



the Quail

Mount Diablo Audubon Society

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

www.diabloaudubon.com/index.php

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April 2015

Bird Carving ✦ Jim Burcio

On April 2, we will be privileged to hear a unique story of an original American art form—decoy carving and its outgrowth into competitive sculpturing of all manner of birds. The oldest known decoys anywhere were discovered in a cave in Nevada in 1924. Learn the relationship between these decoys—made 2000 years ago by the ancestors of the Paiute Indians—and bats.

Then learn about the modern concepts of bird carving from award-winning carver Jim Burcio. Wood bird carving is a relaxing and challenging art medium that transforms a ‘wonder of nature’ into a collectable wood sculpture. Bird carvers have a passion for the perfection of their carvings and are showcased annually worldwide at numerous wood carving shows and exhibitions. Songbirds, water fowl, game birds and birds of prey are all carved to the minutest detail. Using specialty woods, carvings evolve through multiple stages taking weeks to several months to complete.

But carving birds is also an expression of one's appreciation of nature, and master carvers are to be applauded for the exquisite wood sculptures that decorate and delight.

Jim Burcio will tell us about the different types of competition entries, as well as some of the intricacies of technique, such as how the eyes are modeled to appear realistically, and how fine detail of feathering is achieved. He will display some of his competitive entries from recent West Coast shows.

Jim Burcio graduated from Humboldt State College with a degree in Wildlife Management and Biology. He recently retired as the Director of the Educational Leadership Program at St. Mary's College in Moraga. Jim has carved wildfowl for 40 years, competed nationally, judged at Ward World Competition and the three major carving shows on the west coast. He has been the featured carver at the Academy of Arts and Sciences in San Francisco, the Lynn House Museum in Antioch, and has displayed his work in the McHenry Museum in Modesto. For the past twenty years, Jim has annually taught carving seminars for the Pacific Flyway Decoy Association.

Jim has served as a judge for the California Junior Duck



Semipalmated Plover by Jim Burcio. Columbia Flyway Wildlife Show

Stamp Competition, the California Waterfowl Association's Heritage Stamp Competition, and has written several articles on carving and painting decoys for the California Waterfowl Magazine. He has been involved in the leadership of the Pacific Flyway Decoy Association since 1983, and he is currently Vice President for Membership of that organization.

In 2010 his carvings were displayed at the Anthropology Museum at the University of California Chico, the Sacramento International Airport, and permanently displayed at the Bidwell Park Visitor's Center in Chico. In 2010 and 2012 he was selected by the Ward Foundation in Salisbury, Maryland to be an instructor in their National Endowment for the Arts Grant.

Perhaps Jim's talk will intrigue you to have fun with a new and satisfying expression of your talents.

BIRDING INFORMATION

Join Jenny Papka of Native Bird Connections for a special presentation of a live, rare, mystery bird. Native Bird Connections works with live birds who cannot be released back into the wild to share educational messages with groups of all ages. You will not want to miss this!

Meeting Schedule

The next general meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be **Thursday, April 2**, 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: Jim Burcio

*Please remember to bring a cup.

Thursday, May 7: Juan-Carlos Solis
Birds of Baja and the Sea of Cortez

DEDICATED TO HABITAT CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

President's Corner

By Jimm Edgar

I have been out the loop with our Mount Diablo Audubon chapter for about a month. I actually spent a short time in the hospital and then I was traveling some in February. I received a lot of get well cards from members and friends and wish to thank all of you who sent a card. It meant a lot to me. Our MDAS board and officers stepped in and handled all of the chapter duties like nothing had happened. We really have a lot of people who make this chapter great.

Speaking of chapter duties, our annual chapter elections will be coming up in May. Brian Murphy and Hugh Harvey will be our nominating committee. If you would like to run for an office or be a part of the board let them know. Their contact info is in the Quail. We vote at the May meeting on next year's officers.

I read a fascinating article in the New York Times. Sunday, February 15, 2015. The article was entitled "Leaving Only Footsteps? Think Again." It was a somewhat

disturbing article in that it suggested, with some pretty good backup, that even our nature-enjoying hikes and walks can have a negative effect on wild animals. We think of mining companies and strip mines and timber cutting as the culprits, but more and more studies show wildlife is affected in subtle ways. A study around Boulder, Colorado found that several species of songbirds were at their lowest numbers near trails. Reductions in nesting was noted also. More and more of wild nature is being impacted by people. The challenge, says the article, "is to find a balance between enjoying nature and protecting it." It just gives us more to think about as we do get out and enjoy the nature around us.

