



the Quail

Mount Diablo Audubon Society

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

www.diabloaudubon.com/index.php

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July–August 2010

Looking Forward to a Fall Season of Birding Programs

Although Mount Diablo Audubon Society does not have general meetings during July or August, there are field trips to coastal birding habitats on the San Mateo Coast in July, and to Bodega Bay in August. Meanwhile, a full complement of interesting programs is on tap for September and beyond.

Among the speakers this fall will be Jay Holcomb, Executive Director of IBRRC, the International Bird Rescue Research Center. On June 8, Jay was named Oceana's Ocean Hero for 2010. Holcomb is currently leading IBRRC's bird rescue effort in the Gulf, working alongside Tri-State Bird Rescue to care for wildlife caught in the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Larry Arbanas will return with more of his incredible films, this time featuring *The Birds of Texas*. The Flora and Fauna of Mount Diablo State Park will be the subject of a presentation by one of our favorite photographers, Stephen Joseph. We will also be brought up to date on the Burrowing Owl conservation situation, and much more.



▲ *Burrowing Owl*
◀ *Diablo Trail, Mount Diablo State Park.*

Both photos Scott Hein

Audubon California Supports State Parks

As part of its continuing efforts to support California State Parks, Audubon California recently issued grants to two local Audubon chapters to work with State Parks on park land. The grants are funded by an endowment set up by Audubon California to provide long-term financial assistance to California State Parks for important conservation, restoration and public outreach projects.

Redwood Region Audubon received \$7,500 for restoration to create three acres of habitat for the Western Snowy Plover

at Humboldt Lagoons State Park, and conduct outreach to park visitors on the need to protect this endangered species. Morro Coast Audubon received \$2,500 to monitor bird populations at Morro Bay State Park and educate the public about birds and habitat in the area.

"Our state parks not only provide important habitat for birds and other wildlife, they are the places where millions of Californians experience the beauty of nature firsthand," said Graham Chisholm, executive director of Audubon California.

"One way that we can ensure that these special places are protected and enhanced is to bring Audubon funding and volunteers to them."

When Audubon California created the Audubon California State Parks Endowment in 2007, it was the most recent expression of a long-standing partnership between the two organizations. Audubon California continues to raise funds and contribute to this endowment, which is expected to pay out about 5 percent

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President's Corner Observations

By Jimm Edgar

By Maury Stern

We have just completed the update of the 1982 annotated Checklist of the Birds of Contra Costa County. We have printed 5000 copies and will make them available for free at our meetings. The original checklist did not include the western part of the county which has a lot of marshes, tidal areas and open bay. We have included all of West County in this revised edition. It has been a lot of work to bring the records up to date. The checklist basically shows every bird seen in Contra Costa County, the time of year, where it is most likely to be seen, has it bred in the County, and abundance. It should serve us well for many years.

Some of us know that we have partnered with the Wild Bird Club of the Philippines. Moses de los Reyes, our Volunteer Coordinator, met with them while in the Philippines. They are hosting the first Asian Bird Fair to be held in Asia. It will be held September 23-27, 2010. They have extended an invitation to our chapter and would pick up lodging for anyone who could attend, so I think one would just have to get there. If anyone has interest please let either Moses or me know and we can put you in touch with the right people.

As you know our Breeding Bird Atlas has been in print now for about a year. We sold quite a few and have recently donated a copy to every library in Contra Costa County; about 32 libraries I believe. We took them to a central location that will get them into the libraries within the next two months. Some people who teach bird classes suggested that so their students would have access to the Atlas. Good idea.

When you read this our June potluck will have taken place and as always it was a great evening. Our next meeting will be the first Thursday of September. Have a great summer!

Submit Contra Costa County sightings to Maury Stern at mbstern2@yahoo.com or (925) 284-5980 or send to EBB Sightings@yahoogroups.com.

May was the end of migration in Contra Costa County while June was time for nesting and fledgling birds.

Golden Eagles nested at Sibley Park. DV, GT 5/30, 5/31.

Young **Killdeer** were on the grass fields in Heather Farm Park on 5/31. HH.

On 5/23, CK saw a **Barn Owl** roosting in date palms in Kensington.

Anna's and **Allen's Hummingbirds** nested and fledged young in the Lafayette backyard of MS.

