



THE QUAIL

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society | www.diabloaudubon.org

8 pm: Martinez Beavers

Can beavers change an ecosystem? A community? A person's life? In 2007, Heidi Perryman found they could. She became an accidental beaver advocate when a family moved into Alhambra Creek. Concerned the dam would cause flooding, the city advised trapping, but residents wanted another solution.

Heidi formed the group "Worth A Dam" to advocate for the beavers. It held the first beaver festival and connected with beaver experts around the country. What started as a simple blog became the nation's premier website on beaver science and ecology. Eventually Heidi worked with colleagues on groundbreaking research in California beaver nativity.

While Worth A Dam made a difference for beavers, the beavers themselves made a huge difference for birds and wildlife in Martinez. Soon after the dam was built, creek-watchers noticed more Green Heron, Egret and Scaup downtown. Within a year, folks were seeing Hooded Merganser for the first time. Kingfishers and Wood Ducks followed. Muskrats and otters appeared—eventually even mink!

The sleeper Martinez story of 2007 became a parable of community spirit and the triumph of nature in urban environments. Along the way, the story attracted local and

"Beavers, are ecological and hydrological Swiss Army knives, capable, in the right circumstances, of tackling just about any landscape-scale problem you might confront. Trying to mitigate floods or improve water quality? There's a beaver for that. Hoping to capture more water for agriculture in the face of climate change? Add a beaver. Concerned about sedimentation, salmon populations, wildfire? Take two families of beaver and check back in a year."

—Ben Goldfarb, Eager

national news coverage, three documentaries and a chapter in *Eager: The Surprising Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter*, which the *Washington Post* called "one of the 50 most important books of 2018."

Besides being the heroes in a feel-good story, the Martinez beavers became the "job creators" of an entire ecosystem.

Heidi wants people to know that the special story of Martinez isn't special at all, and could happen anywhere people understand that beavers are Worth A Dam.

See www.martinezbeavers.org.

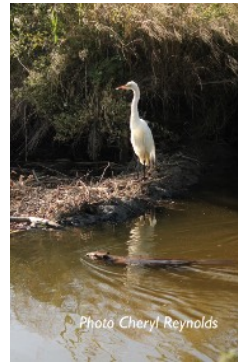


Photo Cheryl Reynolds



Photo Rusty Cohn

7 pm: Regional Parks

East Bay Regional Parks District Director and former Danville Mayor Beverly Lane will share the history of the parks system as well as information about upcoming improvements in local parks.

Next Meeting: MARCH 7

The Mt. Diablo Audubon Society will meet **Thursday, March 7**, in the Camellia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farm in Walnut Creek.

6:30 pm Doors open

7:00 pm Birding Info

7:25 pm News

7:40 pm Snacks & Raffle

8:00 pm Main Program

"Martinez Beavers"

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Plus: Help spruce up McNabney Marsh for birds and birders. p. 7



Chasing Rarities

Anyone who has chased rare birds has probably experienced (to paraphrase Jim McKay's opening line on "Wide World of Sports") the thrill of the sighting and the agony of the miss. In this column, I will share with you a couple of our more interesting pursuits.

January 2007 proved to be an exceptionally good month for very rare bird sightings in northern California. Early that month, a Snowy Owl was reportedly seen at a duck club on Grizzly Island in



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Suisun Marsh. A few birders received access to the duck club, but that ended just a couple days later. However, an alternative plan quickly developed to help birders find the owl. Captain Dan Thiemann, skipper of the *California Sunset*, which was berthed at the Suisun City Marina, began taking birders to the island. So, on Jan. 6, we joined a group of enthusiastic birders at the marina and began the two-hour boat ride to Grizzly Island. Upon nearing the island, Captain Dan navigated the boat as close to the riprap as was safe. He had found the owl at that location on recent previous trips, so he had a very good idea of where to look. As the boat neared the island, we were delighted to see the owl almost immediately, perched on a piling atop the riprap. Not wanting to frighten the owl, the crowd of thrilled birders celebrated in muffled jubilation.

