

the Quail

Mount Diablo Audubon Society

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

www.diabloaudubon.com/index.php

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Muir Woods • Stephen Joseph

Since 1970, Stephen Joseph's career has been devoted to landscape photography, his main subject being Mount Diablo. In the past two years he has taken several different—but fascinating—paths. He has been chosen as the 2008 Centennial Photographer for Muir Woods National Monument. As such, Stephen's photographs take the viewer into the "hidden" Muir Woods, areas that the general public may not see. This spring, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy published his second book, *Centennial Collection of Muir Woods National Monument*. On October 2, Stephen will share a selection of his photographs of our national treasure, Muir Woods. The book should also be available.

In November of 2006, we were privileged to see a presentation based on Stephen's first book *Nature's Beloved Son, Rediscovering John Muir's Botanical Legacy*. That book is due to be released on October 1 so he may also have a copy of this book for us to see. Early in 2010, the Oakland Museum will be opening an exhibit about John Muir, which will include Stephen's original photos of John Muir's botanical prints. Some of these photos are on permanent exhibit at Cavallo Point in Marin County's Fort Baker.

For 43 years, Stephen Joseph has been a photographer. In the 1970s, he received a BFA from California College of Arts and Crafts and, later, an MFA in Photography and Printmaking. He is a fine-art landscape photographer specializing in panoramic



© Stephen Joseph photo

images. He has spent the last 18 years working with land trusts throughout the Bay Area, helping to create open space. In 2003-2004, he was the "Artist in Residence" for the LeConte Memorial Lodge in Yosemite Valley.

Stephen has recently returned to working on his book of panoramic images of Mount Diablo and is really looking forward to its publication in 2010 by the Mount Diablo Interpretive Association. It will include a collection from his earliest photographs up to the present.

Meetings with Stephen always leave us gasping at the beauty of his photographs. Join us for a fascinating evening.

BIRDING INFORMATION

East Bay Regional Park District's Measure WW on November's ballot will raise more than \$500 million to purchase land and provide recreation in Contra Costa and Alameda counties. An extension of an existing bond measure, it will not raise our taxes but will preserve more wildlife habitat close to home for MDAS members. Our speaker will be Jerry Kent, former Assistant General Manager of the East Bay Regional Park District who retired in 2004 after serving the Park District for over 40 years. He served as Assistant General Manager for Operations Division which included over 400 park rangers, interpretive staff, recreation staff and seasonal employees. He is a noted Park District historian and speaker and active with a number of associations

related to East Bay Regional Parks.

Meeting Schedule

The next general meeting of Mount Diablo Audubon Society will be **Thursday, October 2**, in the Camellia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farm, Walnut Creek.

7:00 PM Birding Information
7:25 PM Announcements
7:40 PM Refreshments,* door prize
8:05 PM Speaker:

Stephen Joseph

* Please remember to bring a cup.

**November 6: Amy Fesnock
Marbled Murrelet**

President's Corner

We have started the New Year with our September meeting at Heather Farm. We greeted some new members, guests and lots of current members. Scott and Claudia Hein, long-time MDAS members, presented a stunning program on their recent trip to Trinidad and Tobago. We are thinking of putting a MDAS trip together to Trinidad in the near future. If you have interest in such a trip, contact me.

Someone made note of how beautiful the *Quail* (our newsletter) is when seen in color. You can view it in color if you go to our website (<http://diabloaoudubon.com/index.php>); go to "MDAS News" and you can view current and past *Quails* in color. You can also contact the Editor by email at ellis.myers@earthlink.net and receive the *Quail* by email only; saves a lot of paper and postage.

I want to take a moment to thank Mike and Cecil Williams for all their contributions to our chapter. Both serve on our board. Their Wild Birds Unlimited store in Pleasant Hill donates prizes for our raffle nearly every month. They sponsor field trips from the store, offer bird classes with excellent instructors, open their store at night for our monthly board meeting in their meeting room. So many ways they help make MDAS a success. Thanks Mike and Cecil!

