



the Quail

Mount Diablo Audubon Society

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

www.diabloaudubon.com/index.php

Volume 52, Number 6

March 2007

Transpacific Migration • Peter Pyle

On March 1, discover the amazing movement patterns of the Albatross and other open ocean creatures as Peter Pyle, Institute for Bird Populations wildlife biologist, presents his research on Transpacific Migration. Find out how Pacific Ocean migrants overcome the hardships and risks of long-distance travel through and over inhospitable and food-deprived ocean. The great flights of the Albatross, which come 4000 miles to California to get food for their chicks, will be a primary focus. In addition, Mr. Pyle will discuss the fasting of whales, tuna, Great White Sharks and other marine animals, as well as the surprising over-water journeys of various shorebirds, land birds, insects, and bats.

Peter Pyle worked as a Farallon Island Biologist for the Point Reyes Bird Observatory for 24 years, studying bird, bat, and butterfly migration as well as the habits of the Great White Shark. He and his work with the Great White Sharks are the subject of a book by Susan Casey titled "The Devil's Teeth: A True Story of Obsession and Survival Among America's Great White Sharks". Mr. Pyle currently works for the Institute for Bird Populations where he conducts research on changes in the abundance, distribution, and ecology of, primarily, North American bird populations. In addition, he is a Research Associate for the California Academy of Sciences. Mr. Pyle is the author of "The Identification Guide to North American Birds, Part I" and is an expert on aging and sexing of Passerines.

Join us for a fascinating evening with a truly unique local wildlife biologist.

Birding Information

John Kopchik will present the Habitat Conservation Plan for East Contra Costa County. John is a Principal Planner for the C.C.C. Community Development Department, working in the Conservation Program Division. He is the Project Coordinator for a Joint Power Authority of cities, the County, and special districts preparing a Habitat Conservation Plan for Eastern Contra Costa County. His other duties include policy analysis and formulation related to water and natural resource issues, coordination of park and open space funding, and assisting with the Department's Geographic Information System Program. John has worked for the County for 12 years and has a B.A. degree from U.C. Berkeley in Environmental Science.



BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSS are easily distinguished from other albatross species by their dark plumage and relatively small size, although their wingspan can still reach up to 7 feet.

Nesting primarily on remote beaches in the Hawaiian archipelago, individual birds are known to undertake journeys from Hawaii to northern California to find food for their young. These birds were photographed near the Farallon Islands.

Meeting Schedule

The next general meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be **Thursday, March 1**, in the Camellia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek. (Map on page 7).

7:00 PM Birding Information

7:25 PM Announcements

7:40 PM Social time, refreshments,* door prize

8:05 PM Speaker: Peter Pyle

** Please remember to bring a cup.*

April 5: Bill Bousman • Changes in Breeding Birds

President's Corner

I would like to comment on a couple of chapter items. First, the San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival at Mare Island is put on by the Napa-Solano Audubon chapter. We have participated in the Festival every year and it has been very worthwhile for us to be there. A number of volunteers manned our booth again this year and one of our members, Denise Wight, led a class for beginning birders as well as a field trip for beginners. Shirley Ellis, our volunteer coordinator, worked hard to put all of this together. Thanks to Shirley and the other volunteers.

Another item I wanted to mention has to do with the poisoning of ground squirrels in Eastern Contra Costa County. You may have seen articles regarding this issue in the Contra Costa Times. One of our members discovered the poison being widely distributed in several places. We wrote letters to the county board of supervisors, the mayor of Antioch and the county agriculture department to find why this was happening and why it was being allowed. Our greatest concern is that this poison would eventually find its way to foraging raptors and very likely lead to their death. As of this writing we are waiting to meet with governmental agency representatives and hopefully get answers and some action to get this stopped. All of us can help be stewards of the land around us if we are careful to watch for things that do not appear to be right. That does not mean being a pain in the you know what all of the time, but it does mean being diligent. Sometimes people just don't realize they are in error, other times it is deliberate. Either way we can be of help

The last thing is just a good word on Heather Farm Park. This little urban park is a gem in our midst. The natural area, though small, is a haven for wildlife. One feels they have gotten away from the city just by walking around the park. Recently, Hugh Harvey discovered a Redhead in the pond. It was staying close to a small flock of Ring-necked Ducks that are wintering there. A Redhead is a fairly rare winter visitor in Contra Costa County and here we have one right in our back yard. Be sure and take advantage of this wonderful little park.