Another rarity appeared later that month. On Jan. 20, an adult male Smew was reported at a pond in the Willow Spring area of Soulsbyville in Tuolumne County. The bird was reported throughout the week, and on Saturday, Jan. 28, we made the 115-mile trip there in hopes of finding the bird. As we approached the pond from the parking area, we could see perhaps 100 or more enthusiastic birders standing along the shore, equipped with spotting scopes and long lens cameras. Sadly, for the throng of birders who had come from all over the country, the bird was a no-show that day. After a full 8-hour day of waiting and hoping, we returned home, agonizing that we had missed a true rarity, as this was only the third sighting of a Smew in California. On the following morning, I checked the Listserv and surprisingly learned that the bird had returned to the same pond, accompanied by several Hooded Mergansers. I woke Nancy and shared the "good" news with her, and after some "gentle" coaxing, she agreed to make the return trip to Soulsbyville. Upon arriving at the pond, we were thrilled that the Smew was still there, only about 50-75 feet offshore, clearly showing its stunning white and black coloration. After watching and photographing this remarkably beautiful bird for a couple of hours, and rejoicing with many other exuberant birders, we made a very cheerful trip back home.

Hopefully, 2019 will provide more opportunities to see rare vagrants in our region, and let the chases be on!

Happy Birding. -Paul Schorr

MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY BOARD

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Paul Schorr, pkschorr@comcast.net, (925) 757-5107

Vice President

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Steve Buffi, (925) 938-0929

Programs & Legislative Action

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Field Trips

Hugh Harvey, (925) 935-2979

Conservation

Nancy Wenninger, nwenninger@aol.com, (925) 938-7987

Education

Maren Smith, marensmithbkk@yahoo.com, (925) 322-9477

Sales

Cathy Castillo, artsycastillo@gmail.com, (925) 209-6665

Membership

Virginia Hamrick, vhamrick8@gmail.com, (925) 945-7761

Volunteer Coordinator

Brian Murphy, b-murphy21@hotmail.com, (925) 937-8835

Publicity & Social Media

Rosalie Howarth, barhowarth@msn.com

Young Birders

Juan Pablo Galván, jpgalvan9@gmail.com

Members-at-Large

Bill Chilson, billchil@comcast.net (EBB), (510) 619-6692
Michael Eliot, mikeyeliot@gmail.com (925) 798-0303

The Quail Editor

Lori Patel, thequail@diabloaudubon.org

ADVISORY

Observations Editor

Maurly Stern, mbstern2@yahoo.com, (925) 284-5980

Hospitality

Kathy Kellogg, ggollekyhtak@gmail.com, (925) 228-2690

Citizen Science & CBC

Elizabeth Leite, eleite@diabloaudubon.org

Email Meeting Reminder

Barbara Vaughan, (925) 376-8732

Honorary Advisor

Jean Richmond, (925) 837-2843

MDAS general meetings take place on the first Thursday of the month except July and August in the Camellia Room of the Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Dr., Walnut Creek.

The MDAS Board meets at 6:45 pm at Wild Birds Unlimited in Pleasant Hill on the second Thursday of every month except July and August.

The *Quail* is published monthly except in January, July and August by the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, PO Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053.

For Young Birders Club, search Facebook for Mount Diablo Audubon Society Young Birders Club.

www.diabloaudubon.org
www.facebook.com/mtdiabloaudubon
www.meetup.com/Mount-Diablo-Audubon-Society



Great news for raptors: Fifteen new volunteers just completed training to join the Peregrine Team at Castle Rock (*photo Bruce Erickson*). There's still time to help out during the Feb.-August nesting season; contact Maren Smith at marensmithbkk@yahoo.com. ... Recently, Raptors Are The Solution honored Cal State University East Bay for replacing rodenticides on its Concord campus with owl boxes and raptor perches (*photo Dave Harper*). Kudos to our own Staci Hobbet for her advocacy.



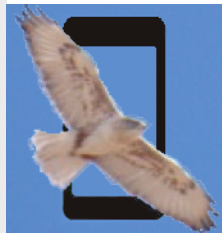
Volunteers are the heart of Audubon. Last month, Nahide Craig and Rosalie Howarth represented MDAS at the 24th Annual San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival (*photo Maren Smith*). Next month, we'll again need friendly faces behind our table at the annual **John Muir Birthday–Earth Day Celebration** April 20 at the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez. Contact Brian Murphy at b-murphy21@hotmail.com to claim a 2-hour shift from 10am-4pm. (While you have him, ask who has set up house in the wood duck boxes in Walnut Creek's Civic Park). ... **Transition:** Michael Mecham, who recently joined the MDAS board as a member at large, has resigned because he is relocating to Sonoma. Our loss, Wine Country's gain.