Nuttall's and **Downy Woodpeckers** nested and fledged young near the backyard of MS in Lafayette. (Look for the red mark on the forehead in the young woodpeckers.) DV found young **Downy Woodpeckers** in Huckleberry Preserve on 5/30. DV also found young **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** at Huckleberry Preserve on 5/30. They were also in the Lafayette backyard of MS.

Oak Titmouse fledged in Hap Magee Park in Danville on 5/11. RT.

Numerous young **Bushtits** were in MS's backyard in Lafayette.

JCh and DH found nesting **Brown Creepers** in peeling eucalyptus bark in Tilden RP on 6/1.

A singing **Canyon Wren** was in the oaks and rocks in upper Las Trampas RP on 5/31. PH.

HH found fledgling **Western Bluebirds** at Heather Farm 5/31.

Swainson's Thrush came to P&NS's backyard in Antioch on 5/12.

HN found a singing **MacGillivray's Warbler** on the EBMUD trail near Inspiration Point in Tilden RP on 5/22.

BYW had a bathing **Western Tanager** in her birdbath in Concord on 5/15, while P&NS had two at their birdbath 5/20.

Rufous-crowned Sparrow was at Sibley RP on 5/31. GT.

LL found at least one **Grasshopper Sparrow** near the Bull Valley Staging Area in the Carquinez Shoreline RP on 6/2. This is between Crockett and Port Costa on the Carquinez Scenic Highway.

A **Dark-eyed Junco** nest was on the ground near a trail in Huckleberry Preserve on 5/30. DV.

Black-headed Grosbeak adults and young were widespread. MOS.

BYW had nesting **Hooded Orioles** in her Concord yard 5/15.

There were many fledgling **Lesser Goldfinches** in Lafayette during the period. MS.

JCh Jim Chiropolis, DH Derek Heins, HH Hugh Harvey, PH Peter Humphrey, CK Christine Koundakjian, LL Laura Look, HN Harold Newman, P&NS Paul and Nancy Schorr, MS Maury Stern, GT Glen Tepke, RT Rod Thornton, DV Debbie Viess, BYW Betty Young Weber, MOS Many observers.



State Parks

» Continued from Page 1

annually to fund projects throughout the state park system selected by Audubon through a competitive process involving local Audubon chapters and California State Parks.

The relationship between Audubon and California State Parks goes back to the 1960s when the state was beginning to identify and prioritize the protection of key natural areas for their scenic, natural, historical and recreational potential. Since then, the two organizations have partnered on many conservation and education projects, with Audubon contributing not just funding, but technical support and volunteers as well.

"Audubon California has forged a unique, cooperative relationship with State Parks that enhances our common goals of protecting wildlife species and habitats across the State," said State Parks' Director Ruth Coleman. "One of the great benefits of this program is that it fosters a sense of investment in local state parks on the part of the chapters and volunteers involved with each project."

California state parks constitute a vital portion of conserved bird and wildlife habitat. Fifty state parks have been designated Important Bird Areas by Audubon California because of the essential habitat they provide for breeding, wintering and migrating birds. *Audubon California*

Welcome New Members

| | |
|--------------------|----------|
| John Barrella | Martinez |
| Mella Leibrand | Concord |
| Lisa M. and M. Tan | Antioch |

County Checklist

In 1982, a Mount Diablo Audubon Society Bird Population Study Committee compiled an outstanding reference to the abundance of bird species that could be expected within Contra Costa County at each month of the year. This work of Sally Steller, Norah Bain, Elizabeth Dickey, Lynn D. Farrar, Tom Lee and Jean Richmond was published as a checklist, and used extensively by field-trip leaders and members for many years.

But times change; and birds have wings and can fly. There were no Wild Turkeys or Great-tailed Grackles or Eurasian Collared-Doves anywhere around twenty-eight years ago. Now, under the leadership of Paul Schorr, a new group of members has revised the data, and a new Checklist of the Birds of Contra Costa County has been issued. Jimm Edgar, Maury Stern, Hugh Harvey, Denise Wight and Steve Glover worked with Paul to evaluate the presence of 161 species. Ellis Myers prepared the checklist for publication, and copies were printed on 100% recycled paper by Galaxy Press of Concord.

