



the Quail

Mount Diablo Audubon Society

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

www.diabloaudubon.com/index.php

Volume 58, Number 9

June 2013

Americans in Chile ♦ Hugh Harvey and Friends

Chile astounds visitors with incredible scenery and spectacular bird diversity. This month, Hugh and Rosita Harvey, Eugenia Larson, Mona Lange, Nancy Salsig, and Bill and Linda Maddaus will share tales and photos from their November journey to some of the best birding spots in Chile.

One of the first stops on the itinerary was Torres del Paine National Park in Patagonia, considered by some to be the world's most spectacular national park. The rugged, diverse landscape of rocky mountains, open grasslands and forests crisscrossed by fjords and rivers supports a huge variety of birdlife, including 118 separate species. Some of the world's rarest bird species, like the Crested Caracara, are found in Torres del Paine. Other bird species include Black-necked Swans, flamingos, ibis, Pygmy Owls, Austral Parakeets and Southern Lapwings.

One unforgettable sight in Torres del Paine is the Andean Condor, often spotted soaring as high as 15,000 feet in search of carrion. This massive condor weighs 16 pounds, is four feet long and has a ten-foot wingspan.



The Andes. Photo by Eugenia Larson.

A pelagic trip from Valparaiso provided a glimpse into the ecosystem supported by the Humboldt current. This current is cold and rich in nutrients and contains a high diversity of invertebrates and fishes, all of which support several seabirds as well as marine mammals. In these productive waters, it is possible to find a variety of pelagic birds flying in large numbers and many coastal birds nearer to the coast. More than forty species of seabirds can be seen off of Valparaiso, several of which are endemic.

Besides the year-round residents, the Humboldt current hosts many seabirds from different corners of the globe, at different times of the year, and for different reasons. Some come from Antarctic and Subarctic waters at the end of the summer on their way to the northern Pacific; and others come throughout the year from remote islands of the western Pacific and the southeastern Indian oceans in incredibly extensive foraging trips, to feast on squid,

fish, and shrimp that thrive in these seas off the Chilean coast.

Our intrepid explorers will discuss these birds and relate other adventures from their trip, so plan on enjoying a lively, entertaining program at the potluck!

Potluck Dinner

The potluck dinner meeting on June 6 will be at our regular meeting place at The Gardens at Heather Farm. Doors open at 6:00 PM. Members bring a main dish, salad, or dessert and their own utensils and coffee cup. Please mark your serving plates. Coffee, tea and punch will be provided. Bring your own wine if you wish. Accolades and thanks are owed to our Hospitality Chair, Nina Wong, and her volunteers for setting the ambience.

There will be a silent auction at the June 6 potluck! The list of items to be offered is topped by one of Harry Adamson's waterfowl lithographs, donated by Adamson's

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Meeting Schedule

The next general meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be **Thursday, June 6**, in the Camellia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farm, Walnut Creek.

6:00 PM Doors open

6:30 PM Dinner is served

Please remember to bring your own utensils and cup.

8:00 PM Announcements

8:15 PM Speakers:

Hugh Harvey and Friends

The next meeting will be Thursday, September 5. There will be no meeting in July or August.

President's Corner

I attended my fourth Audubon California State board meeting a few weeks ago. The meeting was held in Klamath Falls, Oregon and the focus of our time was the Klamath basin of which half is in California and half in Oregon. The Klamath Basin is in a terrible drought and water is a premium. There are many entities that want and need water. Fishing concerns, agriculture, tribal issues and of course migratory waterfowl. There are thousands of acres of wetlands in the basin and unfortunately they are the last in line for water and in a drought that means a disaster for birds. A group called Sustainable Northwest has taken the lead role to try and get a plan together and try and bring in all the groups. We heard from the director and what is currently happening. Because water is so tight and wetlands have little water and when waterfowl come in to refuel at this important stopping place on their migration, they are hit by avian cholera and many die. In many cases they just bypass the basin and head further south in winter or north in spring, but these extra miles without refueling weakens them and their success of breeding is diminished. Audubon is trying to determine if they can have any role in trying to help solve these problems. It is huge problem that affects thousands of acres. We will watch and see what happens.