Online Birding by Ear

Clearly, the best way to learn a bird's vocalizations is to see a bird you recognize and to have it sing or call directly in front of you. Second best is to have a knowledgeable birder identify distinctive sounds in the field often enough that you remember them on your own. Online tutorials and apps offer an advantage over classes in that you can study and learn at your own pace and on your own schedule. Where to begin?

Cornell again leads the way, with an excellent **How to Learn** tutorial section on the **All About Birds** site, and even a free "Academy" feature with videos and soundtracks. In addition, there's an online fee-based course, linked from the pages just described. **National Audubon** offers an engaging free series in 8 parts with carefully selected sound samples, explanatory descriptions, memorization techniques, and much more. Each section focuses on a different aspect of the endeavor, authored by well-qualified experts.



BIRD WIDE WEB

As might be expected, entrepreneurs have also stepped in to create commercial resources, mainly for mobile devices. Fortunately, the good folks at Cornell have investigated them thoroughly, and their review on the **All About Birds** site describes the benefits and drawbacks of the two best, **Larkwire** (344 species) and **Chirp!** (240 species, iPhone only). Both use Macauley Library recordings, and like Cornell's free 50-song **Bird Song Hero** are game-based.

Larkwire offers a free, web-based demo with 21 sounds, including Black-capped Chickadee, which can sound nothing like our Chestnut-backed. Chirp! allows you to choose a location for songs included, but user reviews note that it lacks winter calls. And choosing *California* songs as a set, for example, can add or leave out species unhelpfully.

As both Audubon and Cornell remind us, using recorded songs in the field can be inadvisable unless we are quite certain what the bird sounds we are broadcasting are saying, and know whether the live birds around us might respond in negative ways. This is similar to the question of whether "pishing", which simulates a passerine alarm call, is appropriate, even if it does bring curious (alarmed?) birds closer to the viewer.—MDAS Webmaster Dal Leite

For live links and past columns, see www.birdwideweb.com.

Field Trips

Wednesday, March 6, Contra Loma Reservoir. Carpool leaves Sun Valley at 7:45am. Or meet the leader at 8:30am at the Channel Point Parking Lot in Contra Loma Regional Park. Go east on Hwy 4 and exit at Lone Tree Way in Antioch. Continue south to Golf Course Rd and turn right. Continue to Frederickson Lane, turn right and continue into the park and the entrance kiosk. Fee required. Turn left and continue to first parking lot on right, Channel Point Parking Lot. Expect waterfowl and woodland, riparian/marsh, shore and grassland birds. Bring lunch and beverage. Leader: Paul Schorr, (925) 998-0070. Category 1.

ALMOND RANCH HIKE

Saturday, March 9. Join Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, John Muir NHS, and John Muir Land Trust in a joint partnership hike on Mt. Wanda to spot birds and learn about the JMLT Campaign to Save Almond Ranch (adjacent to Mt. Wanda). Begins at the Mt. Wanda Trailhead in Martinez at 9am and runs till noon. The moderate 3.5 mile hike starts steeply and levels out with vistas of the Carquinez Straits. Surrounded by grasslands and oak woodlands, this area attracts various species of woodpeckers, hummingbirds, raptors and flycatchers. Free and fun for the first 25 guests. RSVP required to Hannah@jmlt.org. www.jmlt.org

EXCLUSIVE: CURRY CREEK

Required registration opens **March 9** at savemountdiablo.org for this partnership hike with Save Mount Diablo to be held **Thursday, May 9.** Enjoy a chance to see Mt. Diablo's east side, not normally open to the public. Meet at the Park & Ride at 1000 Peacock Creek Dr in Clayton at 7am to carpool to the private property. On this 3-mile easy/moderate hike, pass a beautiful valley with rolling hills and valley oak as you walk along the creek, then transition to shady, riparian habitat. Expect warblers, maybe a Golden Eagle or two. Leaders Jerry Britten (925) 321-5332 and Maren Smith (925) 322-9477.