Copies of the checklist were offered to each person who attended the pot-luck dinner meeting on June 3. Single copies are free at future meetings, or you may send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Quail editor, address on Page 7. The checklist will also be available at Wild Birds Unlimited in Pleasant Hill.



Oiled Birds—How You Can Help

The International Bird Rescue Research Center is working closely with the main responder, Tri-State Bird Rescue of Maryland, and has a team of more than 20 veterinarians and wildlife rehabilitators on scene. Jay Holcomb, IBRRC Executive Director, says: "For those of you who are asking about ways that you can either support us or donate to us, I thank you for your generosity. I also want you all to understand that this entire oiled bird rehabilitation effort is being paid for by BP. This

is appropriate as they are the Responsible Party for this spill.

"If you would like to send donations then please keep in mind that your local wildlife rehabilitation organization really needs your help also. They care for the same wild animals that are being impacted by the spill. A pelican is a pelican whether is it tangled in fishing tackle or oiled! Please send support to your local wildlife rehabilitation organizations."

The Quail is published monthly except January and August by Mount Diablo Audubon Society, P.O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053. *The Quail* is printed on 30% post-consumer waste recycled paper. **The deadline for the September issue is August 10.**

As the devastating oil spill spread toward vulnerable wildlife and habitats, Audubon was there. Now we need your help. There's no need to take out your wallet. Go to the website below and vote for Audubon once a week until August 22. Tell your friends too. With enough votes, Members Project™ from American Express and TakePart will help fund Audubon's work to restore a devastated ecosystem. We've worked for birds, wildlife and communities in the Gulf for decades—help us continue long after the headlines fade.

Vote now at www.takepart.com/membersproject/vote

Audubon

We need your assistance to help Audubon continue its vital work in response to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The American Express Members Project is offering Audubon a special grant for its conservation efforts. We need your help—and that of your friends—to secure the votes needed to qualify. Start at <http://www.takepart.com/membersproject/vote> to register. Then, vote for Audubon today and once a week through August 21.

The top vote-getting group in each category of this American Express effort will receive a \$200,000 donation for its work. So tell your friends and family to vote too!

Audubon is recruiting and coordinating volunteers to assist in the emergency response and to provide the citizen science monitoring vital to long term recovery across the region. Our efforts are expanding with the impending launch of a Volunteer Response Center in Mississippi. Our policy team is playing an important role in securing urgent federal funding and assistance. They helped draft key Senate amendments to speed the distribution of previously appropriated coastal restoration money and to authorize the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to use dredged material from Gulf waterways to mitigate disaster impacts. Audubon's science team is working with other experts to develop and implement protocols for measuring and addressing the spill's impact on birds and habitat. Chapters and Centers are fully engaged and our on-the-ground experts have been essential in helping the media and the public to understand the immediate and long term consequences of the spill. Audubon has been working on the Gulf Coast for decades and we will be there to ensure the protection and restoration of its resources for the good of birds, wildlife and human communities long after the headlines fade.

From National Audubon Society

Q This bird is not listed in the new Contra Costa County checklist, but in the 1982 edition it was shown as being found occasionally in June and July. It is a species that is both zygodactylous and monogamous, and also omnivorous. When you observe this bird's behavior, you'll understand why most people think it's a bit cuckoo.

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

AADEEEGNORRRRTU

Field Trip Schedule

By Hugh Harvey

July

24 Saturday San Mateo Coast

August

21 Saturday Bodega Bay

Come Birding with Us This Summer!

