

The QUAIL

Mt Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA
94597-0053
www.diabloaudubon.com



May 2003

Vol. 49, No. 8

Next Deadline: May 5

Seabirds and Seasons of the Farallon Islands

At our May 1 meeting, Joelle Buffa, manager of the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge, will give a presentation on “Seabirds and Seasons of the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge.”

Joelle Buffa will bring us up-to-date about how well breeding murrens, puffins, and cormorants have fared in the Farallons in the last few years, and we’ll learn how humans fit into this island ecosystem. But managing the largest seabird-nesting island south of Alaska isn’t only about birds, according to Buffa. The small research field facility on South Farallon Island is powered by an award-winning solar-collection system and housed in buildings that are on the National List of Historic Places. Human inhabitants of these bits of stone thrust out of the Pacific have to “harvest” their own drinking water. The island that has hosted nesting Cassin’s Auklets and Pigeon Guillemots through the centuries is now the site of a “habitat sculpture” created by eco-artists.

Mysterious Farallones

The Farallon Islands consist of three island groups—little more than mountain peaks jutting above the ocean surface. The South Farallon group is the largest and best known. Located 26 miles southwest of the Golden Gate Bridge, it is about 120 acres (including the only major flat spot on the refuge) and has the only island capable of marginally supporting humans. The Middle Farallon is located 3 miles to the northwest. Known as the Pimple, the Middle Farallon is basically a big rock 50 yards in diameter. Four miles from the Pimple lies the North Farallon group, an inaccessible assemblage of seven steep peaks, crashing waves, and frequent fogs.

Restored Ecosystem

Human devastation has been harsh and far-reaching in the islands, everything from egg collecting on a massive scale in the 1850s to recent oil spills. The 1972 Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act marked the first efforts to protect this unique marine ecosystem. In 1981, Congress designated the area as the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. This law protects not only the islands but also the nearshore waters of Bodega and Tomales Bays, Estero de San Antonio, Estero Americano, and Bolinas Lagoons—all well-known to birders.

The area is recovering. Elephant seals, absent for over 100 years, have begun breeding there again. It is the location of one of the last populations of threatened Steller sea lions. The twelve species of seabirds that nest on the island contain over 400,000 members, making the Farallons the largest seabird rookery in the U.S. outside of Alaska.

For more information about the Farallones, visit the Farallones Visitor Center at West Crissy Field near old Mason Street in San Francisco or visit the website at <<http://farallones.nos.noaa.gov/about/welcome.html>>.

Our Speaker

In addition to managing the Farallon National Wildlife Refuge, Buffa is head of the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex’s Biology Program. She has a degree in Wildlife Biology and has worked as a wildlife biologist for four government agencies during her 25-year career.

Birding Information

Birding Information will be given by Alice Holmes and Mike Williams. Alice will present our new MDAS display board and its new features. Mike will have a slide show and quiz on Arizona birds.

Election of Officers for 2003-04 Slated

In accordance with the bylaws of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, the Nominating Committee is presenting to the general membership the following slate of nominees for the elective offices of the Society for the year 2003-2004:

President	Mike Williams
Vice-president	Joe Frank*
Treasurer	Joe Frank*
Secretary	Mike Tischler

The election of officers will be held at the May 1 general meeting.

*If elected, Joe Frank will hold two offices jointly, Vice-President and Treasurer.

Meeting Schedule

The next MDAS general meeting will be **Thursday, May 1**, in the Camellia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Dr., Walnut Creek (see map on p. 8).
6:30 p.m.—Doors open
7 p.m.—Birding Information
7:25 p.m.—Business meeting
7:40 p.m.—Social time, refreshments and door prize drawing
8:05 p.m.—Program

Remember your cup! We’re serving Natural Origins Tea too!