Our conservation committee continues to work on a number of local issues. The new phenology study that is studying local bird populations has over 20 of our chapter members involved. Programs are always really interesting. All in all, MDAS is having a great year. I hope you will get in a field trip and attend a general meeting.



Ruby-crowned Kinglet.
Sketch by Meg Sandri.

There have been recent reports of diseased Band-tailed Pigeons in Orinda, Lafayette, and in the South Bay.

Trichomonas, the parasite afflicting Band-tailed Pigeons, can be passed to other birds at feeders and baths. All other birds are susceptible to it. So it's a good idea to close feeders and baths if you have band-tails in your area.

To clean feeders and baths, wash with soap and water, then soak in a 1:32 bleach solution for at least 10 minutes; rinse well and let air dry.

Report any cases of mortality to www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Laboratories/Wildlife-Investigations/Monitoring/Mortality-Report.

Board Position Open

Applications are now being accepted for the position of Editor of the Quail. The following is adapted from the *National Audubon Society Chapter Newsletter Committee Guide*. "The newsletter staff collects, writes, and edits the news, designs the newsletter, and arranges to have it printed, addressed, mailed, and posted to the chapter web site, for ten issues per year. The newsletter editor is the chair of the newsletter staff and is a member of the chapter's Board of Directors."

For the last eleven years, the *Quail* has been produced using *Adobe InDesign* software on a *Mac* computer, working from a template of the previous month's issue. The file is then sent to the printer for both printing and addressing. The mailing list is prepared by our Membership Chair. The finished job is then delivered to the Bulk Mail Division of the Concord Post Office.

No prior experience is necessary, as only basic computer skills are needed, along with a willingness to learn. Most of the content is supplied by regular, dependable contributors, such as the field trip summaries and trip reports, and the Observations and other regular columns.

Any questions? Call the current editor, Ellis Myers, at (925) 284-4103.

Welcome New Members

Carol Arnold	Hercules
Virginia Burns	Antioch
Jim Burcio	Antioch
Juan-Carlos Solis	Concord
Raymond Westphal	El Sobrante

Good News for Waterbirds

Mt. View Sanitary District will be deploying additional nesting rafts in McNabney Marsh to help reduce the number of ground nests lost to flooding this season. One large raft (8' x 20'), one medium raft (8' x 10') and two small rafts (4' x 10') with various substrates to attract waterfowl and shorebirds have been constructed. Donations for funding this project are being sought and Plains Products Terminals graciously donated \$2,800 for one medium sized raft.

The rafts were built by about 12 volunteers from the Department of Fish and Wildlife Natural Resource Volunteers program. The volunteers did a great job!

It had been hoped to build and deploy twice as many rafts this year, but without additional funding that has not been possible. Hopefully, the nesting raft fleet can be increased in 2016!

Q These birds can damage or kill trees they nest in, as well as smaller trees, shrubs, and other plants underneath nests. They do this by pooping on the branches. Since many birds nest together, the poop adds up quickly and harms the plants.

Unscramble these letters, or turn to Page 8 to learn more.

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Observations

By Maury Stern

The month continues with many sightings of the **Black-and-White Warbler** and **Tropical Kingbird** at Heather Farm Pond and surrounding area. The larger than normal numbers of **Varied Thrushes**, **Lewis's Woodpeckers**, **Pine Siskins** and **Band-tailed Pigeons** continued.

Many people saw from 3 to 39 **Brant** at the Ferry Point area and Miller-Knox RP from 2/10 to 3/9. RS, T4BGroup, GC, FS, LK, EP, RM, BP, PG, BF.

Two or three **Eurasian Wigeon** were at Miller-Knox for the month. T4B, RC, FS, LK, EP, RM.

AL saw a **Long-tailed Duck** at Miller-Knox 2/11.

Hooded Mergansers were scattered through the area. Miller-Knox with three, one at Waterfront Road near Pacheco Creek GC, and two pair in Grayson Creek 3/8 near Wild Birds Unlimited in Pleasant Hill. IA.

C&TW saw a **White-faced Ibis** in the Delta Waterways 2/22.

A **Ferruginous Hawk** was at Jersey Island 2/22. LK, EP, RM.

Golden Eagles were at Contra Loma RP 2/18, P&NS; Upper San Leandro Reservoir 2/22, SL[and San Pablo Reservoir 3/4, PY.

A **Pacific Golden Plover** was reported at Point Isabel 2/13 by DG.

JM saw a **Glaucous Gull** at Point Richmond 2/24.

An early **Caspian Tern** was at Brooks Island 2/15. GC.

A **Common Murre** was along the Bay Trail in Richmond 2/10. ES.