①②③ Saturday, July 24 San Mateo Coast

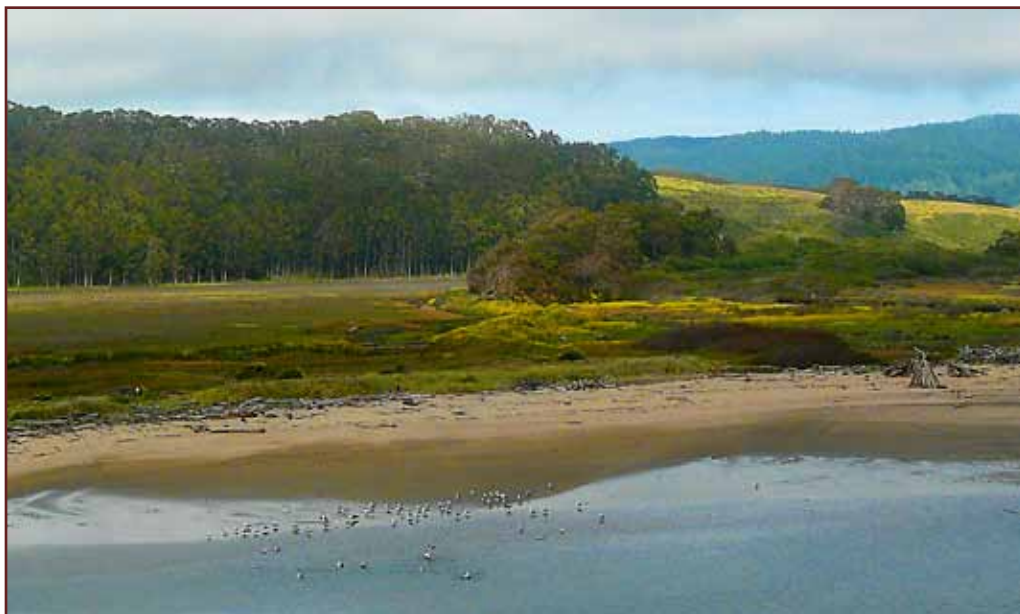
Leader: Maury Stern, 284-5980

Carpool leaves at 7:30 AM from Sycamore Valley Road Park and Ride. Meet at 9 AM at overlook at Pescadero Beach on Highway 1 across from Pescadero Road. Take Crow Canyon Road to I-580, go west to I-238, follow to I-880, then south to SR 92. Cross the San Mateo Bridge (toll) and continue to Half Moon Bay. Turn south on SR 1, go 15 miles to Pescadero Road, turn right into parking lot. Bring lunch and sunscreen—one can get badly burned on a foggy day at the seashore. Early returning shorebirds, gulls, possibly Bank Swallows. Category 1 or 2, with optional Category 3 extension to Año Nuevo Beach.

① Saturday, August 21 Bodega Bay

Leader: Fred Safier, 937-2906.

Carpool leaves Sun Valley at 7:30 AM. Meet in parking lot of Tides Restaurant on Bay side of Highway 1 in Bodega at 9:15 AM. Take I-680 across the Benicia Bridge (toll). Go west on I-780 to I-80 towards Sacramento, exit to SR 37. Follow SR 37 to Lakeville Road, turn right. In Petaluma turn left on E. Washington Street and continue on Bodega Road, Valley Ford Road and SR 1 to Bodega Bay. Possibilities at Bodega Bay include flocks of shorebirds including Black Oystercatcher, Wandering Tattler, Marbled Godwit, as well as terns, gulls, cormorants and much more. Bring lunch, liquids and sunscreen.



Western Gulls loaf on the sand bar at the delta where Pescadero Creek and Butano Creek join to form an estuary. Beyond is the Pescadero Marsh Natural Preserve, a popular spot for birders and the site of the Sequoia Audubon Trail. The preserve is a part of Pescadero State Beach.

Field Trips for Next Year

Another year of field trips is coming to a close. The Chapter has supported 14 leaders on more than 40 trips this year. Some trips are always made in the spring, some only in the winter. The object is to see as many birds as we can in the calendar year.

The membership's input is not only welcomed, but desired. These trips belong to you, the members, not us, the leaders. If you want to go to somewhere new, let us know. If you would like to lead a trip, let us know. If we are doing something wrong, let us know that, too.

The chance to do this is July 14. We will be meeting at Jean Richmond's house in Alamo at 7 PM to discuss next year's calendar. Our meeting will be less than two hours, light refreshment will be offered. For more details, please contact Jean at 837-2943 or Hugh Harvey at 935-2979.

Field trips are open to members and non-members, beginners and advanced birders. Weather or other contingencies may require changes. For updates, visit the MDAS website at www.diabloaudubon.com/index/php. Because most trips do not return until late afternoon, bring a lunch and drink and join us during our midday break.

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

Category ②: Moderate, one mile or more, possibly rough terrain

Category ③: Difficult, extensive walking on rough terrain.

