## Cheers for Our Volunteers

Thanks are due to the volunteers who take the time to attend the several festivals throughout the year where Mount Diablo Audubon reaches the public, explaining our mission of protecting birds and wildlife, and their habitats.

In June, the following members worked at Walnut Creek’s Heritage Day Festival at Borges Ranch: Kathy Kellogg, Dave Kwinter, Sandy Ritchie and Mike Robertson.

In August, these folks helped out at the Beaver Festival in Martinez: Diane Malucelli, Carol Pacht and Cevina Targum.

Also to be acknowledged with thanks is Volunteer Coordinator Brian Murphy.

*Cevina Targum (left) and Diane Malucelli talk with children at the Beaver Festival in Martinez on August 2.*



## Young Birders Club

The Mount Diablo Audubon Young Birders Club spent a little over two hours studying a mile, or so, of the Orinda Connector Trail on Sunday, July 20. Although birding this time of year can be a bit slow, this trail, always beautiful at any time, did yield 46 species.

We had the pleasure of finding a female Wood Duck with six juveniles, numerous Western Wood-Pewees, flocks of Violet-green Swallows, all three nuthatches and an apparent early migrant Hermit Warbler.

Logan Kahle’s complete eBird checklist for our morning can be found here: <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S19160650>

Many families are busy during the summer months and our turnout—only six participants, this time—was, no doubt, a reflection of that fact. But we did have the opportunity to welcome a guest, Danae Daviess from Danville, and a new member, Forest Chapman from Lafayette.

Anticipating fall migration, the Young Birders will soon formulate plans for their next field trip, most likely a shorebird outing. Date and location, when set, will be posted on the MDAS calendar. Please look for it and attend if you are able.

In other news, the Mount Diablo Audubon Young Birders Club has been invited by Point Blue Conservation (formerly the Point Reyes Bird Observatory) to form a team and participate this fall in the 37th annual Rich Stallcup Bird-a-Thon. This event has been a vital fundraiser and, to date, 2.8 million dollars has been raised for their very important conservation endeavors. The entire event takes place between September 1 and October 15. Each team will select a location (or locations), and a 24 hour period within those dates, and basically do a “big day”, finding and identifying as many species as they can. Each team will also seek sponsorship, and donations will be pegged to their respective species counts. Ours would be only the second youth team to join the event since it was established. Anyone wishing to participate with the Young Birders should contact Tracy Farrington at [tracy\\_farrington@yahoo.com](mailto:tracy_farrington@yahoo.com) or: 925-788-6223.

More details may be found at the Point Blue Conservation page for the event: <http://www.pointblue.org/help-the-environment/support-us/birdathon/>.

## William S. Vaux



Fluorite specimen from the Vaux Collection, Academy of Natural Sciences

Drexel University, and the Vaux Collection remains there but is not on public display. The minerals collected by George Vaux were donated to Bryn Mawr University.

Continued from Page 8  
his photography, particularly for his work in Canada with scenes of glaciers.

William S. Vaux bequeathed his mineral collection (valued at the time at over \$50,000) to the Philadelphia Academy of Sciences, along with a \$10,000 endowment to maintain and expand the collection. The Academy is now known as the Academy of Natural Sciences of



For a four-minute video of the spectacle at Rio Vista Academy, go to [www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXtFPHiKtAI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXtFPHiKtAI). Film clip by Gérard Angé,

## Vaux's Swifts

Vaux's Swifts, *Chaetura vauxi*, are aerial birds, members of the *Apodiformes* order, birds that can't perch or walk—they can only cling or fly. They spend most of their lives in the air, living on the insects they catch in their beaks and even mating while in flight. They have sometimes been referred to as "cigars with wings."