Welcome New Members

Barbara Dover	Brentwood
Tom Farr	Lafayette
Teresa Gula	Martinez
Barbara Minneman	Martinez
Moses De Los Reyes	Antioch
Teresa Duddy	Concord
Kenneth & Anna Evilsizor	Danville
Michele Ward	Danville
Margo Watson	Walnut Creek

What You Can Do

✓ Get ready for spring by planting native plants for hummingbirds and other visitors. Salvias are good choices. Read the article in the May 2006 *Quail* (www.diabloaudubon.com/newsletter/Quail_May_06.pdf).



✓ If you are knowledgeable about things audio-visual, join our team of volunteers to supervise such matters at our general meetings. Call Shirley Ellis at (925) 938-3703 for information.

✓ Come on a field trip with Mount Diablo Audubon and bring a friend or two. Everyone is welcome.



Inbreeding season of early summer, these black birds have white or buff feather tufts over each eye. They may incubate their eggs by wrapping the webs of their feet around them.

Unscramble these letters, or turn to page 6 for the answer to this bird's identity.

ABCCDDEEELMNOOORRRSTTU

Bob Gallagher

Despite its great distance from our area, Ida Clayton Road was once one of our popular field trips. Several flower species were special on that trip. The photograph Bob Gallagher took of the Fawn Lilies, during our 1994 field trip, is especially memorable. It was shared with the chapter at our June potluck that year.

Throughout our lives, we often hear that change is the only constant. Since 1974, Bob and Betty Gallagher have supported Mount Diablo Audubon Society. For years members met at their home one Friday every month to prepare the *Quail* for mailing. Birding news and other events were shared as we worked at their large family table. Finally, coffee, tea and pastries were served while Bob's latest pictures, slides or videos were shown when the work was completed. Many of those slides were often shared with the Chapter at our June potluck.

Bob and Betty participated in many field trips, Christmas Bird Counts, and made numerous cross-country trips in their camper, most notably to Alaska and Wisconsin. They joked about how prices had changed, comparing the cost of the camper to the original cost of their Concord home. Though they lived in that house for more than 50 years, it is no longer the house they bought. As their family changed and grew, so did the house, enough to raise their 13 children.

The world changed again Monday, February 5, with the death of Bob Gallagher. We at Mount Diablo Audubon join Betty and her family in mourning Bob's passing and in celebrating his life. Bob was a patient, loving man, willing to accept many into his fold. He was seemingly never so short of time as to be unwilling to share with others, his subtle humor always present, usually joking about himself.

We no longer visit Ida Clayton Road on an annual field trip. The Fawn Lilies may or may not still be there, but their memory remains because of Bob's photograph and his willingness to share it with us. The memories of Bob remain, also.

By Hugh Harvey

The Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) has declined in the East Bay. In 2004, a check of 19 historical nest cliffs in Contra Costa and Alameda counties revealed that fewer than half were still occupied by breeding pairs, in spite of the fact that many of the nest cliffs are on protected lands. Although many factors may be responsible for the decline of the falcon, a primary cause appears to be the loss of rangeland and grassland habitat by human activities. Studies on diet and foraging habits support the hypothesis that Prairie Falcons require healthy grasslands with a sufficient prey base, such as ground squirrels. It is precisely such rangelands that are being lost to development in the East Bay. We need to identify the ecologically most valuable areas for preservation. Radio-tracking of Prairie Falcons will help us do that.

The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD), with financial support from Save Mount Diablo and other backers such as the Contra Costa County Fish & Wildlife Commission, has embarked on a radiotelemetry study of several pairs of Prairie Falcons that nest in the East Bay. Most of the pairs nest either on Mount Diablo State Park or EBRPD lands. A primary goal of this effort is to identify where the falcons forage. Telemetry studies on Prairie Falcons nesting at Pinnacles National Monument in central California have shown that the falcons require much larger home ranges and travel greater distances while foraging than previously thought. Lands far from a nest site may be just as vital to the success of a Prairie Falcon nest as the cliff itself.