Carpool locations: **Sun Valley**—Southwest corner of the Sun Valley Mall parking lot at Willow Pass Road and Contra Costa Boulevard in Concord. **Sycamore Valley Road Park and Ride Lot**—Just south of Danville, exit I-680 at Sycamore Valley Road to the east; the Park and Ride lot is on the left.



Trip Reports

North Briones, April 19. A sunny, but cool day was enjoyed by eight birders. We had an interesting start with busy House Wrens in the shrubs next to the parking area. A female was begging while a male was darting around, including between the birders a few times. The grasslands held Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Lark Sparrow with very close-up views of the latter. We had a great look at a male Orange-crowned Warbler alternately singing and preening. We even saw the orange crown! Summer arrivals included Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Ash-throated Flycatcher.

We watched for a while as a Golden Eagle flew back and forth over the nearby ridge tops, constantly harassed by American Crows and a Red-tailed Hawk. A Lazuli Bunting was possibly the highlight bird, plus we had a final treat of two American White Pelicans flying overhead. The final count was 52 species seen or heard. In addition, the expected spring wildflowers were enjoyed along the walk.

Cheryl Abel

Briones Regional Park, May 13. Seventeen members and guests spent a pleasant morning at Briones Regional Park. The big surprise was the lack of Lazuli Buntings, but other interesting birds were seen. 44 species included four American White Pelicans overhead, Allen's Hummingbird, Western Wood-Pewee, Pacific Slope Flycatcher, Ash-throated Flycatchers in large numbers, Brown Creepers at the cypress trees in Homestead Valley, and on the trail just after it leaves the main trail, numerous singing Orange-crowned Warblers and Wilson's Warblers, and a great look at a young male Western Tanager.

Maurry Stern

Sycamore Grove/Shadow Cliffs/Veteran's Park, May 20. Nineteen birders had one of our few nice, warm, sunny days this spring. Although we saw no out-of-the-ordinary birds, we did have good looks at most of the 64 species we tallied. Probably the best bird was a California Thrasher who scolded us for 10 minutes before flying within ten feet of us to punctuate his objection to our presence. Also nice for me was to see so very many fledged Oak Titmouse since they haven't been nearly as abundant in the past five years or so. Lots of baby sounds coming from nest holes and feeding activity abounded. Loved seeing five baby Pied-billed Grebes; and the rookery with baby Great Egrets, Double-crested Cormorants and Great Blue Herons is always nice. Thanks to all the excellent assistance from such enthusiastic birders, we had a grand day.

Bingham Gibbs

Outer Point Reyes, June 5. Foggy weather greeted us on arrival at our first stop on the day's trip, Drake's Beach. However it did not inhibit the enthusiasm of the 15 participants and proved only a minor inconvenience through the day. Our usual haunts were visited—Drake's beach, Mendoza and Nunes Ranches, the Fish Docks, Lighthouse and RCA Station. Our arrival at Drake's Beach was heralded by a very vocal Swainson's Thrush. Most notable however was the opportunity to watch a male and female Northern Harrier harass initially a Red-tailed Hawk and then surprisingly a young coyote, both of which appeared to have strayed too close to the nest. The resident Great Horned Owl was found at Mendoza. Moving on, good finds at the Fish Docks included Red-throated Loon, Pigeon Guillemot, recently fledged and adult Great Horned Owls, Red-breasted Merganser and a Black Scoter. Great views of overflying Peregrine Falcons were enjoyed at the Fish Docks and Lifeboat

Station. At the Lighthouse a Rock Wren proved notable as well as the scores of Common Murres. At the RCA Station we found one more Great Horned Owl before closing out the day's activities. All in all we managed to find a total of 61 species.

David Hutton

Principles of Birding Ethics

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

Code of Birding Ethics

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

1 (a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.

1 (b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1 (c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance can be minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1 (d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law and the rights of others.

2 (a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2 (b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2 (c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

3 (a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3 (b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

3 (c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

American Birding Association

No Child Left Inside

» Continued from Page 8

for everyone and lifelong memories were certainly created.