We continue to be very involved in two big issues. I am sure you have read about the high avian mortality the Altamont wind farm has caused. We are working as close as we can with operators to stop the killing of raptors. It is a difficult issue because as an organization that would like to see clean energy we also cannot tolerate the high death rate. Keep tuned. The other issue we are close to is the Concord Naval Weapons Station reuse plan. We are very involved with a coalition of about 20 organizations that have put together a platform we all agree on. This platform asks for 80% open space on the 5000 acres. The coalition has a number of environmental groups, local unions such as carpenters, faith groups, the Concord Neighborhood alliance and many others. We have a good amount of input to the city of Concord in their planning process.

Get out during the migration and see some birds!
Jimm Edgar, President

Welcome New Members

Joseph Barbarasch	San Ramon
Amy Cole	Walnut Creek
Annette Mennel	Lafayette
Gary Thompson	Walnut Creek

Observations

By Steve Glover

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

A single White-faced Ibis on 9/2 at McNabney Marsh near Martinez may represent the first record for that relatively well-worked locale (DW).

Nine Red-necked Phalaropes were at McNabney Marsh near Martinez on 9/2 (DW).

A Common Murre was inside the Richmond Marina on 8/10 (LL).

A Eurasian Collared-Dove at McNabney Marsh near Martinez on 9/2 was the first for the location (DW). It surely won't be the last.

An Acorn Woodpecker was at Vollmer Peak in Tilden Park on 9/22 (BF).

Three Willow Flycatchers were in Tilden Park on 9/4 (DW), a nice count away from east county where the species is found rather commonly in the second half of August and the first half of September.

Relatively few "eastern" warblers are found in Contra Costa County, particularly in comparison with the more heavily birded coast, so an American Redstart near Jewel Lake in Tilden Park on 9/4 was a welcome find (DW).

A male Rose-breasted Grosbeak made a brief appearance at a feeder in a residential area near Heather Farm Park in Walnut Creek on 8/19, continuing a noticeable trend of summer records for the county (fide HH).

The bird of the month was a male Summer Tanager first found at the Valle Vista Staging Area near Moraga on 8/8 (TH). The bird continued through at least 9/2 (TR).

Brian Fitch, Hugh Harvey, Laura Look, Ted Robertson, Denise Wight

Trip Reports

San Mateo Coast, July 26. Eighteen members and guests spent a beautiful day at the San Mateo Coast. At the rocky shoreline and ocean we saw Black Oystercatcher, Wandering Tattler, Ruddy and Black Turnstones, White-winged Scoter, Red-breasted Merganser, the three local cormorants, Common Murre, Marbled Murrelet, Pigeon Guillemot, and Elegant Tern. Inland we saw Red-shouldered Hawk, Hairy Woodpecker, Orange-crowned and Wilson's Warblers. *Maury Stern*

Bodega Bay, August 16. It was, as was to be expected, a gray, mild day at Bodega Bay, but 26 enthusiastic birders showed up; with that many eyes it was easy to spot 73 species, including such target birds as Osprey, Elegant Tern, Black Oystercatcher (with downy young), Surfbird, and Wandering Tattler. Breeding plumage Common Loon and Ruddy Turnstone were also noted, and a Virginia Rail put on an excellent show at the famous Rail Pond, but perhaps the highlight bird, well seen, and a life species for many, was a very cooperative Eastern Kingbird. *Fred Saifer*

Jewel Lake, September 4. Three members spent three hours at the Tilden Nature area. We walked the Wildcat trail to Jewel Lake and back in 65 to 80 degree temperatures. We saw 31 species with amazing numbers of migrating birds in large flocks. On arrival at the parking lot there were 30 Turkeys. We spent the first 40 minutes at the entrance trees viewing 25 Warbling Vireos with many Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Swainson's Thrushes, Yellow and Townsend's Warblers, and American Goldfinches. Later, we saw young Western Tanager, Brown Creepers, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers and Pacific-slope Flycatcher. Later in the morning Denise Wight saw an American Redstart. *Maury Stern*

Q

This bird's Latin name is derived from one of its favorite foods. Its common name is also derived from

one of its favorite foods, but not the same one. It's known for its clown-like face. A group of these birds is called a "bushel."

Unscramble these letters, or turn to Page 7 to learn more.