Tuesday, March 12, Mt. View Sanitary/McNabney Marsh. Meet at 9am at the Mt. View Sanitary Visitor Center. Exit from I-680 S at Arthur Rd, turn left and go under the freeway, or exit I-680 N at Pacheco Blvd, turn right onto Arthur Rd and go under the freeway. Arthur Rd will turn left. At .4 miles turn sharp left onto Mt. View Sanitary's private road. Drive through the entry gate, along the freeway and through the tunnel under I-680. Park and sign in at the Visitor Center. Trails may be muddy. Close-up looks at dabbling ducks; possibly bitterns and herons. After walking around the ponds, we will drive back through the tunnel to the viewing platform on the left to observe more birds and also complete a check list. Special projects may be underway, and we may bird at Martinez Regional Shoreline instead, depending on access. Leader: Steve Taylor, (925) 828-8810. Category 2.

Friday, March 22, Valle Vista. Meet at 8am at Valle Vista staging area off Canyon Rd in Moraga. From SR 24 in Orinda, take Moraga Way to Moraga. From Mt. Diablo Blvd in Lafayette, take Moraga Rd south to Moraga. At the Chevron station, go south 1 mile on Canyon Rd to Valle Vista. Expect 55-60 species; we should be finished by noon. Leader: Don Lewis, (925) 284-5480. Category 2.

YOUNG BIRDERS CLUB

Saturday, March 23, Briones. YBC Coordinator Juan Pablo Galván will lead this outing for birders age 10-20 and accompanying adults. For details, search Facebook for Mount Diablo Audubon Society Young Birders Club, or write jpgalvan9@gmail.com.

Wednesday, March 27, Lake Lagunitas. This very popular birding trip to Marin passes through varied terrain in the beautiful area of the northern slopes of Mount Tamalpais. Carpool leaves from Sun Valley at 7:30am. Cross the San Rafael Bridge to US 101 north. Take the first San Rafael exit, go left on 3rd Street. In San Anselmo turn right onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd, continue to Fairfax. Go left on Fairfax Bolinas Rd, follow to left turn on Sky Oaks Rd and continue to kiosk.

Entry fee required (\$8 last year). Drive to parking lot near foot of Lagunitas Dam. Approximate meeting time is 9:00 AM. After birding the nearby area, we will hike around Lake Lagunitas. We have often found Pileated Woodpeckers here. Leader: Hugh Harvey, (925) 935-2979. Category 3.

Saturday, March 30, Tomales Bay State Park. Carpool leaves 7am from El Nido Ranch Rd. Meet at 8:30 in the parking lot at Heart's Desire Beach in Tomales Bay State Park. After crossing the Richmond Bridge, follow US 101 north and take the first San Rafael exit. Go 2 blocks, turn left onto 3rd St. In San Anselmo, turn right onto Sir Francis Drake. Follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd through Inverness. Just over the ridge, turn right onto Pierce Point Rd. The park entrance is on the right. Entry fee required. Leader: Linda Shinn, (925) 597-0234. Category 2.

GRAYSON CREEK BIRDERS

Sunday, March 31: Citizen science survey of the creek with Friends of Pleasant Hill Creeks. Departs 8 am from the parking lot of the Pleasant Hill Library. (Note: The March survey will take place a couple of weeks later than the group's usual third Sunday of the month). Confirm with leader Alan Bade at alanbade@jps.net or (925) 330-1780.

Members and non-members welcome. No dogs.

- 1 Easy. Little walking, smooth paths
- 2 Moderate, more than one mile, possibly rougher terrain
- 3 Difficult. Many miles, rough terrain

Carpool Meeting Spots

•**Sun Valley Mall:** SW corner of mall lot at Willow Pass Rd and Contra Costa Blvd in Concord

•**El Nido Ranch Rd:** Exit Hwy 24 at St. Stephens Dr east of Orinda. El Nido runs parallel and north of 24. Park east of St. Stephens.

Trip Coordinator Hugh Harvey (925) 935-2979.