LK saw and heard a **Northern Pygmy Owl** near Pinehurst Blvd. in Canyon. 3/7.

A **Long-eared Owl** was in the same location 2/15. CS.

P&NS had the first-of-season **Rufous Hummingbird** 3/10 at their Antioch yard.



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

Allen's Hummingbirds were seen 2/16 at Point Pinole, SD; and in Moraga by JC. MS had one at his Lafayette home 3/7.

A **Merlin** was near her Richmond home 2/16, SD; at Contra Loma park 2/18, P&NS; and at Waterbird Park in Martinez and Jersey Island 2/22. LK, EP, RM.

A **Peregrine Falcon** was at Point Pinole 2/16, SD; and Waterbird Park 2/22. LK, EP, RM.

Lewis's Woodpeckers were at Fernandez Ranch 2/13. ST. P&NS saw eight 3/2 at the North entrance to Los Vaqueros Reservoir.

DS saw a juvenile **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at his parent's home in Lafayette on 2/23 and 3/2.

A **Red-naped Sapsucker** was at Sibley Volcanic park 2/18. MK.

A **Yellow-shafted Northern Flicker** was at Bayfront Park 2/10. AL

Tree Swallows, **Violet-green Swallows**, and **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were at Heather Farm pond 2/12.

A **Cliff Swallow** was at Dow Wetland Preserve 3/5. AL

Barn Swallows were seen at the Ironhouse Sanitary District 2/22. LK, EP, RM.

EM had a **Varied Thrush** as a seldom-seen yard bird 3/10.

Five singing **California Thrashers** were at Upper San Leandro Reservoir 2/22. SL; three were singing at Vollmer Peak 2/24. G?

A singing **Orange-crowned Warbler** was heard and recorded by DW on 2/16 at Diablo Foothills RP. By 3/6, they were all over at Tilden Nature Area. AK.

DP, JS, and PY saw a **Palm Warbler** at the Bay Trail near 51st in Richmond 2/22.

A singing **Wilson's Warbler** was at the Tilden Nature Area 3/6. AK.

A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was at the Diablo Foothills 2/16. DW.

AL saw a San Pablo Saltmarsh sub-species of **Song Sparrow** at Bay Front Park 2/10.

JH and KGH identified a **Swamp Sparrow** at Heather Farm pond 2/9.

Three **White-throated Sparrows** have continued at JR's Alamo home.

A Cassiar race of **Dark-eyed Junco** was at Dave Brubeck Park 2/18. AL.

The first **Great-tailed Grackle** was at Heather Farm Pond 2/27. TF.

AL saw the **Pin-tailed Whydah** at Dave Brubeck Park 2/18. This is probably the one there last fall.

IA Isaac Aronow, T4B Tuesday for the birds group, JC Jim Chiropoulos, GC Graham Chisholm, JC Judi Cooper, SD Sheila Dickie, TF Tracy Farrington, BF Becky Flanagan, G? Greg ?, PG Pat Gordon, DG Denny Granstand, HH Hugh Harvey, JH John Henrickson, KGH Kathe Gorla-Henrickson, LK Logan Kahle, AK Alan Kaplan, MK Michael Karpinko, AL Albert Linkowski, SL Steve Lombardi, JM Jeff Miller, RM Roger Muskat, EM Ellis Myers, DP Donald Pendleton, BP Ben Pettersson, EP Eric Pilotte, JR Jean Richmond, FS Fred Safer, RS Rusty Scalf, DS Daniel Scali, P&NS Paul and Nancy Schorr, CS Catherine Spaulding, ES Elaine Stamman, JS John Sterling, MS Maury Stern, ST Steve Taylor, DW Denise Wight, C&TW Chris and Teri Wills, PY Pam Young

Heron Days



Heron Days, sponsored by Redbud Audubon Society, will take place on May 2 and 3 with pontoon boat rides on Clear Lake leaving from Lakeside County Park near Kelseyville on Saturday, and from Redbud Park in the City of Clearlake on Sunday. Boat rides last an hour and a half and tickets are \$25 per person. Redbud Audubon guides are on each boat.

The event will feature only pontoon boat rides; no craft or informational booths. Viewers are likely to see nesting Great Blue Herons along with a variety of other waterfowl and songbirds, including Western and Clark's Grebes.

Go to www.redbudaudubon.org for information and registration for boat rides.

[Editor's note: This is an exceptional opportunity and one that we have enjoyed.]