ACCDEEKOOONPRRW

Vote Yes On Measure WW

By Nancy Wenninger

On November 4, you can support a bond measure which will provide \$500 million to acquire and preserve new parkland in the East Bay and provide recreational opportunities for the future—all at no additional cost to you!

The East Bay Regional Park District is proposing Bond Measure WW, an extension of Measure AA approved in 1988 by Alameda and Contra Costa voters. Using Measure AA funding, during the past twenty years EBRPD was able to purchase more than 34,000 acres of new parkland and create miles of regional trails.

Now, without increasing your taxes, Measure WW will allow the District to continue its work to expand and manage the great network of parks which contribute so much to our quality of life, and to preserve and protect thousands of acres of the habitat which remains for wildlife. Twenty-five percent of the bond's revenues (\$125 million) will be granted to cities,

special park and recreation districts, and county service areas for local projects.

Full disclosure: As the District's land acquisition manager, I have a personal stake in the outcome of this election. But we are all stakeholders. The East Bay is approaching its end game. During the next twenty years, the final boundaries between urban areas and wildlands will be set. Once the open space has been developed, it will be gone forever. The only way to permanently protect our precious open space is to own it.

Where are your favorite birding spots? I'll wager most are within our regional parks. For nearly 75 years, EBRPD has demonstrated its integrity as a public agency and its capability to deliver on its dual mission to protect natural resources and provide diverse recreational opportunities.

The November ballot will be daunting, with a long list of initiatives and other bond



proposals. However, I strongly urge you: please take the trouble to find Measure WW and vote YES. Join me in approving Measure WW for Conservation's sake!

For more information on Measure WW and a complete project list, go to "www.yesforebays.com."

Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps (Federal Duck Stamps)



Mount Diablo Audubon Society members at the September meeting contributed \$300 toward the purchase of land for National Wildlife Refuges by buying Federal Duck Stamps. Additional stamps will be available at the October meeting for your convenience; or of course, you can buy them at many post offices, or online at www.duckstamp.com. When you purchase a stamp at the October meeting for the regular price of \$15, you will be offered a plastic enclosure which can serve as an identification key-ring tag to attach to your scope or binoculars.

The Duck Stamp Program allocates 98% of sales to the purchase of wildlife habitat lands. All birders should be pleased to contribute—for their own benefit as for the benefit of wildlife. Many people like to buy one each year for a collection. There is even a National Duck Stamp Collectors Society.

Seventy-five years ago, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Jay N. "Ding" Darling, Pulitzer-prize winning editorial cartoonist and passionate wildlife conservationist, to serve as Chief of the National Biological Survey. (In 1939, the Biological Survey joined with the Bureau of Fisheries to become the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Survey.) Darling took on the important challenge of convincing Congress to pass legislation to help protect waterfowl habitat. In 1934, thanks to strong support from waterfowl hunters, Congress passed the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act and, on March 16, 1934, President Roosevelt signed it into law.

Darling's idea for a Federal Duck Stamp Program to acquire wetlands created one of America's most successful conservation programs. He championed his vision

by drawing a pair of mallards landing in a wetland. This picture embellished the very first Federal Duck Stamp. The first stamp, which Darling bought from the U.S. Postmaster General for \$1.00, broke



ground for first year sales of \$635,000 for wetland conservation; since then thanks to conservationists, hunters and collectors, Duck Stamp sales have raised \$700 million which has been used to buy 5.2 million acres of wetlands for the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Waterfowl are not the only wildlife to benefit from the sale of Federal Duck Stamps. From Ruffed Grouse at Tamarac NWR in Minnesota to Swallow-tailed Kites

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Field Trip Schedule

By Hugh Harvey

October

- 4 Saturday.....Hawk Hill
- 8 Wednesday.....Berkeley Shoreline
- 18 Saturday.....Abbott's Lagoon

November

- 8 Saturday.....Davis Area/Vic Fazio
- 15 Saturday.....Limantour
- 22 Saturday.....Charleston Slough/South Bay
- 24 Monday.....Mt. View Sanitary/McNabney Marsh

December

- 11 Thursday.....Niles Area
- 12 Friday.....Arrowhead Marsh-High Tide
- 17 Wednesday.....Christmas Count/East Contra Costa
- 20 Saturday.....Christmas Count/Central Contra Costa

Field trips are open to members and non-members, beginners and advanced birders. Weather or other contingencies may require changes. For updates, visit the MDAS website at www.diabloaudubon.com/index/php.