Being a wide-ranging species that seeks out the grassland ecosystems it needs for foraging, the Prairie Falcon represents an “indicator species.” It can serve as a gauge for the health and condition of grassland habitat at the larger landscape level and help answer the question, “Does the grassland habitat in the East Bay support sufficient biodiversity?” The ground squirrel represents a “keystone species,” because a host of species are dependent upon it for food, (kit foxes and Golden Eagles), or its burrow systems, (Burrowing Owls, California red-legged frogs and



PRAIRIE FALCONS may be found in any of the States and Provinces west from Saskatchewan and Texas and in Mexico. Breeding habitat requires cliffs for nest sites, as at this location in Lava Beds National Monument in California.

California tiger salamanders). By identifying and working to preserve key foraging habitats for an indicator species such as the Prairie Falcon, we will ensure not only its long-term persistence in the East Bay but also lend umbrella protection to the entire assemblage of grassland and range-dependent species. In addition, the information gained will assist land managers in determining vegetation management strategies on public lands.

Radiotelemetry studies require trapping the animal, attaching a transmitter and then tracking it. For the first two steps we rely on the skill and patience of Brian Latta of the Santa Cruz Predatory Bird Research Group. His method of capturing a falcon involves setting up nets near a falcon nest cliff, placing a live (non-releasable) great-horned owl in front of the nets, and then waiting for the resident falcon to return. The owl is a mortal enemy to falcons and they respond to its presence by trying to drive it away. Diving at the owl they become caught in the nets. Once caught, the falcon is quickly hooded and processed. A small backpack transmitter is harnessed to the falcon and the harness straps are sewn together with biodegradable thread. Upon release, the falcon quickly preens the harness below its feathers such that only the short antenna

remains visible on the back of the bird. Tracking is accomplished via airplane during weekly flights.

Falcon locations from the first season's tracking have been mapped via GIS by EBRPD staff. The maps are kept confidential to protect both the falcons and land owner property rights. Preliminary results show some interesting trends. Prairie Falcons in the East Bay are wide-ranging and several birds overlap in their use of foraging areas away from their nest locations. The falcons use both public and private lands. On public lands there appears to be a difference in use between grazed lands and those excluded from grazing, with the former receiving higher use. For example, one falcon that nested at Mount Diablo State Park foraged preferentially at Cowell Ranch State Park, a park that is currently grazed. Finally, it seems clear that Prairie Falcons avoid developed areas. We have also learned the fate of one of our birds—its remains were found in a Great Horned Owl nest on Mount Diablo.

We are continuing to collect data on the falcons through the winter, and plan to track more birds next year. The data will be analyzed in greater detail once we have completed two or more seasons of tracking.

The timing of our work is extremely important, as the region faces many challenges in land use planning and management as development proceeds. We believe the information will assist in realizing the goals of the East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan, a blueprint for regional habitat planning and development. But there is also a greater meaning to our work. The Prairie Falcon has persisted in the drier areas of the East Bay Area for millennia. Indeed, the Plains Miwok recognized the Prairie Falcon as “wek-wek” and believe that “wek-wek” helped create their people and “everything, everywhere, so they can live.” It would be a loss to us all if there came a time when “wek-wek” could no longer persist on the Mountain.

Dr. Douglas Bell is Wildlife Program Manager for East Bay Regional Park District (dbell@ebparks.org).

Field Trip Schedule

By Hugh Harvey

March

- 3 Saturday Capay Valley
 *15 Thursday San Leandro Reservoir
 31 Saturday Black Diamond Mines
 * Note change of date.

April

- 7 Saturday Garin Regional Park
 14 Saturday Pine Canyon
 26 Thursday Del Puerto Canyon
 28 Saturday Mines Road

May

- 2 Wednesday Mount Diablo State Park
 9 Wednesday Mitchell Canyon
 19 Saturday East Contra Costa County
 24 Thursday West Briones Regional Park

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.diabloaoudubon.com/index/php.

Because most trips do not return until late afternoon, bring a lunch 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.

El Nido Ranch Road—Take the Acalanes Road/Upper Happy Valley Road exit of SR 24, west of Lafayette. El Nido Ranch Road is parallel to and north of the freeway. Park just east of the intersection with Acalanes Road and on the north side of El Nido Ranch Road.