We were on our way home a couple of days ago and were coming down a street near our house. I noticed a car was stopped in the street and then saw a single female Wild Turkey walking slowly across the street in front of the car. As we stopped and saw what I thought was perhaps a California Towhee running behind the Turkey. When a got closer I saw it was a single turkey chick with the mom. It was tiny! Kind of fun to see.

We were in New Orleans a while back for a few days and I went out to the large city park there for a few hours to do some birding. I saw a few things I don't see here like Blue Jay and was reminded what fun sport birding is. One can almost anywhere

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By Jimm Edgar

go out and see something of interest. Back home last week I led our annual trip up the south gate of Mount Diablo State Park. We had a great day and I was reminded what a gem we have in our back yards with this wonderful State Park.

Our annual potluck is coming up June 6. This is always one of the highlights of the year. I hope to see you there.



This colorful bird of prey has a reputation of hovering as it hunts for small rodents or lizards, then swooping down for the kill. Insects, caught on the wing, are also a major part of the bird's diet.

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

AACEEEIKLMNRRST

Welcome New Members

Georgette Howington	Martinez
David Little	Martinez
Lita Gloor-Little	Martinez
Jill Miller	Oakland
Dan and Joan Murphy	San Francisco
Bruce Mushrush	Martinez
Zachary Perron	San Ramon
Joseph and Donna Saba	Walnut Creek
Linda Stadlbauer	Brentwood
Lori Stoneman	San Ramon
Peter Trueblood	Oakland
Donnell Van Noppen	Oakland
Kartika Widjaja	Hercules

Cheers for Volunteers



Eugenia Larson and Mike Robertson at the *We Love Mother Nature* event on May 4 at Wild Birds Unlimited.

Our Audubon Chapter appreciates the generous efforts of MDAS members for their contributions to the following events so far this year:

- The 17th Annual San Francisco Flyway Festival at Mare Island with Moses and Michelle de los Reyes, Ariana Rickard, Pat

Schneider, Carol Pahl, Diane Malucelli, Jolynn Lacasse and Bev Walker.

- John Muir Birthday/Earth Day Celebration at Martinez with Diane Malucelli, Valerie Haak, Mike Robertson, Kathleen Gonzales, Elizabeth Leyvas, Jimm Edgar, Jane Sedley and Bev Walker.

- We Love Mother Nature at Wild Birds Unlimited Pleasanton Hill store with Diane Malucelli, Cevina Targum, Debbie and Norm Kirshen, Mike Robertson and Eugenia Larson.

The support of our volunteers gets our chapter involved with the community and helps people better understand our natural world and what Audubon is all about. And the bonus for each volunteer is meeting and sharing knowledge with new people.

Bev Walker, Volunteer Coordinator Pro Tem

Dinner and Auction

There will also be a number of fine books, such as a signed book of paintings by Robert Bateman, the exceptional Canadian artist, and naturalist.

Also included is the new book *Mount Diablo • The Extraordinary Life and Landscapes of a California Treasure*, featuring the art of photographer Stephen Joseph.

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A very fine original painting by Bev Walker's mother of a gull on pilings will vie for your bids.

The AviSys Birding software version 6 with guide, retailing for \$99.95, could bring your birding records up to date for less.

Please note: We will only be able to accept cash or checks for payment.

Observations

By Maury Stern

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

Bird Migration is continuing. Most of the expected warblers have arrived and started nesting. Flycatchers of many types came through in large numbers and the breeding ones have been arriving since mid-April. Swainson's Thrushes have come in small numbers to date and usually peak during May. The wintering birds have mostly gone away to the north or into the mountains. Shorebirds have almost finished their time here; some went into breeding plumage before migration—Red Knots, Dunlin, and Black-bellied Plovers.

A few **Brant** were in Richmond off Canal Street 4/20. LK, BM.