Connections

Santa Clara Audubon Asks Help for Burrowing Owls

By Craig Breon, Santa Clara Audubon

On April 7, the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, the San Bernardino Audubon Society, and other conservation organizations will submit a petition to the Department of Fish and Game to list the Burrowing Owl as an endangered or threatened species in California. When this petition is filed, the media will certainly cover the event (though war coverage makes space tight), and this will bring both positive and negative publicity to the owls. We are concerned that some individuals around the state will engage in "vandalism," meaning killing owls or destroying their burrows. While such activities would be a violation of current state and federal laws, we know that vandalism against owls already occurs, and the possibility of listing makes these crimes all the more likely. This crime can be very difficult to catch and prosecute.

We need the help of Audubon chapters and volunteers around the state. Essentially, we need good people to help keep an eye on known owl colonies in your areas, especially in the days following widespread media attention to the listing petition. Owls on private property will be especially vulnerable, although we have seen this problem on some public properties as well.

Breeding pairs of Burrowing Owls are currently protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Fish and Game Code. Both individual owls and active nesting sites are protected. That protection means you cannot harass, shoot, trap, poison (and should not poison ground squirrels near owl colonies due to a strong ecological link to the Burrowing Owl), or manipulate burrows in any way (especially the disking of land with owl burrows).

Nesting season for the Burrowing Owl in California (courtship and egg laying) occurs between February 1 and August 30 (CDFG 1994). In the Imperial Valley, pair formation begins as early as mid-January (Coulombe 1971). Nest site selection begins after pair formation. By February owls are pairing up and can be observed standing together outside the nest burrow. Actual breeding occurs anywhere from March through August, with the peak activity in April and May. Burrowing owls are primarily monogamous for the nesting season.

Despite existing legal protections, nearly 60% of the breeding groups of owls known to have existed during the 1980s had disappeared by the early 1990s (DeSante and Ruhlen 1995). The listing petition further documents these declines, in addition to noting continued threats to most owl populations around the state.

The Burrowing Owl is not usually disturbed by normal land use and is strongly dependent on ranching and farming. It should be emphasized that the California Endangered Species Act allows "ongoing and routine" agricultural practices, even in endangered species habitats. We want ranchers and farmers to know that a listing poses no threat to their ongoing operations. Since the primary threat is loss of owl habitat due to development, we are concerned that in some instances the owls may be viewed as impeding development and deliberately harmed.

Your chapter and individual volunteers can be important in monitoring owl colonies and reporting vandalism or suspicious activities. Reports should be made both to the Department of Fish and Game warden in your area and to the petitioners (either Jeff Miller with the Center for Biological Diversity at (510) 625-0136, jmiller@biologicaldiversity.org or Craig Breon of Santa Clara Valley Audubon at (408) 252-3748, craig@scvas.org). *Editor's Note: Call 707 334-2258 to reach the District Warden Miles Young or email Warden Nichole Kozicki at nkozicki@attbi.com. Warden Kozicki was helpful last year when a developer threatened a Burrowing Owl family in Antioch.*



-drawing by Carol Lutz

Breeding Burrowing Owls have been eliminated from at least eight to 10 percent of their former range in the state and are trending toward extinction in another 25 percent.

The Quail

is published 10 times a year by the Mt Diablo Audubon Society, a nonprofit organization dedicated to habitat conservation and environmental education

P.O. Box 53
Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053
(925) AUD-UBON
(925) 283-8266

MDAS Board of Directors

President: Mike Williams, 376-1631
Vice President: & Treasurer:
Joe Frank, 674-1219
Secretary: Mike Tischler, 689-5552
Sales Mgr: Barbara Vaughn, 376-8732
Programs: Maury Stern, 284-5980
Field Trips: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486
Membership: Ann McGregor, 968-1677
Publicity: Shirley Ellis, 938-3703
Hospitality: Alice Holmes, 938-1581
Education: Cecil Williams, 376-1631
Access: Beverly Hawley, 947-0479
Chapter Development: Joel Summerhill,
753-0862
Hands-On Conservation:
Nancy Wenninger, 938-7987
Christmas Count: Jimm Edgar,
(510) 658-2330
Gloria Cannon, *Quail* Editor
Member-at-Large:
Jean Richmond

Gloria Cannon, *Editor*,
(925) 753-0862, P.O. Box 8367,
Pittsburg, CA 94565
gcannon4@excite.com

Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day May 10

International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) was created in 1993 by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Now under the direction of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, IMBD

continues to focus attention on one of the most important and spectacular events in the life of a migratory bird—its journey between its summer and winter homes.



