



# the Quail

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053  
[www.diabloaudubon.org](http://www.diabloaudubon.org)

Volume 63, Number 7

April 2018

## April Program, 8 PM : Elephants: Beyond the Ivory Problem ♦ Jill Hedgecock

During her visit to the Elephant Nature Park (ENP) outside of Chang Mai, Thailand, Jill Hedgecock witnessed firsthand the unique challenges facing today's Asian elephant populations. While ivory poaching is typically considered the biggest threat to elephant survival, it is African elephants that are the victims of most illegal ivory trafficking. For Asian elephants, expanded human communities and the resulting destruction of the forest habitat poses a bigger threat. Approximately 20% of the world's humanity currently lives in or near wild Asian elephant territory.

In Thailand, less than 2,000 wild elephants remain. Changing times have strained the relationship between Asian



Above: Rescued elephants at ENP; R: Jill Hedgecock, Jill Hedgecock photos

elephants and the Thai people. In 1989, the Thai government banned logging. Overnight, significant numbers of trained elephants that supported the timber industry were retired. These elephants went from being seen as a valuable resource to the family to an unaffordable liability. Many of these elephants have since been repurposed by the tourism industry, but often to the detriment of the elephants.

The Elephant Nature Park, a 250-acre rescue and rehabilitation center housing 76 rescued elephants, offers a bright ray of hope for these amazing creatures and provides an ethical alternative for tourists to support humane treatment of these giant beasts. During her talk, Jill will share some of the heart-warming stories of the elephants currently living at this sanctuary, gray matriarchs like 73-year-old *Sook Jai* that arrived completely blind and mostly deaf, but still plays nanny to two young rescued elephants.

Jill Hedgecock's long-standing roots run deep with the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, serving as the International Conservation Coordinator in the early 1990s, as a leader of the Black Diamond Mines Christmas Bird Count circle, and now, as a *Diablo Gazette* reporter covering the Christmas Bird Count in 2017.

She has a Master's Degree in Environmental Management from the University of San Francisco and her suspense novel about a seventeen-year-old girl on safari who finds herself at odds with rhino poachers is nearing completion.

**For more information:** [www.jillhedgecock.com](http://www.jillhedgecock.com) and [www.elephantnaturepark.org](http://www.elephantnaturepark.org)



### Meeting Schedule

The next meeting of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society will be **Thursday, April 5** in the Camellia Room, The Gardens at Heather Farm in Walnut Creek.

- 6:30 PM** Doors open
- 7:00 PM** Birding Information
- 7:25 PM** Announcements
- 7:40 PM** Refreshments\* & raffle
- \*please bring your own coffee mug
- 8:00 PM** Program: **Elephants: Beyond the Ivory Problem ♦ Jill Hedgecock**

**NEXT MONTH: Thursday, May 3, Jailbirds of Alcatraz ♦ Heather Robinson**

### 7 PM Birding Information

Assemblymember Tim Grayson will speak about environmental issues affecting our District and State and take questions from our members. Grayson was elected to serve in the California Assembly in November 2016 as the representative of the 14th Assembly District, which encompasses portions of Contra Costa and Solano Counties. In 2010, Grayson was elected to serve on the Concord City Council, winning reelection in 2014 and serving on the Council until his election to the Assembly. He also served as Concord's Mayor from 2014–2015. A long time East Bay resident, Tim lives in Concord with his wife of more than 28 years, Tammy, and their children, Joe and Cassie.

In January, I collaborated with the Board of Directors and Advisory Committee Members to complete the 2016-17 Audubon Chapter Annual Report. This report is required for MDAS to receive Audubon Baseline Funding from the National Audubon Society, which was \$3,889 for 2016-17.

Below, are some of the highlights of this year's report:

- At least 300 MDAS volunteers, including Board and Advisory Members, helped with at least one chapter activity over the year.
- Volunteers provided an estimated 3,000 hours of service for the chapter.
- Altogether, approximately 2,200 people participated in various MDAS outreach activities including field trips, membership meetings, Earth Day events, bird festivals, and education outreach activities.
- Bird-Friendly Communities accomplishments included: Just For Ducks, Barn-less Owls, Peregrine Fund, The Kestrel Campaign, and Wildlife Habitat Improvement.
- The chapter was active in the following Important Bird Areas (IBAs): McNabney Marsh, Mt. View Sanitary District ponds, and Waterbird Regional Preserve.
- IBA accomplishments included the phenology studies that were conducted at McNabney Marsh, Mt. View Sanitary, and Waterbird Regional Preserve.
- MDAS collaborated with Mt. View Sanitary District to sponsor, purchase, and place floating nesting platforms at McNabney Marsh. In addition, MDAS has worked closely with other agencies to restore water levels at McNabney Marsh and Waterbird Regional Preserve to provide suitable habitats for waterfowl and shorebirds.

• In an ongoing advocacy role, MDAS has worked closely with a coalition of other agencies regarding the Concord Reuse Project Program related to the redevelopment of the former Concord Naval Weapons Station.

- Two educational activities and/or accomplishments that MDAS is very proud of include: No Child Left Inside and Just For Ducks. Both of these programs were discussed thoroughly in the report.
- The MDAS Young Birders Club remained active with regular field trip outings, Christmas Bird Counts, and vigorous promotion and recruitment of new members.
- In addition to the MDAS website and the newsletter, the *Quail*, MDAS utilized social media outreach through Facebook and Meetup to promote MDAS activities.
- Numerous volunteers participated in two Christmas Bird Counts, The Great Backyard Bird Count, Bioblitz, and other citizen science activities.
- MDAS representatives actively participated in policy advocacy activities that included articles in the *Quail*, email networking, letters to the editor, telephone conferences, action alerts, and met in person with elected officials on policy and legislative issues.
- The MDAS website and calendar were regularly updated and expanded to assure that current Chapter information was available.

In closing, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of the members who contributed so much in 2016-17 to make MDAS such a vital organization.