Wood Ducks were seen along the Orinda Connector Trail 4/10, and 4/21. LK. Also at Iron House Sanitary District 4/17, AL. KB saw 12 at Valle Vista Staging Area 4/18.

American Bitterns were at Dow Wetlands 4/18. AL. There were 7 at the Iron House area 4/21. LK.

Green Herons were at Newhall Pond in Concord 4/16. DM. KM saw 3 at the Lafayette Reservoir and FS saw young in the nest at Heather Farm Pond 5/5.

LK and BM saw 34 **White-faced Ibis** near Jersey Island Road 4/20. There were 4 there 4/26. PS. KF saw 1 at the West County Wastewater Treatment plant in Richmond on 5/3.

A **Bald Eagle** was seen from the Orinda Connector Trail 4/10 by BD, and by KB at the Valle Vista Staging Area of the Upper San Leandro Reservoir 4/18.

Swainson's Hawk returned to east county in mid-April. AL, LK, BD, BM.

Golden Eagles were at Mitchell Canyon 4/14. HT; Morgan Territory 4/21. TM; Sibley Volcanic Park, PB, HT, JH; and the Briones Crest Ridge 4/27.

KB had a **Merlin** near her Lafayette yard 4/18.

Peregrine Falcons are nesting at Castle Rock in one of the wind caves. The young are up and standing near the edge of the site.

AL saw or heard **Black Rails** at the Dow Wetlands, Big Break, and Bay Point Re-

gional Shoreline. 4/18 to 4/27. LK and BM heard them at Martinez Regional Shoreline 4/20.

LK and BM saw two **Common Murres** off Miller-Knox Park shoreline on 4/20.

A **Greater Roadrunner** was in Brentwood 4/11 and 4/13. DW, KP, JS, LK, BD.

LK and BM heard a Northern Saw-whet Owl near San Pablo Reservoir 4/13.

Common Poorwills were at Mitchell Canyon 4/13 and 4/20. LK, BM, JA.

Black-chinned Hummingbirds were near the end of Bethel Island Road. LK, BM, PS, JR.

Calliope Hummingbirds were numerous along White Canyon near Mitchell Canyon in the flowering black sage from 4/10 to 4/20. LK, BM, LL.

Rufous Hummingbirds are still heading north. EL 4/12. BP 4/19 and DH 4/19.

Unusual for Tilden Park Inspiration Point Trail, **Acorn Woodpecker** was seen 4/12 on a walk led by AK.

AW and LK and BM saw the first **Olive-sided Flycatchers** on 4/20 at Nimitz Way in Tilden and Mitchell Canyon.

Western Wood-Pewees made their first appearance 4/20 at Valle Vista Staging Area. DW.

Hammond's Flycatchers were numerous at Donner and Mitchell Canyons. MS, BC. AL saw one at Crockett Hills Regional Park 4/20.

There were two possible sightings of **Dusky Flycatcher** at Mitchell Canyon 4/19. MR, TF.

There were up to 20 singing **Say's Phoebe**s in the Brentwood area 4/11 and 4/13. DW, LK, BM.

BM and LK saw the earliest **Ash-throated Flycatchers** at Somersville Road near Black Diamond Mines 4/13.

The first **Western Kingbird** was in Brentwood 4/7 and again 4/13. LK, BM.

Horned Larks were along the Briones Crest Trail 4/27. MS and group.

A **Purple Martin** flew over JR's Alamo house 4/11.

Rock Wrens and **Canyon Wrens** were seen by many at Black Diamond Mines. AL saw a Canyon Wren at the Riggs Canyon Preserve at the south end of Mount Diablo SP 4/10.



Hutton's Vireo. Photo by Beth Branthaver.

Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were first seen by DW 4/7 at Mitchell Canyon and 4/8 on North Gate Road. SR.

An early **Swainson's Thrush** was in the Lafayette yard of JA 4/7. JS saw one on 4/23 in Tilden RP near Jewel Lake.

Cedar Waxwings continued with the last flock seen 5/5 at Heather Farm. FS.