—IMBD art by Gerald Sneed

IMBD is celebrated annually on the second Saturday in May. This year that day is May 10. IMBD is celebrated in Canada, the U.S., Mexico and Central America through bird festivals and bird walks, education programs, and Bird Day!

Bird Populations Plummet in Wake of Humanity

Bird species today face a wave of extinction not seen since the dinosaurs died out some 65 million years ago, according to a new report from the Worldwatch Institute. Pressures from a human population of more than 6.2 billion have put about 12 percent of the world's 9,800 bird species at risk of extinction, the report finds; and species across the globe are showing increasing signs of distress.

Howard Youth, author of the Worldwatch report entitled *Winged Messengers: The Decline of Birds*, states that declining bird populations mark the “unraveling of delicate natural balances.” Birds are “valuable environmental indicators,” as population growth or decline of bird species can offer early warnings of impending environmental problems, in particular dangerous levels of pesticides and insecticides. Bird extinctions already far exceed the natural rate of loss, according to the report, with 103 extinctions occurring since 1800.

Although 93 percent of bird extinctions recorded have occurred on islands, Youth lists the threats facing many other species, including:

- Habitat loss is the single greatest overall threat to bird species. Some 25 percent of the world's known bird species occur only within ranges of

less than 50,000 square kilometers, and many of these now only have small pockets of natural habitat remaining.

Along with habitat loss, human development, such as roads, power lines and communication towers, contribute to the problem. An estimated 40 million birds are killed in the United States each year by communication towers.

- Some 25 percent of threatened bird species are at risk because of non-native species, including snakes, rats, cats, plants and insects.
- Seabird species have been impacted by oil spills and face a serious threat from longline fishing which has contributed to the 23 species of seabirds that are at risk, as has illegal hunting.
- A third of the world's parrot species are threatened with extinction because people desire them as pets.
- Climate change is a new and emerging threat to bird species, according to the report.

Some Optimistic Trends

Still, Youth finds some cause for optimism, including ecotourism. Successful conservation efforts are increasingly relying on critical partnerships between

Celebrate the return of our migratory birds! There are LOTS of possibilities:

- Create or improve habitat at home or school
- Take notice of the birds around you
- Point out these birds to someone else
- Build and maintain a bird feeder or bird house
- Buy and wear an IMBD t-shirt
- Keep your cat indoors
- Reduce your use of pesticides in yard and garden
- Drink bird-friendly, shade-grown coffee
- Donate to a wildlife preservation fund
- Give a friend or family member a gift membership in MDAS
- Volunteer your birding abilities
- Participate in a bird count or study
- Donate your old binoculars to a school
- Get involved in community land-use planning
- Lead or attend one of our bird walks
- Take a class on migratory birds
- Write a related article for a local paper
- Create an IMBD display for a school or library
- Be an ecotourist this summer
- Attend a bird festival.

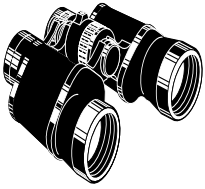
conservationists and local communities that take into account the land, water resources, the local people, and economy.

The rise of organic farming and sustainable agriculture, such as shade-grown coffee, are other promising trends that are helping conservation efforts in developing countries. “The actions needed to ensure a secure future for birds are the very same ones needed to achieve a sustainable human future,” said Youth.

Another key resource, Youth said, is the increasing number of bird watchers throughout the world. Millions of people worldwide take time to watch and document birds in their communities, and this provides science with a growing pool of information about the status of bird species and their habitats.

Winged Messengers: The Decline of Birds is available from Worldwatch Institute at: <http://www.worldwatch.org/pubs/paper/165/>

—from *Environment News Service* 2003.