Trip Reports

Lake Merritt/Arrowhead Marsh at High Tide, Jan. 21:

After many stormy days, we enjoyed beautiful weather for our high tide birdwatching. We started at Lake Merritt, and we had quite a few birds in the trees around the science center. The numbers on the lake were down again, but the variety was pretty good. We saw both species of Goldeneyes, four species of Grebes and a surprise sighting of Red-breasted Mergansers. There were also some surprising additions of fake Snowy Egrets mounted on the edges of a few of the islands. We missed having a Burrowing Owl sighting as we started our time at Arrowhead Marsh. There were hundreds of Willets and some Marbled Godwits crowded onto the dock, with one very cooperative and photogenic Ridgway's Rail just below it. Other Ridgway's were seen and a couple of Soras put in an appearance as we were leaving (*photos Isaac Aronow*). A lot of our time at Arrowhead was spent trying to get good views of the Nelson's Sparrow that has been making a repeat appearance this winter. We finished our day checking out the rainwater pond and waters off of Garretson's Point. The usual reliable sighting of a Blue-winged Teal did not happen. The 13 birdwatchers in attendance saw 73 species for the day. Thank you for all that joined me.—*Sandy Ritchie*



Las Gallinas/Rush Creek/Schollenberger/Ellis Creek, Jan. 26: Fourteen participants enjoyed a lightly cloudy day with fairly mild temperatures. With the recent rains, there was a lot of water at each stop we made. The Las Gallinas ponds were mostly occupied by Buffleheads, Black-crowned Night-Herons (*photo Beth Branthaver*) and Pied-billed Grebes. There were a couple of Mute Swans, a few Common Mergansers and also a female Common Goldeneye. Yellow-rumped Warblers were present in extraordinary numbers. Some keen-eyed observers picked out a few Cackling Geese among all of the Canada Geese. Most of the 11 duck species we saw were in the field before the parking lot. Also of note were a few Great-tailed Grackles. There was so much water at Rush Creek Marsh that there were no shorebirds to be found. The ducks there were a repeat of what we had seen at Las Gallinas, so we quickly moved on to



Schollenberger Park, but not before spotting two Western Bluebirds as we were turning around. Schollenberger Park had a couple of new duck species, a nice Caspian Tern, American Avocets, Black-necked Stilts, Long-billed Curlews and Western and Least Sandpipers. The best sightings at Ellis Creek included last-minute appearances by a White-tailed Kite and a beautiful Red-shouldered Hawk. Also, a couple of people saw an American Bittern that was flushed as we walked along the different channels lined with vegetation. Our final count for the trip was 79 species.—*Sandy Ritchie*

Martinez Waterfront, Jan. 31: We birded McNabney Marsh from the north and south, a bit of the Pt. Edith trail, and parts of Martinez Regional Shoreline. Our 23 participants (*photo Linda Shimm*) identified 77 species. Highlights include 3 falcon species, Merlin, American Kestrel and a Peregrine Falcon, which landed on one of the flat islands in McNabney Marsh (*photo Isaac Aronow*). We had 14 species of waterfowl, which included up to 12 Blue-winged Teals. We also had a Caspian Tern flying near the old ferry pier at the Martinez Marina. This was the second of this species seen on our field trips in less than a week. The 5 gull species included a young Glaucous-winged Gull and 3 Thayer's (now Iceland) Gulls, all seen from the south observation platform for McNabney Marsh.—*Hugh Harvey*



Thornton Area/Cosumnes Preserve, Feb. 9: With partly cloudy skies, 15 birders traveled to the Central Valley to view the Sand Hill Cranes at the Eisenberg Wildlife Refuge near Lodi. Two women from UC Davis who had seen our calendar on the web decided to join us. It was nice having a younger generation along. Because of the wet winter, the seasonal ponds behind the Cosumnes Preserve were full of ducks. We also saw many cranes, although not as many as in years past, and flocks of Greater White-Front and Snow Geese. We also saw Shovelers, Stilts, and Green Winged Teal along with the usual Audubon's Warblers and Meadowlarks. We saw many Great Egrets and some Snowy Egrets. At the end of Woodbridge Road, we spotted a field covered with Snow Geese. All at once, they took off and flew right over us, making their in-flight calls. They then formed up in their usual "V" pattern and headed toward storm clouds over the Sierra. It made quite a striking scene, the lines of geese silhouetted against the dark sky. It was a great trip. We spotted 60 species, and the weather cooperated, holding off the rain until the end.—*Ethan Chickering*

Q: Which warbler will interbreed with the Hermit Warbler? *Answer on page 7.*

BIRDING CLASSES

Spring Birds Sounds Workshop

Two 2-hour classes and two 4-hour field trips
Classes: Tuesday, March 5 and 12, 7-9pm
Lafayette Library and Learning Ctr, Oak Room
Trips: Sunday, March 10 and 17, 8am-noon
Cost: \$40 MDAS members/\$50 non-members
7 spots remaining!