A few **Yellow Warblers** were seen. 4/20 at Iron House. LK, BM. 4/30 Orinda Connector Trail. ES. and 5/2 Mitchell Canyon. SR.

Hermit Warblers were widespread. They were frequently associating with **Townsend's Warblers**.

The **MacGillivray's Warbler** at Inspiration Point Trail continued to be seen by many.

MR had a 3-day visit of a **Common Yellowthroat** to his backyard native plant garden and pond during the end of April. There was a short visit the previous two years about the same time by a Common Yellowthroat.

BD saw a **Yellow-breasted Chat** in Holland Tract 4/28.

Western Tanagers arrived around 4/20 and were widespread. CD, BM, LK, TF. JS saw two behind the Moraga Library 4/27.

Chipping Sparrows were along Briones-Mount Diablo Trail near Borges Ranch Trail 4/13. JA.

AW saw a singing **Sage Sparrow** in the flowering black sage along White Canyon 4/20.

Grasshopper Sparrows were more common than usual this year. SR, AL, LK, BM, MS.

A few **White-throated Sparrows** remained. JR at her Alamo yard had two until early April and another one 4/25-4/28. TF saw one at Castle Rock Park 4/21, and MS saw one at Lafayette Reservoir 4/27.

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Field Trip Schedule

By Hugh Harvey

June

1 Saturday..... Outer Point Reyes
22-23 Saturday-Sunday..... Yuba Pass/Sierra Valley

July

20 Saturday..... San Mateo Coast

August

17 Saturday..... Bodega Bay

② Saturday, June 1 Outer Point Reyes

Leader: David Hutton, 938-4485.

Carpool leaves Sun Valley at 7:00 AM. Meet 8:30 AM at Bear Valley Visitor Center in Olema. From I-80 in Vallejo, follow SR 37 19.1 miles to Atherton Avenue, exit and turn left, cross US 101 to San Marin Drive and continue for 3 miles. Turn right on Novato Blvd for 6 miles to stop sign, then turn left on Point Reyes-Petaluma Road for 7 miles to another stop sign. Turn right across the bridge, go 3 miles to SR 1. Turn left into Point Reyes Station. After a stop at the Bovine Bakery for coffee and pastries, continue out of town towards Olema, then turn right onto Bear Valley Road. Visitor Center is off Bear Valley. We are hoping for migrants. Bring lunch and liquids. Weather is unpredictable.

② Saturday-Sunday, June 22-23 Yuba Pass/Sierra Valley

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

This is always a productive and well-favored weekend trip to the northern Sierra which requires driving and walking, some of it over rough terrain. Saturday we will bird in the Sierra Valley for basin birds. Sunday we will be birding in the Yuba Pass area for mountain birds. Meet at the parking lot at the top of the pass at 7:00 AM Saturday morning. Make motel reservations now! Closest motels are in Sierra City, 11 miles down Highway 49 to the west. Herrington's Sierra Pines (530) 862-1151 or (800) 682-9848 is one of the most popular; or try Yuba River Inn (530) 862-1122 with cabins and kitchenettes (cash or check only). Bassett's Station (530) 862-1297 at Highway 49 and Gold Lake Road has some accommodations and meals, High Country Inn (530) 862-1530 or (800) 862-1530 is across Hwy. 49 from Bassett's. Also, in Calpine is Sierra Valley Lodge (530) 994-3367 or (800) 858-0322. More listings are at www.sierracity.com/Stay/LodgingCamp.html Campgrounds are located at Yuba Pass and Chapman Creek downhill to the west. Sites are available first come/first serve for only three days at a time. Longer term reservations can be made at (877) 444-6777, but there is an additional \$10 charge for this service. After June 17 call Wild Birds Unlimited (925) 798-0303 for information.

Hermit Warbler
Meg Sandri



Woodpeckers, raptors and warblers.

Come birding with us!

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

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

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

Category ③: Difficult, extensive walking on rough terrain.