Observations

by Steve Glover

A nice flock of 102 **American White Pelicans** was at Frank's Tract, Bethel Island, on 3/17. On 4/8 there were 109. (AS)

Great Blue Herons traditionally nest at a rookery at San Pablo Reservoir, but this year they have apparently been joined by a small group of **Great Egrets**. On 4/1 there were four nests (KO). The only other nest site located in the county during the five-year atlas project was near the town of Clyde. A Great Blue Heron was seen building a nest in the eucalyptus trees east of the parking lot at McNabney Marsh on 4/10 (SG, BW). No nesting herons or egrets were found in this area during the five-year atlas project though the setup seems ideal.

A **Bald Eagle** was at Briones Reservoir on the rather late date of 3/29 (KO). An **Osprey** was at Sibley Regional Preserve west of Orinda on 3/22 (SS). This bird could have been a migrant or commuting between reservoirs.

Three **Black Oystercatchers** at the end of Tennent Ave. in Pinole on 4/9 were the furthest northeast that they have been found in the county, though only just barely. They are regularly found at nearby Pt. Pinole Regional Shoreline (TC).

A female **Calliope Hummingbird** was an exciting visitor to a Walnut Creek feeder on 4/9 (GF)

On 3/5 an injured woodpecker was brought to the Lindsay Museum that was believed to be a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** (BG). Unfortunately, the bird died shortly thereafter. Though this species is still quite rare in the county, they have been found more or less annually in recent years.

At least one male **Pileated Woodpecker** was in western Redwood Regional Park, Contra Costa, from 3/14 (SS) through at least 3/22 (CL). This species continues to be found during the breeding season but has yet to be confirmed breeding.

The wintering **Indigo Bunting** in suburban Lafayette was noted through at least 3/24 (MS). At that time, it was molting into alternate plumage.

A male **Great-tailed Grackle** was at the north end of McNabney Marsh on 4/10 (SG, BW). Thus far, this is the only known nest-site in the county although their numbers continue to increase rapidly in Northern California.

Observers: Terry Coddington, George Finger, Bingham Gibbs, Steve Glover, Calvin Lou, Kitty O'Neill, Maury Stern, Anna Sykes, Sylvia Sykora, Bob Wisecarver

Please send observations to Steve Glover, 6526 Conestoga Lane, Dublin 94568, or call (925) 828-7793. Please include your phone number with your observation.
Northern CA Bird Box:
(415) 681-7422

Granados to Receive John Muir Conservation Award

The John Muir Memorial Association has selected a member of Mt. Diablo Audubon to receive the John Muir Conservation Award. The award is given annually to an individual who has contributed much time and effort to conservation within the Contra Costa community. The 2003 recipient is Diana Granados in recognition of her many years of work in environmental education, wildlife rehabilitation, and her own Native Bird Connections.

The award will be presented at the Association's annual dinner/meeting on Saturday, May 3. The barbecue dinner will be in the orchards of the John Muir NHS. Social hour starts at 5 p.m. followed by dinner and the award presentation. All MDAS members are invited to attend. Tickets are \$15 and must be reserved by April 29. Send checks payable to JMMA to PO Box 2433, Martinez, 94553; or call (925) 229-3857 and leave a message.

Teas of India for Mother's Day!

Natural Origins are pleased to offer MDAS members access to the finest Teas from India. These luxurious, mellow teas are a wonderful introduction to the gentle pleasures of tea-drinking and make a perfect Mother's Day gift. Natural Origins also offers lovely handicrafts to enhance your tea drinking.

- Tea Boxes hand-painted by Kashmiri artisans containing 4-oz loose leaf tea in your favorite variety.
- Kashmiri Tea Cozies individually hand-embroidered to keep your teapot hot. The cozies in both wool and cotton in a range of rich colors and patterns.
- Handcrafted Wooden Chestlets containing 4-oz. loose leaf tea/25 tea bags.

FOR ICED TEA LOVERS—Teas of India's Nilgiri brews excellent Iced Tea.

HOT TEA LOVERS—Drink Hot Tea in the summer—it's wonderfully refreshing.

Natural Origins' provides 20% of its sales to MDAS when customers designate MDAS as their donation recipient. How do you find the tea and make the designation?