Vaux's Swifts (rhymes with "foxes") are found flying or clinging to vertical surfaces such as trees or chimneys. They usually nest in natural cavities with vertical entranceways, such as hollow trees, and they roost communally, by the hundreds or sometimes thousands, presumably to conserve heat. However, with the loss of natural habitats, Vaux's Swifts have been increasingly observed roosting during migration in man-made structures such as large industrial chimneys. A number of locations are particularly noted as observation sites during the fall migration of these multitudes as they travel along the Pacific Flyway toward their winter destination between Central Mexico and Venezuela. Among these are the Old Northern State Hospital in Sedro Woolley, Washington; Chapman Elementary School in Portland, Oregon (likely the largest concentration of birds is here); the Rio Lindo Academy in Healdsburg, California; the McNear Brickyard in San Rafael; and the Chester Williams Building in downtown Los Angeles.

At the Rio Lindo Academy, Vaux's Swifts began using the chimney in 1989, and they have returned every fall since that time. Small groups arrive in mid-August; peak populations are there in mid to late September; most have continued their journey south by early October. As many as 20,000 birds may roost inside the chimney on any night. One study counted an average of more than 360 birds per minute entering the chimney over a period of 20 minutes or so.

## Grasshopper Sparrow ♦ *Ammodramus savannarum*

**a** Ralph Hoffmann, in *Birds of the Pacific States*, 1927, describes the Grasshopper Sparrow as follows: "Only a sharp ear catches from some dry weedy field a shrill insect-like trill, almost a buzz. The singer crouches on a weed stalk or fence post or even on the ground, throwing up his head at intervals and uttering his fine dry trill. When the Grasshopper Sparrow flies from his perch, he flutters off with curiously feeble flight. The unstreaked under parts distinguish the Grasshopper Sparrow from a Savannah Sparrow. Its song might easily be mistaken for a Savannah's but is composed of one long dry trill without a change of pitch at the end."

As a secretive grassland species, the



Grasshopper Sparrow. Photo by Beth Branthaver

period when males are singing—March and April—is when these birds are most readily discovered. Grasshopper Sparrows

are so much harder to detect in the fall than singing summer birds that it seems that the species just disappears, when in fact thousands are passing southward to winter in Mexico. Spring migration in March, April and May brings these birds suddenly back to their breeding areas. In Contra Costa County, these birds have been reported on Mount Diablo, at Black Diamond Mines, and in the grasslands south of Mount Diablo. The *Breeding Bird Atlas of Contra Costa County* shows that most breeding birds were found in the Berkeley Hills, including Briones and Las Trampas Regional Parks.

Of seven subspecies of Grasshopper Sparrow in North America, only the western subspecies *A. s. perpallidus* is seen in California. It is paler and more drab than the others.

# Wouldn't It Be Nice?

By Mike Eliot

Wouldn't it be nice if all cats and birds got along?



The simple fact is, in general, they don't. House cats, being instinctual bird predators, were estimated in a 2012 study to kill over 1.5 billion birds a year in the U.S. alone. Outdoor and feral domestic cats can go where they please, causing untold damage to birds, small animals, and other cats. The numbers of abandoned and feral cats are increasing as well. So what can we do?

The most obvious answer is to keep cats indoors. In addition to their being unable to catch birds, indoor cats are much less likely to become ill, get in fights, get abscesses, be hit by vehicles or injured by dogs.

For those whose cats run free, a modicum of responsibility for eliminating cat-related problems seems appropriate.

If your cats go outdoors, you could have them wear bells to alarm birds and other animals. You can also provide them with adequate attractions and toys in your yard to keep them at home and occupied. A recent news column suggests that cats become too lazy to chase birds when they have catnip plants to enjoy. In addition, you could also let cats out only in the evening or night, when birds are not out feeding. Or you could spend time with them playing outdoors. Some cat owners build outdoor play areas for them that are covered so they cannot escape. Moreover, some people have been able to train their cats not to chase or catch birds. I, for example, have two indoor cats and a parrot that get along just fine.

If you feed birds, there are some additional things you can do. First, make sure that feeders are high enough and far enough from buildings, fences, or trees so that cats cannot jump on them. Also make sure there is no brush growing under or near feeders or bird baths where cats could hide.

# Mount Diablo Audubon Society

Mount Diablo Audubon Society, a Chapter of National Audubon, is committed to the sustainable balance of our community's people, birds, other wildlife, and habitat through conservation, education, and advocacy.