**Good News:  
Bay Area Open Space**

By enjoying the wide variety of MDAS Birding Field Trips offered, most of you are aware of the 73 East Bay Regional Parks (**ebparks.org**) and miles of trails around Mt. Diablo State Park to explore. (**www.parks.ca.gov**)

But, did you know that Mount Umunhum, just south of San Jose is now open to the public for exploration? Formerly an Air Force missile defense and radar surveillance station, the property's hazardous waste has been removed, the historic "Cube" maintained, hiking and biking trails improved, and interpretive displays installed. Called Mount Um by locals, *umunhum* means "resting place of the hummingbird" in the Ohlone language. Check out the expansive views from the top and keep your eyes peeled for hummingbirds! (**openspace.org**)

Closer to home, Save Mount Diablo (SMD), announced their latest purchase, the 95-acre Anderson Ranch, east of Clayton off Morgan Territory Road, preserving more land around Mt. Diablo. To hike SMD properties closed to the public, check the free "Discover Diablo" guided hike schedule. (**savemountdiablo.org**)

North of the Benicia bridge, explore native plants at Jepsen Prairie or view the raptors of Lynch Canyon and Rush Ranch, all part of the Solano Land Trust. (**solanolandtrust.org**)

Recently, Metallica rock star, James Hetfield, placed 1000 acres of his family's Lucas Valley Ranch under the stewardship of the Marin Agricultural Land Trust, ensuring that this scenic land will never be developed, preserving more open space for all. (**www.malt.org**)

More Open Space? Now, *that's* good news for all Bay Area inhabitants. ~Maren Smith

**Welcome New Members**  
Toni Maita Walnut Creek  
Erin Wilson Clayton

**Q** What sparrow prefers to live in fire swept areas?  
Unscramble the letters or see page 7 for the answer.  
**CWREPSRROFANRUOOWDUS**

**MDAS on the Web**  
**www.diabloaudubon.org**  
**www.facebook/mtdiabloaudubon**  
**www.meetup.com/Mount-Diablo-Audubon-Society/**

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## Observations (2/1-3/4/18) ————— by Maury Stern

Some interesting birds appeared this month. A Vesper Sparrow was seen at Briones RP, a Tufted Duck at Bethel Island, and both White-winged and Black Scoters at Pt. Molate/San Pablo. Several Long-tailed Ducks were seen and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (previously misidentified as a Red-naped Sapsucker) was seen by many at Tilden. Most of the typical swallows appeared, an Eastern Winter Wren was at Pt. San Pablo/Pt. Molate, and both Western Tanager and Hooded Oriole made early appearances.

LK saw a **Tufted Duck** 2/22 off Bethel Island; also seen by WR and SR.

A **White-winged Scoter** was at the Pt. Molate/San Pablo area 2/20. JC

Three **Black Scoters** were near the Richmond Marina 2/13, JB and DN; HR saw one at Pt. San Pablo 2/18; BD saw one at Vincent Park in Richmond 2/25; and LK saw one on 3/1.

Between 2/6 and 2/25, there were up to two **Long-tailed Ducks** at the Pt. Molate/San Pablo area. LK, JT, TB, DN, JB, JCh, BT, C&TW, CM, HR, DW, JN, JC, KP, ES, JK, JW, CW, BD

PS saw a **Barrow's Goldeneye** at Contra Loma Park on 1/23 and 2/16.

A **Rufous Hummingbird** was seen at Miller/Knox RP 2/3, C&TW; and at the Tilden Nature area 2/18. JS

On 3/3 JD, LH, and WH saw a **Common Murre** at Pt. Potrero near the Red Oak Victory ship in Richmond.

A **Glaucous Gull** was at Meeker Slough 2/10, AK and KDu; HR saw one at Pt. Molate 2/18; and another was at Clifton Court Forebay 2/22. LK

AL saw a late **Caspian Tern** at Clifton Court Forebay 2/13.

LK saw a **Pacific Loon** off Richmond Marina 2/18 and 3/1; JC saw it 2/28.

Two **Golden Eagles** on Sibley RP power towers were mobbed by nine **Ravens** 2/16. GS

A **Western Screech Owl** was at MS's Lafayette home 2/14, about ¼ mile from previous Lafayette-Moraga bike trail observations.

A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was at the Tilden Nature area parking lot from 2/5-3/3, seen by GS, LF, AM, JC,

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HB, CM, KP, JB, DN, JHo, HH, DW, GS, FS, JH, LK, JHe, JS, KH, EL, EV, SL, BB, AR, JC, and BT.

A **Red-naped Sapsucker** was at DF's Lafayette home 2/17.

The Heather Farm **Tropical Kingbird** is now in its 5<sup>th</sup> winter. It was seen by HH, FS, ML, DR, JG, PG, DK, KD, and GSt.

LK saw **Tree Swallows** and five **Barn Swallows** at Discovery Bay 2/21.

A **Violet-green Swallow** was at the Lafayette Reservoir 2/10, WA; and Shell Ridge 2/11, TR.

**Northern Rough-winged Swallows** returned to Heather Farm Pond 3/1. HH

A real **Winter Wren** (not the **Pacific Wren**) was identified by voice by LK 2/17; JCh, BT, AL saw it later.

An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at Bethel Island 2/22, LK; and MS saw one on the Lafayette-Moraga bike trail near the parking lot 2/24.

EM saw a **Chipping Sparrow** in Walnut Creek off Livorna Avenue 2/7.

The **Vesper Sparrow** at Briones RP Sincich Lagoon continued to be seen in February. KH, BM, C&TW, LL, AK, JC, GG, PG, JHo, JS, BT



*Briones Vesper Sparrow, Maren Smith photo*

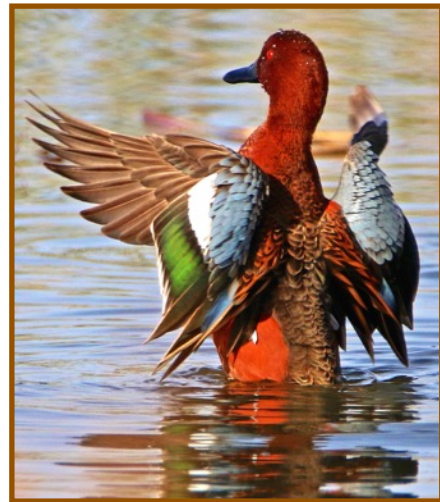
EO saw a **Swamp Sparrow** 2/19 at the Big Break Trail.