Field Trip Schedule

By Hugh Harvey

April

- 4 Saturday Garin Regional Park
- 8 Wednesday Orinda Connector Trail
- 11 Saturday Pine Canyon
- 16 Thursday North Briones
- 18 Saturday Mines Road
- 23 Thursday Black Diamond Mines
- 28 Tuesday Del Puerto Canyon
- 30 Thursday Mitchell Canyon

May

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

③ Saturday, April 4 Garin Regional Park

Leader: Fred Safier, (925) 937-2906

Carpool leaves 7:15 AM from Sycamore Valley Road Park and Ride. Meet in parking lot at the end of Garin Road at 8:00 AM. Take I-680 south and I-580 west. Take Castro Valley exit and continue west. Turn left onto Crow Canyon Road and go under the freeway. Crow Canyon Road becomes Grove Way and then A Street. At A Street and Mission Blvd. turn left; stay left to continue south on Mission Blvd., which becomes SR 238. Go south about 3 miles to Garin Road, turn left, and follow up the hill to its end. Spring migrants will be our goal. Lunch in the park after.

② Wednesday, April 8 Orinda Connector Trail

Leader: Don Lewis, (925) 284-5480.

Meet at 8 AM the northeast corner of Camino Pablo and Bear Creek Road, Orinda. Exit at Orinda from SR 24, turn north on Camino Pablo and drive just over two miles to the intersection. We will walk towards the base of Briones Dam looking for spring birds. We will be finished by noon.

③ Saturday, April 11 Pine Canyon

Leader: Nancy Wenninger, (925) 938-7987.

Meet in parking lot at end of Castle Rock Road at 8 AM. Turn south on Walnut Avenue from the intersection with Ygnacio Valley Road in Walnut Creek. At the traffic circle, turn right and continue on Castle Rock Road past the high school to the end, which is the parking lot for Castle Rock Recreation Area and Diablo Foothills Regional Park. We will hike into Pine Canyon at least as far as the Castle Rocks. The trail crosses Pine Creek several times. Be prepared to carry lunch and liquids. Spring migrants and Peregrine Falcons.

③ Thursday, April 16 North Briones

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

Meet 8 AM in the parking area at the north entrance of Briones Regional Park. Take Briones Road off Alhambra Valley Road and drive up this narrow winding road, park at the end. Wildflowers, spring birds and poison oak are along shaded trails. A continuation through grasslands to Sindicich Lagoons makes this walk about 3 miles round trip. Bring liquids.

① Saturday, April 18 Mines Road

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

Because of limited parking along Mines Road, carpooling is essential. This is an all-day trip and often hot! Bring lunch and liquids. Wild Turkey, Lewis's Woodpecker and Lawrence's Goldfinch and many spring migrants are possible, plus great spring wildflowers. Entry fee required for Del Valle Regional Park. Call the leader for meeting time and location.

① Thursday, April 23 Black Diamond Mines

Leader: Paul Schorr, 925 757-5107.

Carpool leaves Sun Valley at 7:30 AM. Or meet the leader at 8 AM at the parking lot at the end of Somersville Road. Go east on Ygnacio Valley/Kirker Pass Roads; in Pittsburg turn right on Buchanan Road. Go east on Buchanan to Somersville Road (Antioch) and turn right. Alternate route, exit Highway 4 at Somersville Road (south). Follow Somersville to the entry gate, entry fee required, proceed to the last parking lot. Woodland, chaparral and some grassland birds. Bring lunch and a beverage.



California Poppies.
Paul Schorr photo.

① Tuesday, April 28 Del Puerto Canyon

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

Carpool leaves at 7:30 AM from Sycamore Valley Road Park and Ride. Meet on Del Puerto Canyon Road west of I-5 at 9 AM at Patterson Exit (Diablo Grande Parkway and Sperry Road) off I-5 (56 miles from Sycamore Valley Road). Take I-580 east to I-5 south. We will stop at the Westley Rest Area, as there are no facilities on trip until our lunch stop. Canyon Wren, Costa's Hummingbird, Greater Roadrunner and other goodies. Usually very warm! Bring lunch and drinks.

Trip Reports

Los Banos/Panoche Valley, February 14-15. Springtime temperatures, sun screen, shorts, mosquitoes, Goldfields, Fiddleneck, Blue Dicks, all over the Valentine's weekend? Yes, these and more were found by 16 participants on our mid-February trip to Santa Fe Grade Road, Merced NWR, Little Panoche Road, Mercey Hot Springs and Panoche Valley. Despite the spring-like weather, the ducks were plentiful, raptors were common enough, and geese and cranes gathered by the thousands in our great Central Valley. It was only in the Panoche Hills and Valley that raptors seemed scarce, perhaps because the grass was so green and the flowers so bright. Highlights were 17 species of waterfowl including, Ross's Goose, Snow Goose, Blue Goose and Tundra Swan; White-faced Ibis and Cattle Egrets; ten raptor species including all four of our falcons, plus Ferruginous Hawk; a Cooper's Hawk at a nest; Lesser Sandhill Cranes; Great Horned Owl on a nest; Burrowing and Long-eared Owls; two Cassin's Kingbirds; Horned Larks; Tree and Cliff Swallows; Marsh Wrens everywhere we had water, which despite the drought seemed plentiful; American Pipit city high in the hills, Mountain Bluebirds higher still; Lark Sparrows; Tricolored Blackbirds; and Lawrence's Goldfinches. Altogether we identified 103 species over the two days . *Beth Branthaver*