## MDAS Board of Directors

(Area code 925 unless specified)

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Quail Editor



Mount Diablo Audubon Society meets at 7:00 PM on the first Thursday of each month, except July and August, in the Camellia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek. Everyone is invited. [Note: Second Thursday, January 8, 2015.]

Mount Diablo Audubon Society thanks our Business Partners for their generous support:

- Wild Birds Unlimited
- Steven Joseph Photography
- Galaxy Press
- Native Bird Connections

## MDAS MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION

- Please enroll my family and me as a member of Mount Diablo Audubon Society for \$25 for one year. Membership dues are tax deductible.
- I'm enclosing an additional tax-deductible donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- For an additional \$20 (new NAS members only), please enroll me in the National Audubon Society. NAS dues are separate from Mount Diablo Audubon dues.

Please send *The Quail* by:  US mail  E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to:

MOUNT DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY and mail with this application to:

Membership Chair, 282 Firestone Court, Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Mount Diablo Audubon Society,  
P.O. Box 53  
Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053

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Concord, CA



*Vaux's Swift. Glen Tepke photo.*

## William Sansom Vaux Mineralogist ♦ Philanthropist

William Sansom Vaux was born in Philadelphia on May 19, 1811. His father, George Vaux, was a member of the Philadelphia Bar. Both parents were members of the Society of Friends. William's grandfather was William Sansom, a prominent Philadelphia builder and merchant in the East India trade.

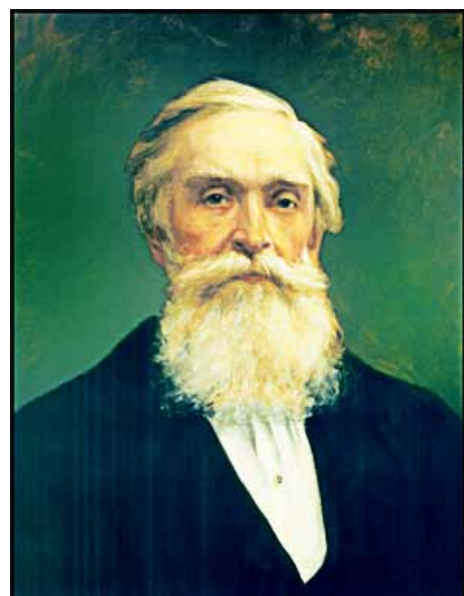
As a boy, William acquired a strong taste for mineralogy, and he devoted much time and energy to collecting the finest specimens and to the study of geology and archaeology throughout his life. His uncle, Joseph Sansom, had assembled one of the first mineral collections in America (later given to Haverford College).

Financially well off, he listed his occupation as "Gentleman," and never engaged in any trade or profession. Vaux was elected to Philadelphia's Academy of Natural Sciences in March 1834. During his lifetime he gave generously to the

Academy's library and museum, especially in the branches of mineralogy and ethnology. He was one of the curators from 1838, treasurer from 1840, and a vice-president continuously from 1860.

Also a member of the Philadelphia Academy of Sciences at the time was John Kirk Townsend (See the *Quail*, October, 2012) and he and William Vaux became good friends. One of the birds Townsend discovered on his travels in the west he named for Vaux—Vaux's Swift.

Vaux began collecting minerals when he was about nine or ten, and he built the finest collection of minerals ever assembled up to that time in the United States. He also influenced his nephew, George Vaux, Jr., to collect minerals. He was one of the founders of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia. Vaux was a founding member of the American Association for the Advancement of Sci-



*William Sansom Vaux*

ence, and treasurer from 1871 until his death in 1882.