Spring is one of the best times to enjoy birding, so why not add to your enjoyment by learning some of the songs and sounds of our local birds? We will learn various techniques for learning bird sounds and focus on the common and special bird species we hope to hear during the two field trips. Taught by veteran birding instructor **Denise Wight**. See www.denisewightbirds.com.

To Register: diabloaudubon.org/education.php

Spring “Avian Treasure Hunt”

Three 2-hour classes and three 5.5-hour trips
Classes: Thursday, April 11, 18 and 25, 7-9pm
Lafayette Library and Learning Ctr, Oak Room
Trips: Saturday, April 13, 20 and 27, 8:30am-2pm
Cost: \$75 MDAS members/\$80 non-members
9 spots remaining!

Prepare for the migrant treasure hunt and sharpen your birding skills by better understanding how seasonal changes impact local bird distribution patterns. Expect broad migratory principles as well as practical birding tips. Naturalist **Juan-Carlos Solis** has over 20 years experience leading trips. See www.quetzaladventures.com.

To Register: diabloaudubon.org/education.php

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS:

Berkeley: Christina Tarr; *Clayton:* Robert Pimm; *Concord:* Lisa Gonzalez, Erin Luke, Julie Satchel; *Danville:* Kathy Fox; *Lafayette:* Mimi Bupp, Robert Raffel; *Martinez:* April McDonald; *Pleasant Hill:* Susan Heckly, Christina Lew, Marlena Weden; *San Francisco:* Glenne McElhinney; *Walnut Creek:* Jean Fiske, Christine Kass, Antonio Nafarrate, Jennifer Napper

Voracious Birds in Winter

Have you noticed larger numbers of birds at your feeders this winter? Customers are reporting lots of hungry goldfinches, both American and lesser, at nyjer and sunflower feeders throughout January and February. Many berries are ripe, so customers are beginning to see flocks of Cedar Waxwings and robins. Consumption at all feeders has grown substantially as House Finches, doves, sparrows and warblers tussle for each perch (*photo Michael Eliot*). The colder it gets, the more they eat.

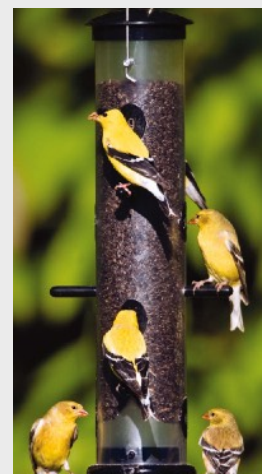
In winter, birds in your yard can be helped in several ways:

1. Provide a source of water for drinking and bathing. Even when it's cold, birds need to keep their feathers clean to help hold in the heat they generate.
2. Keep your feeders clean and filled with fresh seed. Seed left out on cold, damp nights or during rain can mold quickly. Wet seed can be dried in a warm oven for a few minutes or in a sunny window.
3. Provide a variety of foods, including suet, mealworms, Bark Butter and seed blends. These provide both needed nutrients and fats that help birds maintain energy and heat on cold nights.
4. You can also provide protection for food, such as feeder cages, to keep out unwanted birds such as jays and crows. These intruders will often try to scare off the smaller birds.
5. Try baffles to help keep rain and squirrels off feeders. You can also use hot pepper foods that birds enjoy, but rodents don't like.
6. Clean and replenish nectar in your hummingbird feeders at least weekly. Because of the high sugar content, mold and bacteria grow quickly in these feeders.
7. Clean out your bird houses and nesting boxes right away, since many species will be nesting soon. Wash them thoroughly to rid them of mites, and then allow drying indoors or in the sun before rehang.

For more information, drop into Wild Birds Unlimited or give us a call. And remember to mention that you are an MDAS member when you come in so that 5 percent of your purchase will go toward our donations to MDAS and Native Bird Connections.—*Member at Large Michael Eliot*



Wild Birds





Q: Which bird will interbreed with the Hermit Warbler?