- Direct from Natural Origins'. Call toll free 1-877-448-3832 and request that MDAS receive donation benefits when you order.
- Order online at <www.naturalorigins.com>. At checkout, indicate MDAS as the donation recipient.
- Purchase Natural Origins' tea at Wild Birds Unlimited, 692 Contra Costa Blvd, Pleasant Hill (925-798-0303). MDAS receives an automatic credit of 20% of all tea sales. Note: WBU is the only retail outlet whose sales benefit MDAS!

eBird—A Lister's Dream

What is "eBird"? eBird is a relatively new web site that lets birders submit their sightings over the Internet to a vast database anytime, anywhere. A joint project between National Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, eBird is a list keeper's dream come true plus it makes all the entered information available to other birders, scientists, and anyone with an Internet connection. After you enter your sightings, you can sort your own information by species, date, and location plus view sightings by other birders. You can find eBird by going to <www.diabloaudubon.com> and clicking on Related Sites.

July Ornithology Conference in New Mexico

Silver City, New Mexico, will be the site of the 28th Annual Conference of the Western Field Ornithologists July 24-27. The birds and biology of the U.S./Mexican borderlands will be the focus of the meeting which will be hosted by the New Mexico Ornithology Society at the Western New Mexico University. You do not have to be a member to attend. The conference features morning birding trips, programs with speakers in the afternoon, and social gatherings in the evening. Program information is available at the Western Field Ornithologists website <<http://www.wfo-cbrc.org>> or by calling Catherine Waters at 562-869-6718 or by email at <robcatwaters@earthlink.net>.

News from Wild Birds Unlimited

692 Contra Costa Blvd.
Pleasant Hill, CA
798-0303

Visit Our Website at
<<http://www.wbupleasanthill.com>>

Activities at WBU

Saturday, May 3

- 10:30 a.m.—Birding Optics Workshop. Trying to select the right optics for local birdwatching or that next birding trip? Join us for a 45-minute workshop on "How to Buy Birding Optics." There will be many brands of binoculars and scopes on display. Try the Eagle Optics Ranger binoculars: water- and fog-proof, close focus under 6 feet, crystal clear, and a lifetime warranty. Call for reservations as seating is limited.
- 1 p.m.—Butterfly Workshop. Attract butterfly by providing the right habitat. Butterfly-attracting plants will be available.

Saturday, May 10—Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with WBU!

- 10:30 a.m.—Hummingbird Workshop. Learn how to attract hummers with plants and feeders. Slide show.

We'll have plants to attract birds and butterflies available. Native Bird Connections will have a program with a live Bald Eagle.

Birdfeeding Tips

It's time to put out your oriole feeders. Both Hooded and Bullock's Orioles are now arriving. They are nectar-feeding birds but are too large to feed from most hummingbird feeders. They will readily come to an oriole feeder. These are the most spectacular birds that we can attract to our backyards during the summer. Please report all oriole sightings to WBU. We keep track and map all sightings.

Black-headed Grosbeaks are back. They usually start arriving in April and stay until August or September. These birds love sunflower seeds. They nest in our backyards and seem to return each year to reclaim the same territory.

Field Trip Reports

Honey Lake near Susanville, weekend trip, February 15-17—Seven birders ignored dire weather reports and managed a fine weekend of birding in northeastern California. Saturday dawned bright with fine weather and a leader with a nice case of pinkeye. Nevertheless, we managed to see many of the local specialties with the highlights being a flyover flock of about 10,000 Snow Geese with some Ross's mixed in, Hooded Merganser, Barrow's Goldeneye, lots of Bald Eagles and Rough-legged Hawks, a fine Northern Shrike at Modoc N.W.R. spotted by Bob Dunn, and, of course, the displaying Sage Grouse northeast of Susanville at the traditional spot.—*Steve Glover*

Black Diamond Mines, Saturday, March 22—Fifteen birdwatchers saw or heard 43 species on this beautiful day. Best bird was a singing Canyon Wren near the Chaparral Trail. We hiked to the Ridge Trail, with good views of a singing California Thrasher in the Chaparral, White-throated Swifts overhead and wildflowers everywhere.—*Pat MacEachern*