Customary carpool expense is \$3-5 for short trips, \$5-10 for longer trips, plus tolls and entry fees shared among driver and riders.

① Saturday, March 3 Capay Valley

Leader: Hugh Harvey, 935-2979.

Carpool leaves from Sun Valley at 7:30 AM. This is a 225-mile car caravan trip to Yolo County. We will be going west of I-505 on SR 16, following Cache Creek northwest about 40 miles into Colusa County and almost to SR 20. Bald and Golden Eagles are possible, as well as Lewis's Woodpecker, Common Merganser and Canyon Wrens. Bring a lunch.

② Thursday, March 15 San Leandro Reservoir

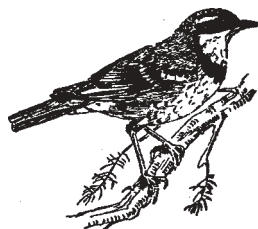
Leader: Don Lewis, 284-5480.

Meet at 8 AM at Valle Vista staging area off Canyon Road. From SR 24 in Orinda, take Moraga Way to Moraga. From Mt. Diablo Blvd in Lafayette, take Moraga Road south through Rheem and continue to Moraga. At the Chevron station, go south on Canyon Road to Valle Vista.

③ Saturday, March 31 Black Diamond Mines

Leader: Eugenia Larson, 806-0644.

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



Coast Varied Thrush
Ixoreus naevius naevius
Birds of Golden Gate Park
Joseph Mailliard
1930

Although no special rarities were found, we did see or hear 44 species around the visitor center and along the trail to Little Yosemite. Four thrush species were seen: Western Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, American Robin and Varied Thrush. Also noted were Purple Finch, Pine Siskin and Hutton's Vireo. Many other expected species of the habitat were seen.

Hugh Harvey

Las Gallinas/Shollenberger, January 27.

Forecast for rain may have kept participation low, but five members spent a dry day birding. We birded at Las Gallinas Sanitary District and Shollenberger Park, with a brief stop at Rush Creek Open Space in between. Expected herons and waterfowl all cooperated. A Peregrine Falcon was seen at Las Gallinas. Several Blue-winged Teal, a specialty at Shollenberger, were seen along with large numbers of Bufflehead and Common Goldeneye on the Petaluma River. Three birders continued on to the Petaluma Adobe area to check out some possibilities noted on sightings hotlines. Eurasian Collared-Dove was seen. 88 species were seen or heard.

Cheryl Abel

Trip Reports

Putah Creek, January 6. A day of superlatives at Putah Creek/Lake Solano. Expected pleasures materialized: Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Osprey, Phainopepla, Dipper, the beautiful scenery. Unexpected pleasures were added: Peregrine and Prairie Falcons, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Virginia Rail, sun, no fog, and balmy temperatures, and some even saw a Pileated Woodpecker. 12 cars, 24 birders, 91 species!

Fred Safier

Sunol Regional Park, January 18. Twelve birders from Mount Diablo Audubon Society visited Sunol Regional Park on a regularly scheduled field trip.

January Observations

By Steve Glover

Submit Contra Costa County sightings to Steve Glover at countylinelines@sbcglobal.net or (925) 997-1112.

Five Cackling Geese were at Meeker Slough near Richmond on 1/1 (LL). Eleven more cacklers were at Heather Farm Park in Walnut Creek 1/26-2/1 (HH). The latter birds were thought to represent the race *minima*.

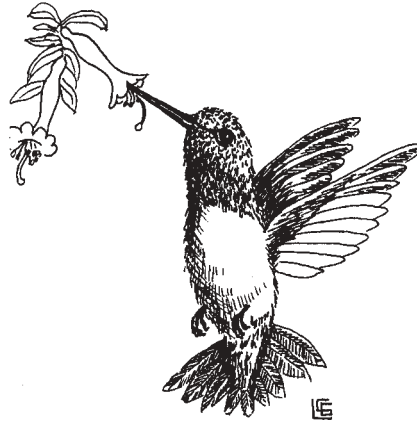
At least two male Eurasian Wigeon were at the Albany mudflats 12/28 (LL). Another or possibly one of the same wigeons was near Meeker Slough, north of Point Isabel, on 1/1 (NB).