A: Townsend's Warbler

Perhaps the most beautiful warbler of the West (photo Jean Halford),

the Townsend's Warbler spends the winter in California in oak woods and conifer forests, near the coast. The warblers that winter in California have shorter wings than those that winter further south in the highlands of Mexico and Central America, where it is often one of the most common species in some areas. They join mixed flocks of chickadees, nuthatches, vireos, kinglets and other warblers.

In its wintering grounds of Mexico and Central America, *Dendroica townsendi* harvests honeydew excreted by sap-sucking insects, along with berries and nectar. In breeding season, it feeds on insects, spiders, seeds and plant galls.

It nests in the tops of mature fir forests in the Pacific Northwest, the spruce-fir forests in Montana, Idaho and northwest Wyoming, as well as the boreal forests of Alaska and the Yukon Territory.

In late May, the male arrives on the nesting grounds and sings to establish territory. Between late May and mid June, the female builds a bulky, open cup nest and lays 3-7 eggs, which she incubates for 11-14 days. The young fledge after 9-11 days, but continue to be fed by their parents for a while.

The Townsend's Warbler hybridizes with the Hermit Warbler where their ranges overlap in Washington and Oregon. Hybrids of these two generally combine the unmarked yellow face of the Hermit Warbler with the yellow breast and black side streaks of the Townsend's. These hybrids are called "Heto" Warblers by birders in the Pacific Northwest.

The Townsend's warbler was among the many species collected by John Kirk Townsend during his expedition with Thomas Nuttall to the Pacific Coast in 1834. This first specimen was found along the Columbia River near Fort Vancouver, Washington. Though Townsend is credited with first describing the bird, Nuttall named the bird after Townsend, thus avoiding the convention against naming a species after oneself.

The oldest recorded Townsend's Warbler was a male at least 10 years, 8 months old when he was recaptured and rereleased during banding operations in California.

A group of warblers may be called a "bouquet," a "confusion," a "fall" or a "wrench" of warblers.—*Jean Halford*

**Olympic Peninsula BirdFest
With San Juan Island Cruise
April 12-14
olympicbirdfest.org**



**10th Annual Point Reyes
Birding & Nature Festival
April 26-28
pointreyesbirdingfestival.org**

**MDAS thanks our business partners.
Alphagraphics Walnut Creek
Native Bird Connections Martinez
Wild Birds Unlimited Pleasant Hill**



Celebrate Earth Day by Joining Us for this Unique Event!

**McNabney Marsh
Earth Day Cleanup & Bird Watching
Saturday, April 13, 2019**

Bird Watching with the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society

7:00am to 9:00am

Cleanup at McNabney Marsh

9:30am – Noon

Meet at Waterbird Regional Preserve Staging Area

We will start the day with a bird watching event hosted by the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society followed by a cleanup around McNabney Marsh on Waterbird Way in Martinez. Children 10 years and above (supervised by an adult) are welcome to participate. Reservations and signed liability forms are REQUIRED. Heavy Rain cancels.



Contact Heidi Petty for more info or to RSVP: hpetty@ccrcd.org



Mt. Diablo Audubon Society

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

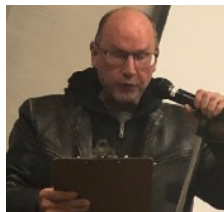
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Concord, CA



Cold weather sharpens the appetite of wild birds, notes Michael Eliot in his column (p. 6). This Nuttall's Woodpecker demonstrates his keen hunger by pursuing Bark Butter so enthusiastically, he paints his beak with it. (Photo Paul Schorr)



Clockwise from Left: Kent Fickett invites MDAS members to join a birding and cleanup event April 13 at McNabney Marsh (see p. 7); Cathy Castillo, Nancy Schorr and Linda Shinn manage shirt and raffle sales; Jeff Rich shares his passion for bald eagles; and members of Antioch's Troop 153 gather around Joshua Gamez, whose Eagle Scout project brought bat boxes to Big Break Shoreline. Tom Garry seeks volunteers to build and place nest boxes for bluebirds in Briones. To help the bluebirds, contact Georgette Howington at ghbirdscape@gmail.com. (Photos Lori Patel)