Long-eared Owl. Beth Branthaver photo..

Sunol, February 25. Fifteen members had a delightful day walking in Sunol Wilderness Regional Park on Wednesday, February 25th. Highlights were a pair of female Hooded Mergansers floating in the creek, two pairs of Varied Thrush, several Hermit Thrushes, a few Western Bluebirds, Tree Swallows flying over the hills above the creek, a small flock of Wild Turkeys near the first parking lot, two Red-breasted Sapsuckers, the usual large numbers of very vocal Acorn Woodpeckers, several very bright yellow singing Orange-crowned Warblers, and at least three Rufous-crowned Sparrows singing on the hillside above the paved road leading to Little Yosemite. Missed were the usual flock of Band-tailed Pigeons flying about and the Wood Ducks in the creek below the bridge before the entrance. It was wonderful to see the hills so green after the latest rain and the creek holding much more water than in the previous two years. A total of 38 species were seen.

Eugenia K. Larson

Walnut Creek Parks, March 4. Twenty-six members and guests walked Heather Farm Park, and at least half visited part of Borges Ranch, enjoying the beautiful weather and the birds we could find. While many of the expected species were not found, among the 49 species we did see were: over 20 Ring-necked Ducks and one Lesser Scaup, a wonderful Red-shouldered Hawk and paired Red-tailed Hawks, one person had White-throated Swifts, a distant Say's Phoebe, singing Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Western Bluebirds, and Fox, Song, White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows at one corner in Heather Farm. A special highlight was seeing the Quail gully at Borges Ranch with signs marking it as Bob Wisecarver Quail Habitat Restoration Area. On top of a post holding one of the signs was a male California Quail. *Hugh Harvey*



California Quail. Beth Branthaver photo..

Saturday/Sunday, May 30-31

Yuba Pass

Leaders: Rosita and Hugh Harvey, (925) 935-2979.

This is always a productive and well-favored weekend trip to the northern Sierra which requires driving and walking, some of it over rough terrain. Saturday we will bird in the Sierra Valley for basin birds. Sunday we will be birding in the Yuba Pass area for mountain birds. Meet at the parking lot at the top of the pass at 7:00 AM Saturday morning. Make motel reservations now! Closest motels are in Sierra City, 11 miles down Highway 49 to the west. Herrington's Sierra Pines (530) 862-1151 or (800) 682-9848 is one of the most popular; or try Yuba River Inn (530) 862-1122 with cabins and kitchenettes (cash or check only). Bassett's Station (530) 862-1297 at Highway 49 and Gold Lake Road has some accommodations and meals, High Country Inn (530) 862-1530 or (800) 862-1530 is across Hwy. 49 from Bassett's. Also, in Calpine is Sierra Valley Lodge (530) 994-3367 or (800) 858-0322. More listings are at www.sierracity.com/Stay/LodgingCamp.html. Campgrounds are located at Yuba Pass and Chapman Creek downhill to the west. Sites are available first come/first serve for only three days at a time. Longer term reservations can be made at (877) 444-6777, but there is an additional \$10 charge for this service. After May 27 call Wild Birds Unlimited (925) 798-0303 for information.

SPEAKING OF CONSERVATION

Tesla Needs Preserving

By Nancy Wenninger



One of my favorite birding trips this time of year is the Mines Road/Del Puerto Canyon loop. Besides interesting possibilities for bird sightings, I always enjoy the diversity of habitats and beautiful landscapes. I have the sense that I have stepped back in time and am far away from the bustling Bay Area.

Southeastern Alameda County is a hidden gem; it has for the most part avoided the pressures of urban development. However, one special area around the historic town of Tesla is facing serious pressure from a different type of development: off-highway motor vehicle recreation.

In the late 1990s, California State Parks purchased about 3,400 acres along Tesla-Corral Hollow Road to expand the existing adjacent 1,600-acre Carnegie State Vehicular Recreation Area. Unfortunately, the purchase was made without any prior study to determine whether such a use would be compatible with Tesla's cultural and natural resources.