Huckleberry Reserve, Wednesday, March 26—only Ruth and I showed up for the Huckleberry bird walk. Along with Travis Hails from Golden Gate, we had an enjoyable, if slightly damp, walk. Birds stayed low, and of the 16 species we saw, the highlights were Orange-crowned Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Wilson's Warbler.—*Ethan Chickering*

Garin Regional Park, Hayward, Saturday, April 5—Perfect spring day at Garin Park. No unusual birds, but good looks at orioles and warblers. Best sighting: a White-tailed Kite harassing a Golden Eagle. 3 birders; 49 species.—*Fred Safier*



Mt Diablo Visited on May Field Trips

Elizabeth Dickey, Field Trip Chair

Field trips are open to MDAS members and nonmembers alike. You do not have to be a birding expert; only one who enjoys nature. Bring binoculars, field guides, and lunch. We have a limited number of loaner binoculars available by calling the trip leader **at least 7 days in advance**. Weather or the availability of leaders may require changes. Trips go in light rain or drizzle. If in doubt, call leader up to 1/2 hour before departure. Carpool time is the departure time. Carpool expense: 20 cents per mile shared among driver and riders; tolls and entry fees are shared equally by driver and riders.

Directions to LaGonda Way meeting

site: From I-680 southbound, exit on El Pintado, turn right, and right again onto LaGonda. From I-680 northbound, exit at El Cerro Blvd., Danville, turn left, then right on LaGonda, and drive about 1/4 mile north to El Pintado.

May 1, Thursday—Del Puerto Canyon.

Carpool leaves at 7:45 a.m. from LaGonda Way in Danville. (For directions, see above.) Meet on Del Puerto Road west of I-5 at 9 a.m. at Patterson Exit of I-5 (59 mi. from El Cerro). Take 580 east by I-5 south. (Recommend stop at Westley Rest Area; there are no facilities on trip until noon.) Yellow-breasted Chat, Costa's Hummingbird, and other goodies. Last year, MDAS birders saw 62 species, including Blue Grosbeak and Lawrence's Goldfinch. This year the trip is led by one of our best birders, Jean Richmond, 837-2843 Category 1

May 3, Saturday—Mines Rd, Alameda County.

Because of limited parking along Mines Road, carpooling is essential. This is an all-day trip and usually hot! **Bring lunch and liquids.** For carpools, meet at LaGonda Way in Danville. (For directions, see above May 1 trip.) Wild Turkey, Greater Roadrunner, Costa's Hummingbird, Lewis' Woodpecker, and Lawrence's Goldfinch all possible. We saw 75 species last May, including Bullock's Oriole, Bald Eagle, and MacGillivray's Warbler. Call Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486, for information and meeting time. Category 1

May 7, Wednesday—Mitchell Canyon.

Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with a bird walk at Mt. Diablo State Park! Meet at 9 a.m. in Mitchell Canyon parking lot. There is a \$5.00 parking fee. From I-680 in Walnut Creek, take Ygnacio Valley Rd. approximately 7 mi to Clayton Rd. Turn right on Clayton and proceed for about 1 mile to Mitchell

Difficulty of field trip:

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

Category 2: Moderate, 1 mile or more, possibly rough terrain.

Category 3: Difficult, extensive walking on rough terrain.

Canyon Rd. and turn right to the end. Carry lunch and liquids. Category 3

May 15, Thursday—South Gate, Mt

Diablo State Park. MDSP is a treasure trove for birders. Although every season in the park has its special qualities, May on the mountain is especially beautiful because wildflowers add brilliant color to the vistas. Carpool leaves 8 a.m. Meet at LaGonda Way in Danville. (For directions, see above May 1 trip.) Meet at 8:30 a.m. in first parking lot on left after entering South Gate. Usually hot! \$5.00 entrance fee. Sage, Rufous-crowned, and maybe Black-chinned Sparrows. Leader: Jimm Edgar, (510) 658-2330 Category 2