The field activities at Contra Loma Regional Park were preceded earlier in the spring by classroom activities at Jack London Elementary School. On March 10, Diana Granados from Native Bird Connections initiated this year's program by doing an introductory lesson on bird anatomy and behavior. The Red-tailed Hawk that she used during the presentation drew much enthusiasm and excitement from the students, a great way to promote this year's program. On April 21, Diana, Nancy and Paul Schorr collaborated to do a classroom presentation to introduce and instruct the students on the proper use of binoculars which had been purchased by MDAS. In addition, each student received a copy of the MDAS Field Checklist and

then they highlighted which birds were likely to be seen at Contra Loma Regional Park during the field activities in May. Concluding this lesson, the students were introduced to the book, *Bird Songs*, so they could learn and appreciate the vocalizations of the target birds. To continue this activity until the field trips, copies of the book were left with the teachers.

In summary, MDAS, through the No Child Left Inside Program, has made a strong commitment to fulfilling its mission of dedication to habitat conservation and environmental education. The successes of this program would not be possible without the continuing support and involvement of all of the MDAS volunteers.



MDAS Volunteer Austin Prindle helps students focus on a Barn Owl.

Photos by Paul Schorr.

Your participation is greatly appreciated. Thanks to each of you.

It should also be noted that MDAS is deeply grateful to the East Bay Regional Park District and the staff at Contra Loma Regional Park for their continuing support of the No Child Left Inside Program.

Greater Roadrunner • *Geococcyx californianus*

Contrary to popular opinion, the Greater Roadrunner says "Cooooos, coooooos!" and not "Beep, beep!" when it wants to pass.

The last time a Greater Roadrunner was confirmed in Contra Costa County was in 1986, along Morgan Territory Road. They are sometimes found during field trips along Mines Road in Alameda County. A Shasta County sighting was recorded during the December, 2008 Christmas Bird Count.

Roadrunners mate for life and build stick nests low in trees or cactus. Four to six eggs are hatched asynchronously, and sometimes unhatched eggs are not incubated following the successful hatching of others. The young are altricial, fledging in 18 days, and they begin hunting their own prey immediately. Most of a Greater Roadrunner's diet consists of lizards, snakes (including rattlesnakes), insects and caterpillars, rodents and birds. In the spring, one of their favorite foods is baby Gambel's Quail. Their table manners during the reptile course leaves something to be desired. Capturing a snake by its head to prevent use of the fangs, a bird will whip the snake over and over on the ground, breaking the spinal column with body slams until the prey stops moving.

The long, sturdy legs of the Greater Roadrunner allow the bird to achieve a stride equal to its own length of 20 inches



or more as it reaches a speed of a four-minute mile. As these birds prefer to run rather than to fly, it is thought by some southwestern native peoples that seeing a Greater Roadrunner in flight is an omen of an imminent and significant happening.

Greater Roadrunners have few predators—certainly not a coyote—but they may have a problem with Peregrine Falcons or other raptors. An encounter was recorded of an attack by a Cooper's Hawk that was

like a game to the Roadrunner. The Cooper's Hawk would dive at the Roadrunner, who kept running under a tree. Eventually the hawk landed on the ground, too exhausted to get up. So the Roadrunner ran out to taunt it. When the hawk finally rose up to fly away, the Roadrunner chased it down a dry streambed.

Greater Roadrunner, icon of the southwest desert, is the State Bird of New Mexico.

Ornithology Opportunities

Point Reyes Bird Observatory Birdathon, September 1–October 15. Come one, come all! Announcing the 2010 PRBO Birdathon, in support of PRBO's Conservation Science! PRBO is providing sound conservation biological data for organizations such as CA Fish & Game in decision-making processes that affect our lives and the conservation of our resources and wildlife; locally in the East Bay they are working collaboratively with the East Bay Regional Park, studying the Least Terns on Alameda, and studying shorebirds and their long-distance migration patterns. You're invited to participate in the Birdathon with your own birdathon (minimum \$25 contribution to PRBO for participation), take part in a mini-birdathon walk with a PRBO-sponsored birding walk, or support one of the teams participating in the birdathon. We are also looking to start a children's team in the East Bay (please contact Susanne Methvin, godwit2@comcast.net, 925-631-0339). There will be a fun-filled celebration at PRBO headquarters in January, 2011, with music, birding art-for-sale, food & wine, and awards! Please contact PRBO for more information: www.prbo.org; 707-781-2555 or contact Susanne, a committee member of the PRBO Birdathon.