As it turns out, the Tesla land is in many ways a mirror image of Black Diamond Mines Regional Park. It has interesting cultural history; resources include Native American grinding rocks and rare prehistoric rock carvings. It was a key route used during the Spanish and Gold Rush eras to travel from the Central Valley to San Francisco Bay; Grizzly Adams lived and

hunted there in the 1800s. In the 1890s a large-scale commercial coal-mining operation was built, and the company town of Tesla flourished for two decades. Clay and sand were also extracted from Tesla mines, much like Black Diamond mines in Contra Costa County.

Tesla is also rich in natural resources. The area is a mosaic of blue-oak woodland, mountain savannah grassland, scrub sage and riparian woodlands, with scenic ridge tops and dramatic canyons. Corral Hollow Creek drains into the San Joaquin River system. The land supports a wide range of sensitive wildlife and plant species, many of which are threatened, rare and endangered, such as California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, California tiger salamander, Western spadefoot toad and tule elk. The level of biological diversity is unique, with 50 listed species documented on site and over 80 more listed species expected based on known habitats and sightings on adjacent land.

Since 2000, the State Parks Department Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHVR) Division has tried twice to get an Environmental Impact Report approved for the expansion. They have been unsuccessful, due in large part to the extraordinarily negative impacts their existing park is having on water quality and wildlife. The OHVR Division is hoping the third time is

Night Migration

By Mike Eliot



Bird migration is a spectacular global phenomenon watched for centuries, even mentioned in the writings of Aristotle. But it wasn't until the 20th century that ornithologists realized most migration occurred at night.

Over the last century, technological advances in radar, acoustic, electronic, and optical devices have allowed night exploration of bird migration. On certain nights hundreds of millions of birds migrate across North America. Birds generally take off 30-45 minutes after sunset and may fly all night. Some birds continue in migration nonstop for 60-100 hours that span oceans and continents! Altitude varies by species and by local conditions, ranging from just a few feet to several miles above the ground.

Most of the information gathered on night migration has been limited to a handful of large species wearing tracking devices. But other sources of data provide partial information, including a large network of volunteer bird watchers (eBird), flight calls of migrating birds captured by acoustic monitoring stations, and clouds of migrating birds detected at night by radar.

Launched in 2002 by the Cornell Lab and National Audubon, eBird provides basic information on bird abundance and distribution. eBird's goal is to make available vast

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a charm when they release their draft EIR for public comment later this year.

MDAS has joined with other environmental organizations as a Friend of Tesla, in support of an alternative plan to use the land for low-impact recreation. OHMV users have been very vocal in support of the expansions, but we believe Tesla is too fragile and important to open to dirt bikes and ATVs. For more information, including maps and photos of the area, please go to www.teslapark.org.



Cock of the Plains (Sage Grouse)
From William Clark's journal.



Clarkia, Contra Costa County,
Photo courtesy of Michael Marchiano.

"I met with a singular plant today in blume of which I preserved a specimine; it grows on the steep sides of the fertile hills near this place."

Meriwether Lewis, on the discovery of Clarkia, near Kamiah, Idaho, June 1, 1806.



Cape Disappointment photo by Ellis Myers

"Men appear much satisfied with their trip, beholding with astonishment the high waves dashing against the rocks of this emence Ocean ... this Cape is an elevated Circlier point Covered with thick timber on the iner Side and open grassey exposur next to the Sea and rises with a Steep assent to the hight of about 150 or 160 feet above the leavel of the water"

William Clark, November 18, 1805, on sighting of the Pacific.

tally, Meriwether Lewis, too, was skilled in creative spelling. Clark also made many sketches of the mammals, fish and birds.

On November 18, 1805, after more than a year and a half, the Expedition reached the Pacific Ocean at Cape Disappointment, just north of the mouth of the Columbia River.

Eagerly the men scanned the gray, rolling waves of the ocean for the masts of a ship that could carry them home. Eventually, though, they resigned themselves to spending the winter on the coast.

Lewis and Clark decided to make camp south of the Columbia. They cleared a site of trees and brush and built Fort Clatsop, named after the local Clatsop Indians. During their 106 winter days at Fort Clatsop (six of them sunny) the Expedition first described these birds: Greater White-fronted Goose, Pacific Loon, Western Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Northwestern Crow, and Winter Wren.

Upon the return of the Expedition to the east, President Thomas Jefferson appointed Clark brigadier general of the militia and superintendent of Indian Affairs for Louisiana Territory. Clark spent his later years serving in various political offices—including Governor of Missouri Territory—and speculating in fur trade enterprises.