A **Slate-colored Junco** stayed the month at PS's Antioch home and another was at MS's Lafayette home.

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

A **Western Tanager** made a short visit to MS's home 2/15.

Another early appearance was a **Hooded Oriole** at the home of MW in west Concord 2/10.



*Cinnamon Teal at Yolo Bypass ponds, Rick Saillard photo*



WA Will Anderson, JB John Blakelock, TB Tony Brake, BB Bob Brandriff, HB Henry Burton, JCh Juli Chamberlin, JC Jim Chiropolis, JD Judith Dunham, KD Kris Dunlap, BD Bob Dunn, KDu Kathleen Durkin, DF Daniel Fitzgerald, LF Lee Friedman, PG Philip Georgakakos, GG Gregory Gladkov, JG Julie Gonzalez, JH John Harris, HH Hugh Harvey, JHe Jeff Hendricks, KH Kevin Hints, WH Wendy Hoben, JHo Jeff Hoppes, LH Lydia Huang, LK Logan Kahle, JK Julia Kelly, DK Dave Kent, AK Alan Krakauer, SL Seth La Rosa, EL Elizabeth Leite, AL Albert Linkowski, LL Laura Look, ML Marty Lycan, AM Aaron Maizlish, BM Bruce Mast, CM Colin Meusel, EM Ethan Monk, JN Joey Negreann, DN David Nickerson, EO Eric Ongman, KP Kir Pridatko, HR Heidi Regier, SR Sue Riffe, TR Ted Robertson, WR William Rockey, AR Allison Rofe, DR Dave Rose, FS Fred Safier, PS Paul Schorr, JS Judi Sierra, GSt Gavin Stacey, MS Maury Stern, ES Emilie Strauss, GS George Suennen, JT John Toldi, BT Bob Toleno, EV Edward Vine, DW Dave Weber, C&TW Chris and Teri Wills, CW Charlie Woidat, JW James Woidat, and MW Marilyn Wojcik

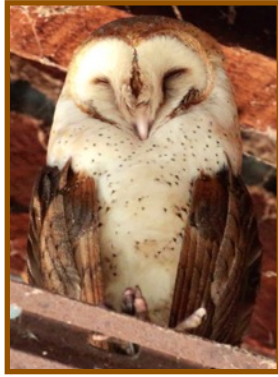
## Trip Reports

### Grizzly Island, Thursday, February 8:

Twenty-three members and guests had a wonderful day of 75 degree

weather at the refuge

and 79 species were seen between Grizzly Island and Rush Ranch. Highlights included a flock of Greater White-fronted Geese, 11 Tundra Swans, a Ferruginous Hawk directly overhead, Merlin, Virginia Rail, Sora, Barn Owl, two Great Horned Owls, and about 100 tree Swallows with a few Violet-green Swallows as well. There were 27 Tule Elk in the



Barn Owl,  
Beth Branthaver photo

harem of a large Bull Elk and four river otters in one of the side channels along the main road. ~Maury Stern

### Thornton Area/Cosumnes Preserve, Sat., February 10:

Under beautiful azure blue skies, 12 birders traveled to the Central Valley to view the Sand Hill Cranes at the Eisenberg Wildlife Refuge near Lodi. We could see the snow-capped Sierra along the eastern horizon and Mt. Diablo to the west. Although the past month has been dry, there were birds aplenty on the ponds. We did see the cranes, although not as many as in years past, and flocks of Greater White-fronted and Snow Geese. We also saw Northern Shovelers, Black-necked Stilts,



Greater and Lesser Sand Hill Cranes, Isaac Aronow photo

Green-winged Teal, along with the usual Audubon's Warblers and Western Meadowlarks. We saw many Great Egrets and some Snowy Egrets. The best bird was a well-hidden Great Horned Owl nesting in the trees just beyond the viewing area. Afterwards, the group went to the Cosumnes River Preserve to bird some more and have lunch. Unfortunately, I was fighting off a cold, so Beth Branthaver graciously agreed to finish up the trip and do the count, a total of 72 species. (thanks Beth!) ~Chick Chickering

**Bodega Bay, Saturday, February 17:** It was an absolutely gorgeous day with few clouds and little wind for 30 participants, though it hardly felt like a winter trip. After collecting at the Tides Restaurant, we found numerous species in the harbor such as Common and Pacific Loons, Brant, Surf Scoters, and a very cooperative Belted Kingfisher. We drove to Bodega Head where the continuing Rock Sandpiper and Surfbirds were already spotted by another birder. With so little wind, we spent a lot of time scoping the ocean for more pelagic species and some of us found Common Murres, Marbled Murrelets, and Red-necked Grebes, in addition to the more common Pelagic and

Brant's Cormorants and Black Oystercatchers. Campbell Cove and the Hole in the Head produced some more species, including a singing Bewick's Wren, Hermit Thrush, and Horned Grebe. A total of six gull species were seen including Glaucous-winged and Mew Gulls. We finished our tour at Porto Bodega and added a few more shorebirds such as Whimbrel and Willets. Then, a mature Bald Eagle flew over us, not once, but twice, mobbed by a flock

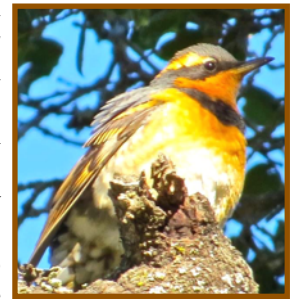


Rock Sandpiper, Paul Schorr photo

of screaming gulls hoping to chase it away. A total of 74 bird species were identified along with a river otter, harbor seals, and sea lions. ~Hugh Harvey

### Sunol Regional Wilderness, Wednesday, February 21:

Twenty-one members and guests spent a sunny day birding. Altogether, 48 species were seen or heard. When we first arrived, there were Varied Thrush in the first parking lot, exciting for all. Other sightings included a small flock of Band-tailed Pigeons, two Tree Swallows, two Western Bluebirds, a lone Hutton's Vireo, two Golden Eagles flying fairly low for good views, an Orange-crowned Warbler singing, two groups of California Quail, and one Hermit Thrush seen by some. Wrens included a House and a calling Bewick's Wren. A small group of Bushtits was seen, as well