A pair of Redheads was a surprise find at Heather Farm Park, Walnut Creek, 1/15 (HH). The male was present through at least 1/29 (HH). The male Tufted Duck found on the Eastern Contra Costa County Christmas Count was still present through at least 1/2 (MB). A Long-tailed Duck was along the Pinole/Hercules shoreline on 1/29 (KS, LL). Amazingly, the bird was first spotted from a train! A male Red-breasted Merganser, also found on the CBC, was still present through at least 12/26 (JL, SH). An immature male Barrow's Goldeneye was at Clifton Court Forebay near Byron 12/29 (EP).

Two adult Bald Eagles were at Lafayette Reservoir 1/6 (DW, LG); one adult was present there 1/17 (MM). More unusual was a young Bald Eagle at Point Pinole Regional Shoreline on 1/20 (Paula and Kevin?). An immature

Swainson's Hawk flying north over Byron Hot Springs on 1/29 may have represented an early spring migrant (BB). A Ferruginous Hawk over the Bear Creek Trail, Orinda, on 1/15 was unusually far west for this species (JP).

Four Clapper Rails were at Meeker Slough near Richmond on 1/1 (LL); this



remains the most accessible place in the county for this species.

A single Burrowing Owl was at the Concord Airport on 12/16 (PK). Two more Burrowing Owls continued near Meeker Slough, Richmond on 1/1 (NB). Short-eared Owls were big news this month. On 1/15 at least five were found around the Byron Airport (KR). A flood of observers noted as many as five birds through at

least 1/29. Short-eared Owls were once reliable at this location (and were even once confirmed nesting) but they have been quite sporadic in recent years.

A Pileated Woodpecker was on the ridge near the intersection of Skyline and Pinehurst Roads 1/16 (SS). This is slightly further north than most recent reports.

A Phainopepla was around the ball fields at Castle Rock State Park, Walnut Creek on 1/1 (JCS).

A Fox Sparrow thought to represent the red eastern race was in the Nortonville section of Black Diamond Mines Regional Park on 12/16 (DW). White-throated Sparrow reports slowed to a trickle, though it is likely that most birds present earlier in the winter are still present. One in a Martinez yard was present through at least 1/2 (CA). Another White-throated Sparrow was at Heather Farm Park, Walnut Creek, 1/26-29 (FS, HH, PS).

Cheryl Abel, Nel Benningshof, Bill Bousman, Matt Brady, Laura Gee, Hugh Harvey, Steve Huckabone, Patrick King, Jim Lomax, Laura Look, Mary Malec, Ed Pandolfino, John Poole, Kathy Robertson, Fred Safier, Paul Schorr, Juan Carlos Solis, Kirk Swenson, Sylvia Sykora, Denise Wight

Trip Report

Thornton/Cosumnes Preserve, February 3. Ten MDAS birders met for the field trip to the Cosumnes River Wildlife Refuge for viewing the Sandhill Cranes. We met at Westgate Landing Park and spent a little time birding the area. From the park, you could hear the Sandhill Cranes calling. Once at the preserve we birded for about three hours and got a total species count of 60.

The weather was ideal. Jean Richmond showed the group two ponds on the way to the preserve where a great number of waterfowl were spotted. I estimate the total number of Sandhills at Cosumnes to be 30-40. Quite a few came in for landing while we were there. All in all a great trip! Thanks to all who participated!!

Chick Chickering

Audubon's New Energy Policy

As it becomes increasingly incumbent to confront global warming, Audubon has called for major changes to address the needs of our great open spaces and endangered species, while working to solve our profound energy challenges. Audubon and other environmental leaders have unveiled their platform for reducing global warming while ridding the nation of its dangerous addiction to oil.

Among Audubon's priorities for Congress are:

- A reduction in greenhouse gases that cause global warming, particularly through improved energy efficiency and development of clean, renewable energy sources,

- Stiffer protections for public lands threatened by oil and gas development, especially the Arctic Refuge, and

- Passage of a Farm Bill that greatly improves funding for critical conservation programs.