Because most trips do not return until late afternoon, bring a lunch and drink and join us during our midday break.

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

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

Category ③: Difficult, extensive walking on rough terrain.

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

Federal Duck Stamps

» *Continued from Page 3*

at Florida Panther NWR, national wildlife refuges offer opportunities to view hundreds of species of birds and numerous other mammal, fish, reptile, and amphibian species that rely on wetland habitats. One-third of the nation's endangered and threatened species find food or shelter in refuges established using Federal Duck Stamp funds.

Many National Wildlife Refuges maintain viewing platforms, trails, and auto tour routes, ideal locations from which to use your binoculars, scopes and cameras. Refuge staff or volunteers can help you identify local birds, direct you to birding hotspots, advise you of new or unusual sightings, even loan you keys to protected areas where few are normally permitted.

Moreover, the protected wetlands help purify water supplies, store flood water, reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, and provide spawning areas for fish.

Many National Wildlife Refuges are open without charge, but fees are collected at more than 100, including the Sacramento NWR and the Klamath Basin Complex in California. Your Duck Stamp provides free access where fees are charged for entrance.

Come birding with us in October!

② Saturday, October 4 Hawk Hill

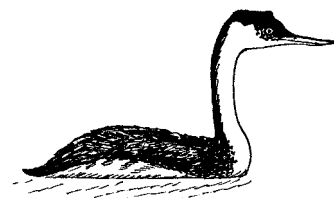
Leader: Fred Safier, 937-2906

Carpool leaves El Nido Ranch Road at 8:00 AM. Meet in parking lot upper Rodeo Lagoon at 9:15 AM. From Hwy 101 exit Alexander Ave. On west side of freeway turn right and go up the hill, at the intersection go right and down hill. Turn left at the stop sign and continue to the parking lot on the right just before the bridge. We will bird the lagoons before going up to the hawk-watch site. At noon the staff gives a talk on their work and usually demonstrates the actual banding. Carry lunch and liquids. The walk up the hill is only a few hundred yards, but it is steep.

① Wednesday, October 8 Berkeley Shoreline

Leader: Lynn Lakso, 932-6367

Carpool leaves at 8 AM from El Nido Ranch Road. Meet at 8:30 AM in the parking lot at the north end of the Emeryville Marina. Take SR 24 to I-880 west, turn north onto I-80. Take Powell St. exit, turn left on Powell, go out to Emeryville Marina, park in last lot near pier. May be cold and windy. Loons, grebes, bay ducks and shorebirds.



③ Saturday, October 18 Abbott's Lagoon

Leader: David Hutton, 938-4485

Carpool leaves Sun Valley at 7:30 AM. Meet at 9:00 AM at Bear Valley Visitor Center, Point Reyes National Seashore. 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, turn left on Point Reyes-Petaluma Road for 7 miles to the stop sign. Go straight on Platform Bridge Road to Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. Turn right to Olema. Turn right at stop sign and take SR 1 north for 0.25 miles, then turn left on Bear Valley Road. Visitor Center is off Bear Valley. Be prepared to carry lunch and liquids. Lots of walking in sand.

A Trip to Iowa

» *Continued from Page 8*

the Garden of the Gods, a wonderful geologic site of vertical slabs of red rock. We saw a Prairie Falcon zooming around and landing on the formations.

In Goodland, Kansas we saw our trip's first Baltimore Oriole, Blue Jay and Common Grackle. At Prairie Dog State Park, we saw not only Black-tailed Prairie Dogs, but also Burrowing Owls, a Brown Thrasher, a Field Sparrow, the first of many Chipping Sparrows and a Red-headed Woodpecker. The primary reason for driving across northern Kansas was to pass through Lebanon, close to the geographic center of the Lower 48 States. At the marker for the center of our nation, Rosita found a Red-bellied Woodpecker and both Western and Eastern Kingbirds. We also had our first Purple Martins. Before stopping for the night, we heard and then saw Dickcissels singing along the road, found an Upland Sandpiper on the fence line and Chimney Swifts flying above downtown Marysville, Kansas.