Above: Varied Thrush;  
Below: Nesting Anna's Hummingbird, Isaac Aronow photos

as a Brown Creeper, and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Another highlight of the day was three sightings of Rufous-crowned Sparrows (see P. 7) along the trail to Little Yosemite. Raptors included Red-tailed Hawks, a perched White-tailed Kite, a Cooper's Hawk and American Kestrel, and several Red-shouldered Hawks heard, but not seen. ~Eugenia K. Larson

### Los Banos/Panoche Valley, February 24-25: text/photos p. 8

**Walnut Creek Parks, Wednesday, February 28:** Sixteen participants walked around the large Heather Farm pond—early arrivals saw two river otters swim past the wooden railing. Everyone saw the Merlin perched in one of the conifers next to the parking lot. Many crowned sparrows were seen, along with Song Sparrows, a nesting Anna's Hummingbird, Black-crowned Night-Herons, Great Egret, Green Heron, Ring-necked Ducks, and Buffleheads. At Borges Ranch, we added many Western Bluebirds, several Say's Phoebes, California Quail, White-tailed Kite, Red-tailed Hawks (copulating), American Kestrels, and Acorn Woodpeckers. A total of 47 species were seen or heard. ~Hugh Harvey



# Field Trip Schedule

By Hugh Harvey

## April 2018 (Contact Leader for ?s or rain cancellations)

- 04 Wednesday Orinda Connector Trail
- 07 Saturday Garin Regional Park
- 12 Thursday North Briones RP
- 17 Tuesday Pine Canyon
- 19 Thursday Black Diamond Mines RP
- 21 Saturday Mines Road
- 24 Tuesday Del Puerto Canyon
- 26 Thursday Mitchell Canyon @ Mt. Diablo State Park

## May 2018

- 01 Tuesday Mt. Diablo State Park
- 03 Thursday West Briones RP
- 05 Saturday Mt. Wanda—Global Big Day (see page 9)
- 12 Saturday East Contra Costa County
- 22 & 24 Tu/Th “No Child Left Inside”

### 2 Wednesday, April 4

#### Orinda Connector Trail

Leader: Don Lewis (925) 284-5480

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

### 3 Saturday, April 7

#### Garin Regional Park

Leader: Fred Safier (925) 937-2906

Carpool leaves 7:15 AM from Sycamore Valley Road Park and Ride. **OR**, meet in parking lot at the end of Garin Road at 8 AM. Take I-680 south and I-580 west, to 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 three miles to Garin Road, turn left, and follow road up the hill to its end. Spring migrants will be our goal. Bring a lunch and liquids to enjoy in the park after the field trip.

### 3 Thursday, April 12

#### North Briones Regional Park

Leader: Maury Stern (925) 284-5980

Meet at 8 AM in the parking area at the north entrance of Briones RP. Take Briones Road off Alhambra Valley Road, drive up this narrow winding road, and 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 three miles round-trip. Bring snacks and liquids.



Horned Lark, Maren Smith photo

### 3 Tuesday, April 17

#### Pine Canyon

Leader: Nancy Wenninger (925) 938-7987

Meet in the parking lot at the 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 looking for spring migrants and Peregrine Falcons. The trail crosses Pine Creek several times. Carry lunch and liquids.



Peregrine Falcon, Maren Smith photo

### 3 Thursday, April 19

#### Black Diamond Mines RP

Leader: Paul Schorr (925) 998-0070

Carpool leaves Sun Valley Mall 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 (fee required) and proceed to the last parking lot. Our goal is woodland, chaparral, and some grassland birds. Bring lunch and liquids.

### 1 Saturday, April 21

#### Mines Road

Leader: Hugh Harvey (925) 935-2979

Due to limited parking along Mines Road, carpooling is essential. Phainopepla, Lewis's Woodpecker (*R. Susana de Trapaga photo*), Lawrence's Goldfinch, spring migrants, and wild flowers possible. Entry fee at Del Valle RP. This is an all-day trip and often hot! Bring lunch and liquids. Call leader for meeting time and location.



Field trips are open to members and non-members, beginners to advanced birders, but no dogs. **Contact Leader for ?s or rain cancellations.** MDAS is a conservation organization; as such, we encourage carpooling (riders help with gas, tolls, or entry fees). **Drivers who carpool for field trips should have proof of liability insurance in their cars.**

**1**: Easy, little walking, smooth paths **2**: Moderate, one mile +, rougher terrain **3**: Difficult, many miles, rough terrain  
**Sycamore Valley Road Park and Ride:** Exit I-680 at Sycamore Valley Rd., Park and Ride lot is east of freeway  
**Sun Valley Mall Parking Lot:** SW corner of mall lot at Willow Pass Rd. and Contra Costa Blvd. in Concord.

More Field Trip Listings on page 6

**1 Tuesday, April 24**

**Del Puerto Canyon**

Leader: Beth Branthaver (510) 502-4869

Carpool leaves at 7:30 AM from Sycamore Valley Road Park and Ride. **OR**, meet on Del Puerto Canyon Road west of I-5 at 9 AM at Patterson Exit (Diablo Grande Parkway and Sperry Road, 56 miles from Sycamore Valley Road). Take I-580 east to I-5 south. Restroom stop at the Larry Combs Rest Area near Westley; no facilities on trip until lunch stop. Canyon Wren, Costa's Hummingbird, and Greater Roadrunner are possible. Usually very warm! Bring lunch and liquids.

**3 Thursday, April 26**

**Mitchell Canyon**

Leader: Maury Stern (925) 284-5980

Meet at 8 AM in the Mitchell Canyon parking lot. (\$6 parking fee). From I-680 in Walnut Creek, take Ygnacio Valley Road to Clayton Road. Turn right on Clayton Road and right on Mitchell Canyon Road to the end. We hope to see gnatcatchers, spring migrants, residents, and lots of wildflowers. Usually hot! Bring lunch and liquids. (*Wrentit, Isaac Aronow photo*)



**SAVE THE DATE—BOOK YOUR HOTEL/CAMPSITE NOW**

**Saturday-Sunday, June 23-24, Sierra Valley and Yuba Pass**

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

This is always a productive 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 bird in the Yuba Pass area for mountain birds. Meet at the parking lot at the top of the pass at 7 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. **www.sierracity.com/Stay/LodgingCamp.** Campgrounds are located at Yuba Pass and Chapman Creek downhill to the west. Sites are available first-come, first-served for 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 June 18 call Wild Birds Unlimited (925) 798-0303 for information.