In its first 100 hours, the 110th Congress passed HR 6, which sets up a fund to invest in clean, renewable energy sources while repealing billions of dollars in subsidies and tax breaks to big oil special interests. Audubon activists across the country helped mobilize support for the bill.

Now is the time for immediate action on energy, global warming, protection of public lands, and improved funding for conservation programs. You can participate by signing up for the Audubon Advisory.



A big thank you to the following list of members who volunteered their help at the Eleventh San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival on February 3-4 on Mare Island:

We appreciate your help. The conservation gods are watching.

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| ★ Cheryl Abel | ★ Gene Fletcher | ★ Brian Murphy |
| ★ Ethan Chickering | ★ Liede-Marie Haitsma | ★ Maury Stern |
| ★ Ruth Chickering | ★ Kathy Kelly | ★ Beverly Walker |
| ★ Laurel Coltart | ★ Ron Kline | (Above left) |
| ★ Susan Cooper | ★ Diane Malucelli | ★ Cecil Williams |
| ★ Carolyn Erdman | (Above right) | ★ Bob Wisecarver |

San Joaquin River

The San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge encompasses more than 6,500 acres of riparian woodlands, wetlands, and grasslands that host a diversity of wildlife native to California's Central Valley. Established in 1987 under the authority of the Endangered Species and Migratory Bird Conservation Acts, the refuge has also played a major role in the recovery of Aleutian Cackling Geese.

Within the borders of the San Joaquin NWR is one of California's largest riparian forest restoration projects: 400,000 native trees have been planted across 1,700 acres of river floodplain.

Riparian forests, which once covered large portions of California's Central Valley, have been greatly reduced due to state and federal water projects and diversions. The San Joaquin River NWR's important riparian habitat is host to many rare animals. Swainson's Hawks nest in the canopy of tall cottonwood trees. Herons and cormorants form communal nesting colonies within the tops of the large oaks on Christmas Island. Endangered riparian brush rabbits have been reintroduced to their historic habitat.

An elevated observation platform on Beckwith Road provides terrific opportunities to view large flocks of Aleutian Cackling Geese that make the refuge their winter home. A visitor information kiosk and interpretive panels narrate the story of the refuge. The observation platform and parking area are open from one-half hour be-

fore sunrise to one-half hour after sunset seasonally when the geese are on the refuge. The limited facilities of San Joaquin River Refuge can be reached by driving 8 miles west of Modesto on State Highway 132, north on Gates Road, and west on Beckwith Road.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Double-crested Cormorant

Phalacrocorax auritus



An excellent swimmer and diver that can search for fish under water for more than a minute, its feathers are not waterproof. Thus the common sight of these birds with wings spread out to dry. They feed mostly on small, schooling fish and have the habit of coming to the surface, then flipping the fish into the air, catching it head first, and gulping it down.

the Quail

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Mount Diablo Audubon Society

• a nonprofit organization dedicated to habitat conservation and environmental education •

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The Garden Center

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.



Ornithological Opportunities

Grab your binoculars and head for the **Olympic Peninsula BirdFest**, Friday, March 30 to Sunday, April 1, in Sequim, Washington. Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, Black Oystercatchers, Peregrine Falcons, and Pygmy-Owls will be sporting their finest spring plumage for this celebration. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, kayaking, salmon banquet, and many other presentations. A schedule for all events of the festival will be found at www.olympicbirdfest.org.

The Oakland Museum of California exhibit **Bringing the Condors Home**, a compelling look at *Gymnogyps californianus*, has been extended through August 26, 2007. The traveling exhibition was organized by the Ventana Wildlife Society, whose 20-year effort to restore the endangered species, with the help of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has the California condor flying wild again.

Bringing the Condors Home highlights this singular bird and the technology, research efforts, and people working to save it from extinction. When the last wild condor joined 26 others in captivity, in 1987, its future looked grim. Today there are 138 condors in the wild, 61 in California.

The exhibition explains condor biology, behavior, and life history through in-

terpretive panels and a 360° walk-in panorama of a condor habitat. "Bringing the Condors Home" also presents a video of condors in the wild, condor computer games and quizzes for kids and adults, and a mounted condor with egg and skull from the museum collection.