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

Trip Reports

April 13, Pine Canyon. A congenial group of 20 birders enjoyed perfect birding weather in Pine Canyon. Due to low winter rainfall, creek crossings were less treacherous than in years past. A total of 57 species were seen or heard. Highlights included very good looks at the resident pair of Peregrine Falcons, one of which was actively feeding on the remains of a large white bird. Unfortunately both birds were very distressed by the encroachment of a pair of rock climbers who had strung a hammock on the rock face in close proximity to the nest site. (Perhaps next year MDAS volunteers can work with Mount Diablo State Park staff to discourage climbers from disturbing the site during nesting season.) Bullock's Orioles were also plentiful, and it was a three-vireo day with Cassin's, Hutton's and Warbling Vireos seen or heard. We also spotted a number of sparrow species, including Spotted and California Towhee and Lark, Song, Lincoln's, White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows and Dark-eyed Junco.

Nancy Wenninger

April 20, Mines Road. While the hills appear to be green from a distance, it was obvious as we drove Mines Road that winter had not been very wet. Flowers we have seen in the past were not seen and the grass is already drying. Still, at least we had water in Del Valle Reservoir this year. The twelve participants in our trip identified 73 species, starting at Murietta's Well just outside Livermore and finishing in San Antonio Valley and the upper reaches of Del Puerto Canyon Road. Highlights were: a Cedar Waxwing flock at Murietta's Well, Lawrence's Goldfinches in several places, four grebe species on the reservoir, a Bald Eaglelet in the nest with an adult, California Thrasher, Phainopepla, a Killdeer with 3 chicks during our lunch stop, Ash-throated Flycatchers and Western Kingbirds, five swallow species, an active Lewis's Woodpecker nest hole and

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Trip Reports

» Continued from Page 4

Wood Ducks south of The Junction, and Tri-colored Blackbirds east of the same junction. We ate ice cream and had cold drinks while we did our checklist at the outdoor seating of The Junction. This area was shared with many bikers, some leg-powered, some motor-powered. It was a beautiful day. *Hugh Harvey*

April 24, Del Puerto Canyon. Sixteen participants showed up for the annual MDAS's trip through Del Puerto Canyon. The day dawned warm, cloudless and was well up into the 80s by lunchtime. A brief stop was made at the Westley Rest Area on Interstate 5—there, we were off to a good start with sightings of Western Kingbirds and a Wilson's Warbler. The early part of Del Puerto yielded only hearing a Grasshopper Sparrow; until a few years ago and before much of the land had been converted to dairy use, these were seen regularly. However at Milepost 3 in the small arroyo that crosses the road, on the north side, we encountered our find of the day, a brightly plumaged, male Lark Bunting. At Graffiti Rock we had numerous sightings of Rock Wrens; however, no Costa's Hummingbirds were encountered at their usual spot associated



Lark Bunting. Photo by Beth Branthaver.

with tree tobacco plants. From Owl Rock up to Frank Raines Park, of note, we found Lark Sparrows, Bullock's Orioles, Phainopeplas, Greater Roadrunner, Ash-throated Flycatcher. Other prominent finds included Rufous-crowned Sparrow and Green Heron. Lawrence's Goldfinches and House Wrens were seen during lunch at the off-road vehicle park. Finally we found Lewis's Woodpecker on San Antonio Road, approximately 1/2 mile south of the Junction Café. Fortified with ice cream from the Junction Café we tallied our list and found we had seen 69 species. *David Hutton*

North Briones Regional Park, April 26. Seven birders visited North Briones in search of birds and wildflowers. Wildflowers were poor but birds were good. A pair of Golden Eagles sat side-by-side on a gate above Briones Crest Tail. One was adult, the other juvenile. In that area there were Horned Larks and Grasshopper Sparrows just off the trail near Upper Sindicich Lagoon. There were two Lazuli Bunting males at Lower Sindicich Lagoon. On the trail up from the entrance were Cassin's Vireos, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and many singing Orange-crowned and Wilson's Warblers. Near the parking area were many House Wrens. *Maury Stern*

Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, April 30. Eleven MDAS members enjoyed a clear, warm and breezy/windy day to participate in the chapter's annual spring outing to BDMRP. Perhaps the most sought-after bird was a Canyon Wren and the group was not to be disappointed as we saw and heard a singing bird along the Chaparral Loop Trail. Of the total 47 species seen or heard, other highlights included: exceptional views of four male Lazuli Buntings, exceptional views of a pair of Hermit Warblers, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Grasshopper Sparrow, Ash-throated

Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Hutton's Vireo, Cassin's Vireo, three wren species (Canyon, Bewick's and House), and a Red-tailed Hawk feeding chick(s).

Paul Schorr

Mount Diablo, May 9. Members and guests went up the south gate entrance to Mount Diablo for our annual trip. It was a chilly morning with some wind. After a brief look at the gate we proceeded to Rock City. We had lots of birds and could have spent a lot more time. Fred Safier, who birds the mountain a lot, said this was the most

birds he had ever seen there. We had great views of Ash-throated Flycatchers, a Sharp-shinned Hawk and Hutton's Vireo. At the junction we had a few Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, House Wren and a Hermit Warbler. At Green Valley Road we saw a California Thrasher singing on top of tree. We also had Wrentit here and Sage Sparrow. As we were preparing to leave after lunch at Juniper campground, eight American White Pelicans flew over for our 42nd species of the trip. *Jimm Edgar*



Canyon Wren at Black Diamond Mines.



Hermit Warbler at Mount Diablo.

Both photos by Beth Branthaver.

Observations

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Blue Grosbeaks were at Jersey Island Road at the usual area 5/2. TF saw one at an unusual spot at Black Diamond Mines 5/2.

Lazuli Buntings arrived about 4/13 and are now widespread. BM, LK, MK, SG, TF, JB.

MM saw a flock of **Tricolored Blackbirds** near Kellogg Creek in Los Vaqueros Park 4/27.

Many **Hooded** and Bullock's Orioles continue to be seen.

The Pine Siskin irruption has not ended yet.

Lawrence's Goldfinches were seen 4/10 at Black Diamond Mines. PS. Sky Ranch in Martinez 4/22. AL; Shell Ridge 4/28. DS.

JA Jeff Acuff, PB Pat Bacchetti, KB Kristen Baker, JB John Blake-lock, BC Bill Chilson, BD Bob Dunn, CD Cedric Duhalde, JE Janet Ellis, KF Kathy Francone, TF Tracy Farrington, SG Susan Greef, JH Jim Hargrove, BH Bob Hislop, DH David Hutton, AK Alan Kaplan, MK Marilyn Kinch, EL Eugenia Larson, LL Louis Libert, MM Mike Marchiano, TM Tim Miller, KM Kai Mills, BP Bernt Pettersen, MR Mark Rauzon, JR Jean Richmond, SR Sam Roberts, MR Mike Robertson, FS Fred Safier, DS Dan Sandri, PS Paul Schorr, ES Ed Schoenberger, JS Judi Sierra, JSt Julia Starr, MS Maury Stern, HT Holly Thomas, AW Alan Wight, DW Denise Wight.

Charles Lucien Bonaparte

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seabirds, later writing a paper first describing the bird, which was given the name Wilson's Storm-Petrel in honor of Alexander Wilson.

In Philadelphia Charles continued his quest for knowledge of natural history and at the age of 21 he became a member of the American Philosophical Society and the Academy of Natural Sciences. His colleagues were many of the leading naturalists of the time, including William Cooper, James Audubon and Thomas Say.

Say was instrumental in enabling Bonaparte's major contribution to American ornithology—his revision of Alexander Wilson's work, *The American Ornithology*, which was published in 1825. Bonaparte corrected Wilson's errors in nomenclature and taxonomy and included all new species of birds discovered in America since Wilson's death in 1813. In this endeavor, Bonaparte named both Say's Phoebe and Cooper's Hawk. This work solidly established Bonaparte's reputation as an ornithologist.