**Legislative Committee News**

Mt. Diablo Audubon joined other chapter members from Sacramento and Southern California and staff from Audubon California on February 8 at a protest in Sacramento against plans to expand offshore oil drilling. Over 500 protesters from a coalition of conservation organizations rallied at the steps of the Capitol before marching to the site of a public meeting held by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to receive public input on the plans to increase offshore oil drilling in California.



Above: Georgette Howington, L, and Kent Fickett, R, at the Sacramento oil protest, Rosalie Howarth photo; R: Ariana Rickard speaks to the crowd, Georgette Howington photo

The BOEM is responsible for developing the Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. On January 4, BOEM released a new Draft Proposed Program (DPP) that includes 26 planning areas. Three of those planning areas are in California: Northern, Central, and Southern California.

Department of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has already exempted Florida from the DPP. In a January 9 statement, Zinke said, "I support the Governor's position that Florida is unique and its coasts are heavily reliant on tourism as an economic driver. As a result of discussion with Governor Scott and his leadership, I am removing Florida from consideration for any new oil and gas platforms."

This has opened the door for other governors to argue that their states are also unique and their coasts are heavily reliant on tourism dollars. Since BOEM held only one public meeting in Sacramento, conservation groups organized the rally, march, and protest outside the meeting location.

Mt. Diablo Audubon Board members Rosalie Howarth and Kent Fickett attended the BOEM meeting in a public library. Rosalie described the set-up as informational tables, with maps and cardboard displays with titles such as "Why Oil is Important." leading to a bank of computer terminals for electronic email comments. But there was no "hearing," no officials present, and no discussion of business, although the BOEM staff members in the room were very courteous and engaged.



The rally included many staff legislators, indigenous groups, and conservation organizations. The event attracted media attention from local TV news, newspapers and online outlets. Californians remain strongly opposed to offshore oil drilling and we will be following this issue to let you know what you can do to protect our state and our natural resources. ~Ariana Rickard, Legislative Action Committee

📺 **VIDEO:** Ariana speaking to the crowd by Georgette Howington: [ca.audubon.org/node/27801](http://ca.audubon.org/node/27801)

📅 **SAVE THE DATE:** Audubon Advocacy Day in Sacramento will be held June 20. Join MDAS and Audubon Chapters to promote bird-friendly, conservation legislation.



## Rufous-crowned Sparrow ♦ *Aimophila ruficeps* — by Jean Halford

The Rufous-crowned Sparrow prefers open, sparse, scrub habitat on rocky, south-facing slopes. The sparrow avoids dense chaparral and oak dominated woodlands, and especially likes areas that have been swept by fire. Thus, fire suppression in areas where they live has caused the vegetation to grow too dense for the Rufous-crowned Sparrow; after a fire, the habitat remains suitable for Rufous-crowned Sparrows for up to 15 years. (R: Jean Halford photo)

They are year-round residents throughout their range, although they will descend to lower elevations outside their normal range during severe winter weather. Average territory size is about 2-3.5 acres and the sparrows tends to stay on or close to the ground where they can get shade and protective cover from predators.

Sporting a rufous crown, this pretty little sparrow has grey eyebrows and cheeks, a rufous line behind the eye, white eye-ring, black and white whisker stripes, a whitish throat, and an unstreaked, buffy-gray breast.

Males will defend their territories year-round and will sing throughout the breeding season defending those territories. Research finds that the sparrows are monogamous, with the majority of birds staying paired for multiple breeding seasons.



Their nests, constructed by females, are built on the ground or on a low bush. The nest is a loosely constructed, a bulky, thick-walled open cup made up of dried grasses, twigs, and rootlets, lined with fine grasses and animal hair, and about 4 inches wide and 2.5 inches tall.

The female lays 2-5 pale bluish-white eggs and she alone incubates the eggs that hatch after 11-13 days of incubation. The nestlings stay in the nest for about 8-10 days. At that time, they are unable to fly, so they run along the ground under the cover of vegetation. Both parents continue to feed the young until the autumn months, but even after the young can feed themselves, they remain as a family unit well into the winter.

Partners in Flight estimates a current breeding population of two million individuals, with 54% of them living in the U.S. and 46% in Mexico. According to the *North American Breeding Bird Survey*, their numbers declined 45% from 1966-2014, mostly due to the suppression of fire, and loss of habitat as a result of agricultural and urban development. There is some thought that cattle grazing can actually benefit this species due to their trampling and consumption of dense vegetation.

These sparrows prefer insects during spring and summer, and seeds, stems, and shoots in the winter. The oldest known Rufous-crowned Sparrow lived to 5 years, 1 month of age.

### Community Events

#### ► Los Medanos College Earth Day Festival, Wednesday, April 18, 10 AM-1 PM

Join campus staff and students as they celebrate the Earth, explore sustainable actions, and support local environmental organizations. Stop by the MDAS table! **Location:** Los Medanos College Main Campus Quad, 2700 E. Leland Road, Pittsburg

#### ► John Muir B'day-Earth Day Celebration, Martinez, Sat., April 21, 10 AM-4 PM

Celebrate the 47th Anniversary of Earth Day and John Muir's 180th birthday at his former home. The festivities will include bagpipe music, food, conservation booths, and kids' activities, bringing participants closer to knowing our planet while learning practical ways to help it thrive. Free admission and parking. **Location:** 4202 Alhambra Avenue, Martinez **For information:** [www.nps.gov/jomu](http://www.nps.gov/jomu) • **MDAS booth:** Contact Brian Murphy to volunteer for a 2-hour shift: [b-murphy21@hotmail.com](mailto:b-murphy21@hotmail.com)

#### ► 9th Annual Point Reyes Birding & Nature Festival, Pt. Reyes Station, April 27-29

Come celebrate the Year of the Bird, the 100th Anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and ongoing work to protect nesting birds in Marin. Gain a deeper awareness and appreciation of the area's unique resources on more than 50 field trips. **To register and for more information:** [www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org](http://www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org)