Monterey Bay Birding Festival, September 23–26, Watsonville. "The California coast: from Condors to Snowy Plovers" is the theme of this event. The Monterey

Bay region has long been regarded as one of the greatest birding areas in the world. A wide variety of habitats—including mountains, shoreline, chaparral, sloughs, grasslands, and pelagic waters—a moderate climate, and the scenic geographic location guarantee a long and interesting bird list. www.montereybaybirding.org.

Kern Valley Hummingbird Celebration, August 7, Weldon. The Southern Sierra's Kern River Valley is one of the premier migration routes for six species of hummingbirds, come for a day of hummingbird appreciation at the feeders. Kern Valley Nature Festivals, PO Box 833, Weldon, CA 93283. http://kern.audubon.org/hummer_fest.htm. This event is free although a \$10.00 donation per adult is suggested to help defray the cost of feeding all of the birds at the Kern River Preserve.

Lindsay Wildlife Museum, 1931 First Ave., Walnut Creek. "Still-Life Birdwatching" is an art show featuring a selection of Aimee Baldwin's detailed crepe paper replicas of birds found in the greater Bay Area. Aimee's cruelty-free "Vegan Taxidermy" evokes the presence of life through its naturalistic poses and meticulously hand-crafted feather details. Exhibit hours: Wed.–Sun. 10 AM–5 PM, through September 6. Art show available for viewing with regular museum: Adults \$7, Seniors 65+ \$6, Children 2–17 \$5, Members & Children under 2 free. Info: http://vegantaxidermy.com/. 925-935-1978.



"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

John Muir (1838–1914)

Mount Diablo Audubon Society meets on the first Thursday of each month, except July and August, in the Camellia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farms, 1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek. Everyone is invited.



MDAS Board of Directors

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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.
 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.

Please send The Quail by: US mail E-mail _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ E-mail _____

Please make your check payable to:

MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY and mail with this application to:

Membership Chair 1932 Golden Rain Road #4 Walnut Creek, CA 94595

MDASQuail@earthlink.net
 215 Calle La Mesa
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Students from Jack London Elementary become birders

No Child Left Inside

By Paul Schorr

On Tuesday, May 25th and Thursday, May 27th, the No Child Left Inside Program concluded this year's activities by taking sixty-five fifth-grade students from nearby Jack London Elementary School to Contra Loma Regional Park and Reservoir in Antioch. Their teachers, Evelyn Jones and Amy Martin and several parent volunteers were joined by fifteen MDAS volunteer leaders to enjoy two mornings of good birding. The MDAS volunteers included President Jimm Edgar, Brian Murphy, Hugh Harvey, Gloria Cannon, Joel Summerhill, Claudia Hein, Mike Tischler, Austin Prindle, Jenny Papka, Carolyn Lie, Barbara Minneman, Jody Sherrard, Dia DeRose, Nancy Schorr and Paul Schorr. On Tuesday the weather was cool and overcast with a slight breeze, but on Thursday rain interrupted the very last of the activities. The students were divided into six groups and they rotated among six birding stations on or near Loma Island, each station being monitored by MDAS volunteer(s) with a spotting scope.

Each of the students adeptly used a pair of binoculars that had been purchased by MDAS for purposes such as this and other Education Outreach programs. Brian Murphy borrowed several bird mounts from the Lindsay Wildlife Museum to use as teaching aids at the birding locations. These bird mounts certainly complemented and enhanced instruction and learning. Following this activity the group walked from the lake area to an open area with views of the oak-dotted hills, an introduction to the California savannah. From this location the students learned the importance of the nearby California Quail habitats, the Western Bluebird/Tree Swallow nest boxes and the nearby bat houses. After lunch, as in MDAS field trips, the groups tallied a total of 35 and 32 species respectively. Highlights included the following observations: roosting Barn Owl in a palm tree, a successful Osprey with a fish, Anna's Hummingbird chicks in their nest and an active



Field Trip Chair Hugh Harvey instructs at lakeside.

Bushtit nest. Due to the rain on Thursday, we completed the checklists on the school bus. The volunteers all had many teachable moments and they were rewarded with the subsequent excitement and enthusiasm of the students. At the conclusion of each day's program, a copy of the book entitled *Backyard Birds of California*, was presented to every student by Jimm. These books were also purchased by the Chapter. All in all, it was a very rewarding experience

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