Visitors can learn about the critical issues threatening the condors' survival and get an inside look at condor conservation and recovery efforts, including field techniques, captive breeding, and release and monitoring programs.

Plan ahead for the **2007 Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival**, Friday-Monday, April 27-30, 2007. The 13th Annual Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival, centered on Audubon-California's 3200+ acre Kern River Preserve along the South Fork Kern River in north-central Kern County, California. Formerly known as the BioFest, this festival celebrates a Globally Important Bird Area that has garnered international recognition for its natural diversity. Two hundred thirty-seven bird species were tallied during last year's four-day festival, a remarkable number for an inland location. Field trip destinations include Audubon-California's 156-acre Kelso Creek Sanctuary and Butterbrent Spring. More information can be found at <http://kern.audubon.org/>

MDAS MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION

Please enroll my family and me as a member of the Mount Diablo Audubon Society for \$25 for one year.

For an additional \$20 (new NAS members only) or \$35 (returning members), please enroll me in the National Audubon Society to receive four quarterly issues of the *Audubon Magazine*.

I'm enclosing an additional donation of \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Email _____

Card Number: _____

____ Visa ____ MasterCard _____ Expiration Date: _____

Name on Card: _____

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to:

MT. DIABLO AUDUBON SOCIETY and mail with this application to:
Membership Chair, 400 Oneida Court, Danville, CA 94526

Mount Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053

Return Service Requested



TIME VALUE MAIL



Barn Owls are among the several raptors who live among the rocks and cliffs at Lava Beds National Monument.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 66
Concord, CA

Quickies

Weekend Birding in California

Klamath Basin – A Year-Round Birding Destination Part 2.

By Terry Colborn

In last month's column, a number of excellent birding locations in Siskiyou and Modoc Counties were discussed. In addition to those, the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges also includes Clear Lake NWR in Modoc County, and Bear Valley NWR in Southern Oregon. The National Park Service offers two venues for birds and birders.

Lava Beds National Monument

A trip to the Klamath Basin is not complete without a visit to the Lava Beds NM. A relatively new Visitor Center offers excellent interpretive exhibits of the park's geology and the flora and fauna. Several caves offer easy access to the wonders just below the surface, while the more adventurous souls can try spelunking at several nearby caves. A camp-

ground with tent and RV sites affords visitors planning a multiple day excursion with a great base from which to do some in-depth birding and exploration.

In the spring and summer, a drive to the Monument's southern boundary will take you through sagebrush-grasslands and juniper-mountain mahogany, to the Ponderosa Pine forests at Mammoth Crater. Birding *en route* can produce a nice variety of species associated with these various habitats. Look for Prairie Falcon, sparrows, Rock Wren, and California Quail. At Mammoth Crater, you may find Dusky Flycatcher, Common Poorwill, Mountain Quail, Calliope Hummingbird, Mountain Chickadee, Orange-Crowned and Nashville Warblers and White-headed Woodpecker, to name a few. Driving another four miles to Medicine Lake is well worth the time and effort. Northern Saw-whet and Flammulated Owls can be heard, and Black-backed Woodpecker has nested there.

Crater Lake National Park

In addition to being one of the most beautiful lakes in North America, Cra-

ter Lake is the deepest at 1,932 feet. The road around the rim of the lake is the highest in the Klamath Basin, between 6,000 and 7,865 feet. The mixed conifer forests provide habitat for over 150 species of birds, with many nesting migrants. While heavy winter snows often make the rim road impassable, a visit in the spring, summer or fall can be very rewarding with breath-taking views and exceptional montane birding. Look for Clark's Nutcracker, Gray Jay, Pine Grosbeak, Gray-crowned Rosy Finch and White-winged Crossbill. A summer walk along Annie Creek may produce nesting Rufous and Calliope Hummingbirds, Flammulated and Pygmy Owl, all three nuthatches, Lazuli Bunting, Red Crossbill, Nashville and Hermit Warblers, White-headed, Hairy and Pileated Woodpeckers, Green-tailed Towhee, Evening Grosbeak and Cassin's Finch. Check in the hemlock-spruce forest for Three-toed Woodpecker (rare), Townsend's Solitaire, Pine Siskin, Williamson's Sapsucker and an occasional Northern Goshawk.