#### ► 4th Annual Owens Lake Bird Festival, Lone Pine, Friday-Sunday, April 27-29

Join fellow birders in the Eastern Sierra for field trips, workshops (geology, botany, history), photography, and fun, while witnessing thousands of birds on their annual migration. **To register and for more information:** [friendsoftheinyo.org](http://friendsoftheinyo.org)

#### ► Volunteers @ the Mitchell Canyon Native Plant Garden, Thursday mornings

Calling all California Native Garden devotees and anyone interested in learning more about native plants. Dig in to learn about the plants that make Mount Diablo so extraordinary and join other like-minded volunteers in creating and maintaining the lovely eight year-old Native Plant Garden at the Mitchell Canyon Visitor's Center, one that features the ecosystems in MDSP. Volunteers must complete a 3-hour training. **For information contact Carole Leadem:** [carole.leadem@gmail.com](mailto:carole.leadem@gmail.com)

cont. from p. 4 >> **Los Banos/Panoche Valley, February 24-25:**

On a cold and chilly morning 24 MDAS members set off for Santa Fe Grade Road near Gustine, an easement area which is part of the San Luis National Wildlife Complex. The area includes numerous ponds which are very active during hunting season. As we started our tour, we were greeted by a Burrowing Owl standing on a mound and numerous Wilson's Snipes. Driving through the easement area, we found large numbers of White-faced Ibis, ducks, and geese, including Gadwalls, American Wigeons, Mallards, Cinnamon Teals, Northern Shovelers, Northern Pintails, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Ducks, Buffleheads, and Ruddy Ducks. We also found a small group of Red-headed Ducks, Tundra Swans, and a few Canvasbacks. The geese we saw were primarily Greater White-fronted and Snow Geese. In plentiful numbers were egrets and Great Blue Heron and American White Pelicans. We even managed to find three Cattle Egrets just outside the refuge.



In addition to the waterfowl, we had many raptors including an immature Bald Eagle, a Golden Eagle, a White-tailed Kite, several Northern Harriers, numerous Red-tailed Hawks, American Kestrel, and a Peregrine Falcon. Great Horned Owls were particularly plentiful, flying in front of our car as we drove along. Some were able to see a Ring-necked Pheasant. There were also several sandpipers species including Black-bellied Plover, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Long-billed Curlew, Least Sandpipers, Dunlin, and Long-billed Dowitcher. There were several Loggerhead Shrike along the route, and we had a few woodpeckers including Nuttall's and Northern Flicker. Some saw a Yellow-billed Magpie. Calling out of the marsh reeds were Marsh Wrens.



After lunch at the Refuge Headquarters we headed off to Merced NWR hoping to see nesting Great Horned Owls, wintering geese, cranes and numerous other waterfowl. At the viewing platform we saw several Wilson's Snipes, coots and ducks, and Sandhill Cranes feeding in the fields. On the auto tour we found Greater White-fronted, Snow, and Ross's Geese (including one blue morph of each), and ducks. We did find several Great Horned Owls and one Burrowing Owl. At the viewing platform on the far-side of the refuge some were able to find a Sora and a Common Yellowthroat.



the Quail

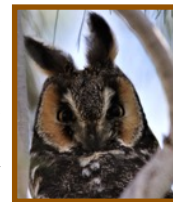
Our second day of birding started slowly, though we had two really exciting moments before lunch. Along Little Panoche Road we had wonderful views of a Greater Roadrunner, which actually crossed the road in front of us and then ran back across to the field in which it was first spotted. Because we were already out of our vehicles when the bird was found, we drove up to the bend where the roadrunner was located and some participants were able to photograph it before it disappeared over a small hill.



We had a similar event as we descended the BLM Road from the top of the Panoche Hills. While the hill itself seemed devoid of bird life, near the bottom we suddenly found a Sage Thrasher, then two, three, and ultimately, five! Luckily, we were able to double-park the eight cars so that everyone had good views. Had this been the film era of photography, Kodak stock would have made a significant jump!



After lunch at Mercey Hot Springs, we took a walk around the back to see and photograph as many as nine Long-eared Owls. This was our first stop here in several years. We were thankful for Kenda at Mercey Hot Springs who helped coordinate our visit, as well as the owner of the Panoche Inn for his hospitality. He sells real ice cream in a cup or a cone for \$1 which many of us enjoyed while we did our checklist outside.



We finally found two male and at least one female Mountain Bluebird in the Panoche Valley. We picked up almost all of the additional birds we wanted to see including Tricolored Blackbird, Prairie Falcon, Ferruginous Hawk (see page 12), Merlin, and more Golden Eagle sightings, but we were unable to locate the previously reported Cassin's Kingbirds. When we finished our checklist for the two days, we had identified a total of 98 species, tying the total birds seen from last year. ~Beth Branthaver and Hugh Harvey

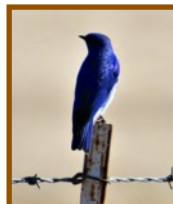


Photo credits: Top L: Wilson's Snipe, Walt Duncan; Middle L: Loggerhead Shrike, Isaac Aronow; Bottom L: Great Horned Owl, Danny Swicegood; Top R: Greater Roadrunner, Beth Branthaver; Middle R: Sage Thrasher, Isaac Aronow; Lower R: Long-eared Owl, Walt Duncan; Lower R: Mountain Bluebird, Walt Duncan; Bottom R: Merlin, Beth Branthaver



## Save the Date: Global Big Day on Mt. Wanda in Martinez May 5

MDAS and John Muir National Historic Site are partnering again this year in a collaborative Citizen Science event on Saturday, May 5. Park staff will enter our resulting bird list into eBird as part of the Global Big Day effort.

This year Alan Bade will lead. Alan has a unique interest and affinity with the site. His grandfather, William F. Bade, an early Sierra Club President, was a friend of John Muir. He was asked by Muir's family to give the eulogy when he died. He did so at the gravesite which is now a part of the John Muir National Historic site. In addition, Alan's grandfather wrote John Muir's first biography and was Muir's literary executor at the request of the Muir family. Alan's family held documents which have been placed among John Muir's official papers at University of the Pacific.

While Alan never met his grandfather he is, of course, very proud of him. He and his wife, Wendy Gollop, frequently walk on Mt. Wanda and feel a special connection with the land.