James Audubon and Charles Bonaparte were good friends—Charles was the first subscriber to Audubon's *Birds of America*—but the friendship became strained in later years, in part because of a difference of opinion on the naming of Cooper's Hawk.



Wilson's Storm-Petrel, off Hatteras, NC. Photo © Jeff Poklen, Monterey Seabirds.

Bonaparte next wished to review the taxonomy of birds of the world, and decided that this could best be done in Europe. He returned to Rome in 1826 where he studied the birds of Italy and became increasingly involved in politics. He spent two years studying museum collections in England, the Netherlands and Germany. In 1840, on the death of his father, Charles became 2nd Prince of Canino and Musignano. In 1850 he moved to Paris, where he remained until his death in 1857.

Bonaparte's Gull was originally described by George Ord and named *Sterna philadelphia*. This was changed to *Larus bonapartii* by William Swainson to honor Bonaparte for his contributions to American ornithology while in Philadelphia. Later changed to *Larus philadelphia*, the Latin name now—as of July 2012—is *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*. The genus *Zenaida*, including Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*), White-winged Dove, and Zenaida Dove of the West Indies, honors Charles Bonaparte's wife Zénaïde.

Ornithologist William Swainson, for whom Charles Bonaparte had named Swainson's Hawk, wrote that Bonaparte had been "destined by Nature to confer unperishable benefits on this noble science."

American Kestrel ♦ *Falco sparverius*



The handsome American Kestrel, smallest of the falcons, is readily found in all parts of Contra Costa County. It is a cavity nester, but does not create its own cavity; it will use not only woodpecker holes, but also nest boxes, including those meant for Barn

Owls or Wood Ducks.

The former name Sparrow Hawk—still in colloquial use—reflects this raptor's penchant for taking songbirds in flight, as do other falcons. The scientific name *Falco sparverius* means "falcon of the sparrows." As is the case with many beneficial predator species, the kestrel is valued for the role it plays in keeping insect and small rodent populations in check. While American Kestrels feed mostly on crickets and other insects, their diet is varied and includes small reptiles, amphibians and rodents. Therefore, they need open space where grasshoppers, voles and other preferred prey are plentiful. Useful to them, too, are power lines where they perch and wait for a meal to appear. They also need places to nest, so ideal American Kestrel habitat consists of a complex of open grassy fields, pastures, highway and power line rights-of-way, woodland edges, perches in the form of trees, shrubs, utility wires or power poles, and natural or artificial nesting cavities.

The American Kestrel Partnership, with which Mount Diablo Audubon Society is associated, is a project of The Peregrine Fund working to restore habitat for these colorful hawks. They



American Kestrel. Photo courtesy American Kestrel Partnership.

have a Kestrelcam at <http://kestrel.peregrinefund.org/index.php?action=webcams>. Five eggs laid in April were expected to hatch on May 24. Since the nestlings will not fledge for about a month, take the opportunity to watch these five American Kestrels as they begin their new life.

Charming Chickadees

By Mike Eliot

Chickadees may be just about everyone's favorite backyard feeder bird. These petite black, white and tan birds flit from place to place and bring smiles to all when they alight on a feeder. Described as friendly, cheery, or a ray of sunshine, chickadees are the darlings of the backyard birdfeeding world.

Chickadees are bold birds and are easy to attract to feeders. They often display little fear of humans and will stand their ground against larger birds at feeders.



Chickadees tend to feed one at a time because there is a hierarchy that allows the most dominant bird to feed first. Generally, chickadees take one seed from the feeder—sometimes choosing with care to get the heaviest seed—and they fly away to eat it and return for more. Their favorite food is oil sunflower seed, but they also eat striped sunflower seeds, peanuts and suet.

Chickadees are very vocal as they call to their mate to announce their find of food or a warning. Because chickadees generally do not migrate, they are good at finding food sources, and other birds such as nuthatches, kinglets and woodpeckers sometimes join them in foraging for food. They have particularly strong legs that let them hang upside down while searching for food.