May 17, Saturday—East Contra Costa

County. Meet at 8:15 a.m. on Cypress Rd. just beyond the Shortstop Market in Oakley. Go north on I-680, east on SR 4 through Oakley, left onto Cypress Rd. Usually hot! Burrowing Owl, Swainson's Hawk, Yellow-billed Magpie possible. Bring lunch and liquids. Leader: Joel Summerhill, 753-0862 Category 2

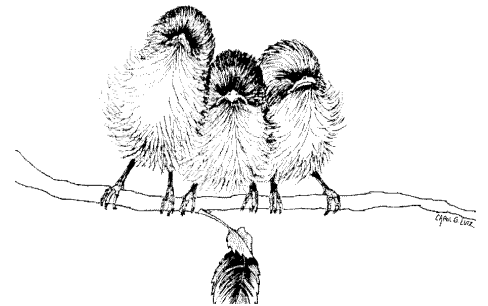
May 22, Thursday—West Briones.

Meet at 8 a.m. in parking lot on the right hand side of the west entrance road, off Bear Creek Rd. Wildflowers, spring birds; Lazuli Buntings are usually abundant. Poison oak along shaded tails. Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486 Category 2

May 28, Wednesday—Consumnes Preserve.

Car pool leaves LaGonda Way at 7 a.m. (For directions, see above May 1

trip.) Meet 8:30 a.m. at parking area on left side of J8 south of Desmond Road. Take I-680 south, I-580 and I-205 east to I-5. Go north on I-5 to Twin Cities Road and turn right. At Franklin Road (J8) turn right again. Valley riparian area. Will probably be hot; carry water and bring lunch. Bring insect repellent. Leader: Elizabeth Dickey, 254-0486 Category 2



MDAS Plans Weekend Field Trip to Yuba Pass

On Saturday and Sunday, June 21-22, MDAS is sponsoring a weekend trip to Yuba Pass. Saturday will be spent birding in the Yuba Pass area for mountain birds. Sunday we will be in the Sierra Valley for basin birds. Directions will be in the June *Quail*. But make motel reservations now. Closest motels are in Sierra City 18 miles down Hwy 49; choices are limited and "rustic." Herrington's Sierra Pines, (530-862-1151) is probably the best; Buckhorn Lodge (800-991-1170) has new cabins. Sierra Skies RV Park (530-862-1122) has some cabins as well as RV spaces. Sierra Chalet, 530-862-1110. There are campgrounds (vault toilets, no showers, piped water) at Chapman Creek and Yuba Pass. Leaders will be Hugh and Rosita Harvey, 932-4715. Trip requires driving and walking, some of it

MDAS Membership Renewal Campaign Begins

The first year of our MDAS Membership is quickly coming to an end, and many of us will need to renew our membership for another year. You can also join as a life member in two payments of \$250 each.

If your membership expires at the end of the summer, it is time to renew. The date of your last issue of the *Quail* is now printed to the right of your mailing address with the year immediately followed by the month. For example: If you have the number 200307, that means the last *Quail* you will receive is the July/August issue in the year 2003.

Membership dues are \$25 for one year. Remember that dues are tax-deductible and all monies remain with MDAS. You can renew online at our MDAS website <www.diabloaudubon.com>, or at the May general meeting, or by completing and mailing the renewal form printed in this issue of the *Quail*.

Be an Early Bird and renew your membership today!

Summer Camps in the Sierras

SFSU Sierra Nevada Field Campus

San Francisco State University is again offering short courses in environmental sciences at its Sierra Nevada Field Campus. The campus is located along the scenic North Yuba River where the snow-capped Sierra Buttes and east slope deserts provide a spectacular settings for this enriching educational experience. Campus facilities include a dining hall/lodge (meals are \$17/day), tent platforms with tents and beds (\$12/night), and restrooms with flush toilets and hot showers. For the less adventurous, there are motels and lodges in the area. Among the courses are Bird Identification by Song (June 8-113), Birdwatching in the Sierra Nevada (June 9-13), Birds of the Sierra Nevada (June 16-20), and Bird Banding in the Sierra Nevada (July 6-11). For details on tuition costs and registration, contact Jim Steele at San Francisco State, (415) 338-1571 or visit the web: <<http://www.sfsu.edu/~sierra>>.