Our bird walk will begin at 8:30 AM on May 5 at the Mt. Wanda parking lot (Alhambra Avenue, south of Hwy 4 in Martinez). Directions and details are available on the MDAS (field trips) webpage: [www.diabloaudubon.org](http://www.diabloaudubon.org).

As mentioned there, the initial hike up to the plateau is level 3, but at that point it becomes a much easier walk. Last year we heard and saw numerous spring migrants. Birders spent about four hours completing a loop trail, but participants can easily make this a two-hour trip if needed.

According to the published 2017 eBird report, "On May 13, 2017, almost 20,000 birders from 150 countries around the world joined together as a global team, contributing more than 50,000 checklists containing 6,564 species—more than 60% of the world's birds. This is a new record for the number of bird species reported in a single day, and it's thanks to you. From Antarctica to Zimbabwe, your contributions make this possible. For us, Global Big Day is a celebration of birds. By bringing people together, Global Big Day showcases the great birds from each region—helping bring awareness to birding and conservation regionally and globally." -**Elizabeth Leite, Citizen Science Chair**

For more information: [ebird.org/globalbigday](http://ebird.org/globalbigday)  
**Volunteers Needed**

☛**The Education Committee** is looking for volunteers interested in helping set up classes, contacting instructors, collaborating with area conservation groups to provide birding expertise on hikes, and/or working with youth and classroom teachers. Next meeting in April. Contact Maren Smith: [marensmithbkk@yahoo.com](mailto:marensmithbkk@yahoo.com) or (925) 322-8477.

☛**Save Mount Diablo needs your help!** From March through May, volunteers over the age of 18 are needed to collect signatures in Antioch to qualify for a ballot measure that will protect more than 1,800 acres of beautiful hills adjacent to Sand Hill Creek. Together, we have a chance to protect thousands of acres of endangered

species and bird habitat, stop suburban sprawl, and defend new regional parks in East Contra Costa County. Save Mount Diablo will provide you with background information before your shift and pair you up with more experienced people. For more information, please contact Juan Pablo Galván, Save Mount Diablo Land Use Manager: [jpgalvan@savemountdiablo.org](mailto:jpgalvan@savemountdiablo.org), or call (925) 947-3535.

☛**Quail Editor position open starting September 2018.** If you are creative and enjoy writing, editing, and learning about birds, and have moderate computer skills, this might just be the dream volunteer job for you. Will train now! Contact Maren Smith: [marensmithbkk@yahoo.com](mailto:marensmithbkk@yahoo.com).

☛**No Child Left Inside Program** needs a few more volunteers, May 22 and 24. To volunteer and share your love of birds with schoolchildren, please contact Paul Schorr: [pkschorr@comcast.net](mailto:pkschorr@comcast.net) or call (925) 757-5107.

## Wood Duck Update



Eagle Scout Candidate, Davis Miller (*photo L*) of Troop 1630 in Danville, built and installed replacement Wood Duck nest boxes around Civic Park in Walnut Creek guided by Volunteer Coordinator, Brian Murphy. And, Dal Leite, (*photo R*) checked and recorded the GPS location of the local Wood Duck nest boxes.



Data from observations will be reported to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's NestWatch Program. ~**Brian Murphy text and photos**

## Great Backyard Bird Count Recap

Thanks to all who participated in this year's Great Backyard Bird Count. Data continues to be processed on the website. All worldwide checklists were to be recorded by March 1, so it is probably accurate to say that at this writing, Colombian birders reported 996 species on 544 checklists and are, thus, the country identifying the most species in the



single four-day weekend event. Additionally, birders in Ecuador, Brazil, and India identified more species than in other countries, as would

be expected. However, U.S. birders produced the most checklists, tallying 657 species on 108,921 checklists. The popularity of the event worldwide had expanded significantly.

Birders are dedicated to their passion and many are committed to Citizen Science. Over the four days, 6227 species were identified worldwide, 27,197,804 individual birds were counted, and over 174,000 checklists were added to the enormous database which is eBird. Wow! ~**Elizabeth Leite, Citizen Science Chair**

## Plants for Birds

One of the best ways we can help birds to adapt and survive in the face of climate change is to choose native plants for our yards and open spaces.

Over the past century, we have converted a rich, contiguous landscape of ecologically healthy native plants into a sterile monoculture of turf-grass lawns and decorative alien plant species. Already we have lost 150 million acres of ecologically productive land to urban sprawl. Plants in suburban and urban landscapes tend to be about 80% non-native, developed for convenience and to celebrate lawn as a status symbol--not designed to share with other living things.

By transforming lawns to living landscapes, every yard can be a sanctuary for birds. Planning for birds through their annual cycle means providing:

- a high diversity of native plant foods for all seasons
- structural diversity—tree canopy, shrub layer, ground cover and leaf litter
- a source of clean, fresh water
- shelter for roosting and nesting sites

And don't forget the things NOT to include: invasive plants, chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and outdoor cats!

Bird-friendly is also climate friendly. Lawnmowers account for up to 5% of greenhouse gas emissions in the U.S., and fertilizers release nitrous oxide, a powerful greenhouse gas. Lawns store some carbon, but trees and shrubs store more. A yard full of native plants provides the food resources birds need to feed their babies and refuel during migration.

Nearly 96% of land birds feed insects to their chicks. Native plants evolved as hosts for our specialized native insects, which support our native bird species. Native plants provide birds with insects as well as fruit, seeds, nectar, and shelter. Exotic species don't provide the same support. The National Wildlife Foundation estimates that native plants support 10 to 50 times as many species as non-native plants.

Native plants are adapted to local conditions. Once established, they conserve water and help to reduce the volume of pesticides and fertilizers that are loaded into the environment. This improves water quality by reducing the pollutants that are carried by rainwater to local creeks, streams, and into San Francisco Bay.

The good news is that if you plant native plants, birds will find them and eat what they have to offer. Food from plants offers complete nutrition for birds: protein from insects, protein and fat from nuts and seeds, and sugar and antioxidants from berries.

Plants are the foundation of the ecosystem—the only organisms that can capture the sun's energy turning it into food for animals. The vast majority of the animals that eat plants are insects, which are, in turn, eaten by other animals.