Chestnut-backed Chickadees are the most common chickadees that feed in this area. They are common at seed and suet feeders, and love Bark Butter. They also forage high in trees and spend quite a bit of time upside down in search of food.

Mountain Chickadees are less common at feeders and often forage at the tops of trees for spiders and larvae. Black-capped and Carolina Chickadees are found mostly in the Eastern US. They look virtually identical so you need to know their range to identify them.

Next time you see a chickadee at your feeder, notice its antics and see if you too can make it your friend.

Mount Diablo Audubon Society

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

MDAS Board of Directors

(Area code 925 unless specified)

- President: Jimm Edgar 510-658-2330
- Vice President: Paul Schorr pkschorr@comcast.net 757-5107
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Mount Diablo Audubon Society meets at 7:00 PM on the first Thursday of each month, except July and August, in the Camellia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek. Everyone is invited.

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Bonaparte's Gull. Glen Tepke photo..

Charles Lucien Bonaparte Prince of Ornithology

Charles Lucien Jules Laurent Bonaparte, was born in Paris on May 24, 1803, the son of Napoleon Bonaparte's younger brother Lucien.

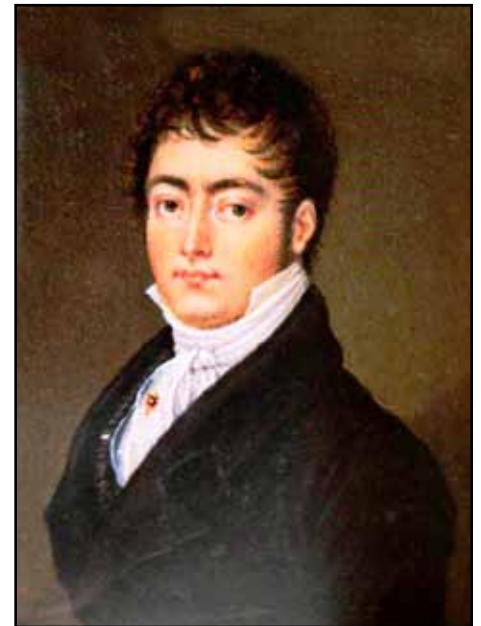
But at this chaotic time Napoleon was furious with Lucien, and, fearing fratricide, Lucien took his family to Rome where he found protection under Pope Pius IX. By the time Charles was seven, Napoleon's power over Rome and the Pope boiled over, and Lucien set out for the United States. Instead, through a fiasco of mishaps of weather and politics, their entourage landed in England, where the family settled under a sort of "house arrest".

Charles was given a copy of Linnaeus's *Systema vegetabilium*, from which he discovered a love of natural history. He collected birds, butterflies and snakes, keeping a small collection of fish in a garden pond. He wrote careful documents of his collections.

After four years of "exile" in England, the tables were turned in 1814, as Napoleon

had been defeated and was exiled to Elba. Lucien and his family were free to return to Italy. A year later, Napoleon and Lucien had become reconciled and Lucien served as advisor to his elder brother. Then, after the Battle of Waterloo, Napoleon was exiled to the Island of Saint Helena; Lucien and his family returned to Rome. Charles, an intelligent and well-tutored teenager, studied plants, insects, animals and birds. He decided to write his own book on the birds of Rome. One of the birds he had shot in the Roman Campagna—the outskirts of Rome—he could not identify, and he sent the specimen to the eminent Dutch ornithologist Temminck at Leiden. The bird proved new to science, and Charles was credited with the discovery of the Moustached Warbler.

In 1822 Charles married his cousin Zénaïde Laetitia Julie Bonaparte—a marriage arranged by his father and uncle Joseph. Napoleon had named Joseph as



*Charles Lucien Bonaparte
Museo Napoleonico, Rome*

King of Spain and Naples, but by the end of 1813, Joseph had been deposed and was living near Philadelphia. The young couple set sail to the United States to live with Zénaïde's father. On the voyage Charles made notes and collected specimens of

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