In January of 1808, 38-year-old Clark married 16-year-old Julia Hancock, with whom he had five children. St. Louis became his home, and there he held several political offices at the same time and was involved in the fur trade and real estate. In 1813, he was appointed the first governor of the newly created Missouri Territory, and was reappointed three times, until Missouri achieved statehood in 1821. Julia Hancock Clark died in 1821, and soon afterward Clark married Harriet Kennerly Radford, a widow who was also Julia's cousin. His

most important post-expedition service was in his long tenure as Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the West. He died of natural causes on September 1, 1838 at the age of 69 after a brief illness, in the home of his son Meriwether Lewis Clark in St. Louis.

The "Corps of Volunteers for North Western Discovery," (later shortened to Corps of Discovery) provided the first documentation of 122 species of animals, birds and fish.



Night Migration

» Continued from Page 6

numbers of bird observations made each year by bird watchers. It is amassing one of the largest and fastest growing biodiversity data resources in existence, with more than 100 million observations recorded so far.

Flight calls are simple, single-syllable vocalizations (usually less than one quarter of a second in duration) produced by birds during nocturnal migration. These calls are species specific, and they differ from their other calls

and songs. Monitoring of flight calls is the only reliable method for identifying the species composition of nocturnal migration while it is occurring, providing information on species-specific migration patterns for comparison with radar and eBird data.

Ornithologists have also increased the use of radar for understanding bird migration. Presently an operational network of over 140 weather surveillance radars provides coverage of the atmosphere above the continental U.S. This radar network is also

used to watch and to track the movements of birds. Radar is an excellent tool for determining where flights are occurring, how many birds are aloft, and in what direction and speed they are moving. This technology, in conjunction with acoustic and eBird data, provides accurate movements of particular bird species both continentally and regionally.

Anyone can view the data on eBird and can even contribute to it at <http://ebird.org/content/ebird/>

Join Us on John Muir's Birthday-

Mount Diablo Audubon joins over 50 other exhibitors at the Earth Day/John Muir Birthday event on Saturday, April 18, presented at the John Muir National Historic site, 4202 Alhambra Ave., Martinez, from 10 AM to 4 PM, rain or shine. Entry and parking are free, with shuttles provided to and from the celebration from Alhambra High School (150 E St.) and Martinez Adult Education center (650 F St.).

There will be demonstrations and hands-on activities for all ages, live music, and food available for purchase,

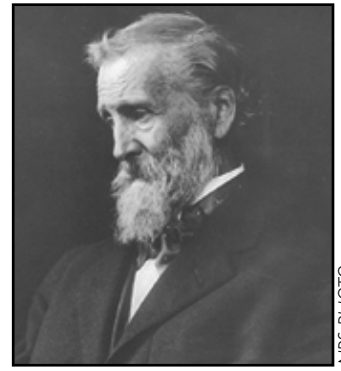
The Earth Day/Birthday event is a festive mix of celebration, awareness, preservation, and education on the importance of preserving our natural world. It's one thing you can do to celebrate Earth Day and John Muir's Birthday.

For more information on the Earth Day/John Muir Birthday celebration, call the John Muir National Historic Site (925) 228-8860 or see the John Muir Association web site, <http://johnmuirassociation.org/>.

Muir was born on April 21, 1838 in Dunbar, Scotland. As part of his birthday cele-

bration, the Martinez Museum at 1005 Escobar Street will be displaying historic photos of Dunbar, Scotland, Martinez'

sister city. See the Martinez Museum website, www.martinezhistory.org, for more information.



NPS PHOTO

Double-crested Cormorant ♦ *Phalacrocorax auritus*

a Cormorants—the name comes from the Latin *Corvus marinus*, or sea raven—have been looked on with disfavor since biblical days. In Leviticus, it says: “These are the birds you are to regard as unclean and not eat because they are unclean: the eagle, the vulture, the black vulture, the red kite, any kind of black kite, any kind of raven, the horned owl, the screech owl, the gull, any kind of hawk, the little owl, the cormorant, the great owl, the white owl, the desert owl, the osprey, the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe and the bat.”

Double-crested Cormorants, of which there are several sub-species, are found only in North America. In the breeding season, adults develop a small double crest of black or white feathers.

Very recently, Double-crested Cormorants have caught the ire of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, who will begin to shoot up to 16,000 of these federally protected birds as they sleep on their nests at night. And they will destroy up to 26,000 nests by covering the eggs with oil.

Why?

Because cormorants do what comes naturally—they eat fish!