Golden Trout Workshop

The Golden Trout Natural History Workshop, an affiliate of the National Audubon Society, is again offering three one-week camps that include, in addition to meals and tent cabin space, daily naturalist-interpreted hikes and evening talks by professional naturalists. The hike-in Golden Trout Camp is located at 10,000 feet in the Golden Trout Wilderness near Mt. Whitney in the southern end of the John Muir Wilderness. The camp is composed of historic log cabins, where meals and showers are provided, and tent cabins for guests. The three sessions are from June 29-July 5, July 6-12, and July 13-19. Reserve early. For brochure call 805-688-8344 or email paul.roak@verizon.net. The website is <www.lstartists.com/gtc/>.

MDAS MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION

Please enroll my family and me as a member of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society for \$25 for the year 2003-2004.

Please enroll me as a lifetime member for \$500. Payment can be made in two annual payments of \$250 each.

Please enroll the individual/family listed below as a gift membership for \$25 for the year 2003-2004.

For an additional \$20 (new NAS members only) or \$35 (returning members), please enroll me in the National Audubon Society to receive the *Audubon Magazine* (4 quarterly issues).

I'm enclosing a donation of \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone with area code: _____ Email _____

Visa MasterCard Card Number: _____

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 Ct., Danville, CA 94526

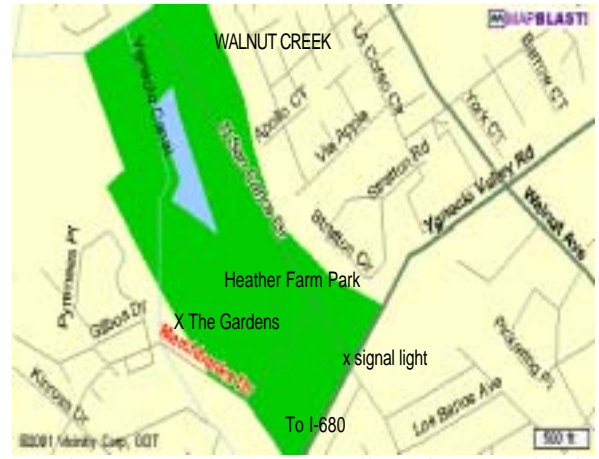
CALENDAR

MDAS holds its general meetings on the first Thursday of every month. Our next meeting is Thursday, May 1. The last meeting for the 2002-03 year is the June 5 potluck. There are no meetings in July or August.

If you are a new member or new to the area, let us know. We want to welcome you and tell you about our activities. All new members and visitors receive a free door prize ticket.

The MDAS Board meets at 7 p.m. on the second Thursday evening of the month at the conference room of Wild Birds Unlimited, 692 Contra Costa Blvd., PH. All members are welcome to attend.

Visit our website for the latest birding information:
<www.diabloaudubon.com>



Driving directions: Take Ygnacio Valley Rd. to signal light at N. San Carlos Dr. (Heather Farm entrance). Go 1 block and turn left on Heather. At Marchbanks Dr. turn right. The Garden Center is located about 200 ft. on the right.

Questions about membership or mailing addresses? Call Ann McGregor, Membership Chair, at (925) 968-1677. MDAS membership includes 10 issues of the Quail. A 1-year family membership in MDAS is \$25/year or \$500 for lifetime membership (payable in two \$250 annual payments). National Audubon Society membership includes the Audubon magazine. Introductory 1-year membership is \$20 or \$30 for 2 years; membership renewal is \$35/year. To join MDAS or NAS, send a check payable to MDAS to Ann McGregor, Membership Chair, 400 Oneida Ct., Danville, 94526. SEND ADDRESS CHANGES for both NAS and MDAS to P.O. Box 53, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-0053. Please end exchange bulletins for MDAS to the editor, 4801 Shavano Peak Ct., Antioch, CA 94531.

TIME VALUE MAIL

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



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