If the insects cannot eat the plants in our landscape, the food chain is essentially broken. And a world without insects is a world without birds. Insects also provide natural pest control. Less than 1% of insects are garden pests.

- a ladybug will eat over 2,000 aphids in its lifetime
- dragonflies catch and eat mosquitoes and gnats
- spiders destroy 100 times their number in insects/yr.
- ants feed on termites and on organic materials in compost piles; they contribute beneficial fungi and minerals such as potassium and phosphorus
- California has nearly 1,000 species of bees, many of which have a single plant species as their nectar source

Native insects are specialists; they can only eat the plants with which they coevolved. The exotic plants that dominate the landscaping industry are, for the most part, unpalatable to our native insects. Our native oaks in the genus *Quercus* are host to over 530 species of caterpillars, whereas Ginkgo, a commonly planted ornamental landscaping tree from Asia, supports only four species of caterpillars. When you are a bird in search of food for your young, that difference is life-threatening.

Another critically important category of food is fruit. Natives which produce edible fruits include barberries, coffeeberries, currants, gooseberries, manzanitas, toyons, wild roses, and wild grape.

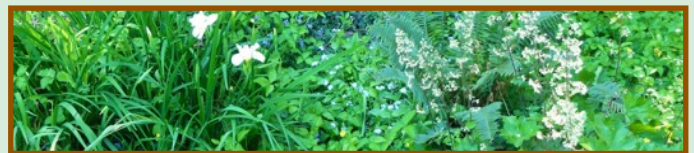
Nectar, of course, is an important food source for our hummingbirds. Natives which produce nectar include manzanitas, alum roots, monkeyflowers, penstemons, sages, and California fuchsia. Oaks and grasses produce nuts and seeds at a critical time of year when other food sources are more scarce.

Any garden can become a haven for birds, but each garden is unique. Consider these factors when planting:

- is the soil light and sandy or heavier like clay?
- how much direct sun does the garden get, and where are the shady spots?
- what is the topography like and are there slopes where soil drainage is increased?
- is there a water source nearby?

In addition to the food and habitat provided by native plants, the most important thing to provide for birds in your sanctuary is clean, fresh water for drinking and bathing. Evergreen trees provide nesting sites, important shelter from cold, and cover from predators, especially in winter.

Late fall is the optimum time for planting California natives. The soil is still warm and winter rains are just around the corner to help the roots become established before being stressed by our summer heat. ~Nancy Weninger, Conservation Chair (text and photos)



For more information: [www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds](http://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds)

## Make Spring Less Stressful For Birds

Spring can be an especially difficult time for birds. Early in spring, birds' natural food supply is at its lowest point of the year. Insect populations are low, and the few remaining wild fruits, berries, seeds, and nuts are undesirable due to weather and age. Unpredictable weather doesn't make life any easier. Warm spring-like days can turn into cold, damp conditions that challenge birds' survival skills. And to make matters worse, this may be happening as some prepare for nesting season.

Foods make a difference! Offer your birds lots of high energy foods such as Bark Butter Bits, peanuts, and suet. Loaded with fat and protein, these are beneficial substitutes for the scarce insects many birds would eat if they could find them.

Counteract the lack of natural insects by offering protein-rich mealworms. They are eaten by



numerous species of birds and can be a lifesaver during a sudden cold snap.

Nesting birds need help, too. Many birds build open cup-shaped nests in trees, on the ground, or nest in tree cavities. Place nesting materials nearby to help them.

Or, by installing bird houses around your backyard, you can entice bluebirds, wrens, chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, flickers, and more, making the birds' lives a little easier. After all, they have already expended a lot of energy establishing territories, courting, and looking for scarce food. When deciding upon a nesting box, make sure you research the necessary information to provide an appropriate box and where to place it. There are lots of cute, decorative boxes that do not have the necessary qualifications to keep birds healthy or reduce predator threats.

When you help the birds, you help preserve the species while increasing your own enjoyment as you watch our feathered friends. ~Mike Eliot, WBU

## Mt. Diablo Audubon Society (MDAS)

*Mt. 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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Honorary Advisor:	Jean Richmond	.....(925) 837-2843

**The MDAS Board meets at 6:45 PM at WBU on the 2nd Thursday except for July and August. Check the MDAS website: [diabloaudubon.org](http://diabloaudubon.org) for cancelled or rescheduled Board meetings.**



Mt. Diablo Audubon Society thanks our Business Partners:  
**AlphaGraphics, Walnut Creek**  
**Galaxy Press, Concord**  
**Native Bird Connections**  
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**Wild Birds Unlimited, Pleasant Hill**

*The Mt. Diablo Audubon Society meets at 7 PM the first Thursday of each month except in July and August in the Camellia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94598.*

### MDAS MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION

- Please enroll me/my family in the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society for \$25 for one year. (MDAS dues are tax-deductible)
- For an additional \$20 please enroll me as a first-time member in the National Audubon Society (NAS). (includes 6 bi-monthly issues of Audubon Magazine)
- Please enroll me as a lifetime member for \$500. (or 2 annual \$250 payments)
- I am enclosing an additional tax-deductible donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

**Please send the Quail by  "Go Green" email  US Mail**

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A soaring Ferruginous Hawk was photographed by Beth Branthaver on the February 24-25 MDAS weekend field trip to Los Banos and the Panoche Valley. For a descriptive report and more beautiful photographs, see the field trip report on page 8.



At the March monthly meeting, a full-house enjoyed a robust program including:

- Nancy Wenninger (Top L), Conservation Chair, presented a Birding Information program, "Plants for Birds," planting with drought-tolerant, California natives to encourage birds, bees, and butterflies. If you missed it, you're in luck, the full text is on page 10.
- Douglas E. Chickering, Chick Chickering's visiting brother (Bottom R), read a beautiful essay from his book **Reflections on a Golden-winged Warbler; The Joys and Aesthetics of Birding**. The book was auctioned off by Paul Schorr to Brian Murphy, raising \$50 for MDAS.
- For the monthly program, Norman Kikuchi (Bottom L), presented stunning images from his 20 or so trips to Alaska, as well as fascinating background information about the scenery viewed and interesting details about the bird photographs he shared. Maren Smith photos

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." ~Nelson Mandela*