This will take place on East Sand Island, at the mouth of the Columbia River in Oregon. According to the Corps of Engineers: “the Corps is proposing to reduce the Double-crested Cormorant colony size from current levels (approximately 13,000 breeding pairs) to approximately 5,600 breeding pairs on East Sand Island. To accomplish this, the Corps is proposing to implement



Double-crested Cormorants. Photo by Ellis Myers.

a management plan that includes shooting individual Double-crested Cormorants and oiling eggs in nests, along with hazing and integrated non-lethal methods to reduce the colony size over a period of 4 years. Shooting is proposed on East Sand Island and over water from boats. Annual regional monitoring would occur to assess the impacts of the proposed action to the western population of Double-crested Cormorants. Information gained from this monitoring would be used to adjust future actions through an adaptive management strategy.”

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission claims that it's hard enough for the fish to make it through a network of dams on the river without being eaten by a

large number of cormorants at the river's mouth.

Portland Audubon is waging war against this nonsense, but it is likely too late, as the “management program” was slated to begin in late March.

Meanwhile, reports are that the 2015 salmon run on the Columbia is greater than at any time since Bonneville dam was built in the 1930s! [www.opb.org/news/article/best-chinook-run-since-the-1930s-expected-on-the-columbia/]

And once the cormorants have been slaughtered, it may well be that the Corps will train their shotguns on the 7600 pairs of Caspian Terns on East Sand Island—who also enjoy eating young salmon.

Tern Decoys Help Shorebirds

The protection of the Least Tern and its nesting habitat on the Mississippi Gulf Coast has been nationally recognized as a model conservation effort. Although heavily impacted by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill, this site has been designated as a Globally Important Bird Area because there are more Least Terns nesting on the beaches of Harrison County than any other site in the world.

Until twenty years ago, the main nesting colony in Gulfport has annually supported from 2,000 to more than 3,000 pairs. However, their numbers are rapidly diminishing because of increased public use and erosion of the nesting beaches. In the mid-1970s, three designated nesting areas were established on the beaches in Harrison County to provide suitable nesting habitat for the terns. Once the terns have started nesting they are protected by law and cannot be disturbed.



Tern decoys on the Mississippi Gulf Coast

Along the Mississippi Gulf Coast from Gulfport to Biloxi there are 27 miles of man-made beach—ideal habitat for Least Terns and Black Skimmers. The local Audubon chapter and Audubon Mississippi led the county to set aside a half-mile strip of beach for Least Tern colonization. To lure the birds to this location, staff at the Pascagoula River Audubon Center produced inexpensive decoys. Thirty-eight decoys were cut, sanded, and primed by Audubon staff, painted by Gulfport High School art students, and deployed within the “official” designated Least Tern area. At the beginning of the project, there were only a few adult terns in the area; by the end there were more than 700 adult terns nesting, and numerous chicks present.



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.

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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.

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

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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 _____

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MOUNT DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY and mail with this application to:
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Clark's Nutcracker Ellis Myers photo..

William Rogers Clark Soldier ♦ Explorer ♦ Collector

By Ellis Myers

William Clark was born on August 1, 1770, near Charlottesville, Virginia, the sixth son of plantation owners John and Ann Rogers Clark. After the Revolutionary War, the Clark family moved to Kentucky, which at the time was on the western edge of American settlement. William Clark spent his teenage years on the frontier, learning outdoor skills from his famous brother, Revolutionary War hero George Rogers Clark, 18 years his senior. At age 19 he joined the Kentucky militia to fight against the Indians of the Ohio Valley, who were then trying to prevent whites from settling their lands.

In 1792, Clark transferred to the regular army, where he obtained valuable command experience and furthered his frontier education. Three years later he met a young officer by the name of Meriwether Lewis. The two Virginians struck up a lasting friendship.

In 1803, while living in Indiana, Clark received a letter from his old friend Lewis, by then a captain in the army. In this historic document, Lewis invited Clark to help him lead an exploratory expedition across the continent. Clark accepted the offer with enthusiasm, gathered together some of Kentucky's best frontiersmen, and joined Lewis near St. Louis.

"This is an undertaking fraught with many difeculties, but My friend I do assure you that no man lives whith whome I would perfer to undertake Such a Trip."

From William Clark's response to Lewis..

Although Clark, who had resigned his commission in 1796, was technically only reinstated at the rank of lieutenant, both he and Lewis shared leadership of the Corps of Discovery. Both were referred to as Captain



by all members of the Expedition. Clark was also the Expedition's cartographer, producing dozens of maps of previously uncharted areas. He was also more diligent in writing a journal of the observations—as requested by Jefferson—than was Lewis, although, with his limited schooling, his grammar was of varied consistency. He spelled *Sioux* more than twenty different ways. Inciden-

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