His wife and only son had predeceased him so that William Vaux was left without any direct descendants. His nephew carried on his name as William S. Vaux, Jr. William Vaux, Jr. became well known for

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# Mount Diablo Audubon Society

## 2014-2015 Field Trip Schedule

By Hugh Harvey

### September

4	Thursday	Jewel Lake	MS
13	Saturday	Antioch Dunes	HH
20	Saturday	Rio Lindo Academy, Healdsburg	HH
27	Saturday	Outer Point Reyes	DH

### October

4	Saturday	Hawk Hill	FS
7	Tuesday	Hayward Shoreline/Winton Avenue	BR
11-12	Saturday/Sunday	Monterey Pelagic and Land Birds	TC
22	Wednesday	Berkeley-Emeryville Shoreline	EL
25	Saturday	Abbott's Lagoon	DH

### November

18	Tuesday	McNabney Marsh/Mountain View Sanitary	ST
22	Saturday	Charleston Slough/South Bay	EL
29	Saturday	Limantour	MS

### December

6-7	Saturday/Sunday	Sacramento Refuges	TC
11	Thursday	Niles Area	JE
17	Wednesday	Christmas Count/East Contra Costa	JE/MS
20	Saturday	Christmas Count/Central Contra Costa	JE/MS
27	Saturday	Solano County Raptors	GF

### January

3	Saturday	Putah Creek	FS
10	Saturday	Panoche Valley	DH
20	Tuesday	Lake Merritt/Arrowhead Marsh—High Tide	SR
31	Saturday	Las Gallinas/Rush Creek/Shollenberger Park	EL

### February

7	Saturday	Thornton Area/Cosumnes Preserve	EC
12	Thursday	Grizzly Island	MS
14-15	Saturday/Sunday	Los Banos/Panoche Valley	DH
25	Wednesday	Sunol Regional Park	EL

### March

4	Wednesday	Walnut Creek Parks	HH
11	Wednesday	Contra Loma Reservoir	PS
17	Tuesday	Mountain View Sanitary/McNabney Marsh	ST
19	Thursday	Valle Vista	DL
21	Saturday	Tomales Bay State Park	MS
25	Wednesday	Lake Lagunitas	HH

### April

4	Saturday	Garin Regional Park	FS
8	Wednesday	Orinda Connector Trail	DL
11	Saturday	Pine Canyon	NW
16	Thursday	North Briones	MS
18	Saturday	Mines Road	HH
23	Thursday	Black Diamond Mines	PS
28	Tuesday	Del Puerto Canyon	DH
30	Thursday	Mitchell Canyon	MS

### May

2	Saturday	East Contra Costa County	GF
6	Wednesday	Mount Diablo State Park	JE
14	Thursday	West Briones Regional Park	BB
19	Tuesday	No Child Left Inside	PS
21	Thursday	No Child Left Inside	PS

### June

6	Saturday	Outer Point Reyes	DH
TBD	Sat/Sun	Yuba Pass/Sierra Valley	HH

### July

TBD	Sat/Sun	Mount Lassen	EL
18	Saturday	San Mateo Coast	BB

### August

15	Saturday	Bodega Bay	FS
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## Come Birding With Us!

Field trips are open to members and non-members, beginners and advanced birders, but not dogs. Weather or other contingencies may require changes. For updates, visit the MDAS website at [www.diabloaudubon.com/index.php](http://www.diabloaudubon.com/index.php). Phone area codes are 925 unless specified otherwise. Because most trips do not return until late afternoon, bring a lunch and drink and join us during our midday break.

Category ①: Easy, little or no walking, smooth paths

Category ②: Moderate, one mile +, possibly rough terrain

Category ③: Difficult, extensive walking on rough terrain.

Our Mount Diablo Audubon Chapter is a conservation organization. As such, we encourage members to consider meeting at the carpool point to pick up or ride with others. It is important that given the cost of gasoline, those who ride with others offer to pay some of this cost. Don't forget about any bridge tolls or park entry fees on some of our longer trips.

## Field Trip Leaders

(Area code 925 unless specified)

Hugh B. Harvey, Chair	935-2979
Beth Branthaver	944-1856
Ethan (Chick) Chickering	686-9231
Terry Colborn	503-312-9947
Jimm Edgar	510-658-2330
Gary Fregien	916-708-0636
David Hutton	938-4485
Don Lewis	284-5480
Eugenia Larson	806-0644
Bob Richmond	510-427-9843
Sandy Ritchie	685-8048
Fred Safier	937-2906
Paul Schorr	757-5107
Maury Stern	284-5980
Steve Taylor	828-8810
Nancy Wenninger	938-7987