More Swifts were flying over St. Joseph, Missouri, as we searched for the Pony Express Museum. Having been in Old Town Sacramento we wanted to see the other end of that short-lived, but famous, enterprise. Continuing through Missouri and into Iowa, we watched a Bobolink sing as it flew up and down, saw a Groundhog, and Rosita found her first Cardinal of the trip.

Norman Johnson's house was just across the flooded Iowa River, east of Marshalltown, and we had to drive maybe 20 miles around in order to reach it. We spent a lovely evening visiting and he was very happy to receive the sweater. He took us to his son's house the next day, and we later had lunch with Maynard, his 83-year old little brother. We saw many flooded corn fields and heard tales of the troubles they were having.

As we started west, heading home for sunny California, the troubles in Iowa visibly grew grimmer. The skies darkened, the winds blew strong and the rain fell sideways. We were on the leading edge of a storm which turned deadly. We listened on the radio to the tornado warnings and the first reports of the deaths at the Boy Scout camp some 70 miles southwest of us. Because we were going west, and the storm to the northeast, we passed into sunny skies before we crossed the Missouri River at Sioux City, Iowa. It was hard to imagine the destruction taking place behind us, while we drove through the peace and tranquility of the eastern Nebraska evening.

Ponca State Park is adjacent to the Missouri River and a beautiful, tree-filled setting. We pitched our tent, heard a Whip-poor-will while we ate and a Barred Owl during the night. In the morning we found more of the expected eastern birds, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Baltimore Orioles, an Eastern Towhee, my first and only Cardinal of the trip, more Yellow Warblers, an American Redstart and an Eastern Phoebe. Rejoining US 20, we drove through farmland until we passed through the northern part of the Sand Hills. Another Upland Sandpiper, Long-billed Curlews, a Wilson's Snipe, a Grasshopper Sparrow and Black Terns were among of the birds we saw.

At the extreme northwest of Nebraska is Fort Robinson State Park, famous as the site of Chief Crazy Horse's murder. Rosita and I were happy to find some of our most special birds here. At Soldier Creek, we stopped and found a Black-headed Grosbeak, a Lazuli Bunting, both Eastern and Western Kingbirds, a Western Wood-Pewee, an Orchard Oriole, and a Yellow-breasted Chat (Rosita then found the nest). As we sat in the

Look around... where you are!

car, we heard a very distinctive *cu-cu-cu-cu* followed by a second *cu-cu-cu-cu*. We had never seen a Black-billed Cuckoo, and we didn't see this one either, but that is what sang in the tree directly above our car.

The habitat of Wyoming quickly turned to sage brush country, but we still found an absolutely amazing Lark Bunting singing four distinct songs as it fluttered down to the field from which it flew. We left US 20 at Shoshoni, Wyoming and continued west to Dubois to camp so we could enter Grand Teton National Park from the south the following morning.

Togwotee Pass and the Continental Divide is east of the park, and where there was still snow on the sides of the road we found a Clark's Nutcracker and an American Pipit. As we approached Jackson Lake Lodge, we passed Christian Pond to our right. Rosita told me we had to go back, and when we did we saw our first lifer of the trip. Trumpeter Swans were swimming in the water not far off the road. This was just the first of the many wonders we shared as we drove through Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks. Many Bison and Elk were seen, as well as American White Pelicans, Common Mergansers, lots of Ravens, Mountain Bluebirds, and American Avocets. The vistas of the Teton Range and Yellowstone are famous, but

we had to continue into Idaho to meet a high school friend in Challis. Our friends live just north of town overlooking a wonderful river valley. Dave and Elise Faike took me there the next morning and we found both Least and Willow Flycatchers, Cinnamon Teal, Wilson's Phalaropes, Spotted Sandpipers, a Great Blue Heron, an Osprey and a Western Tanager. The highlight, though, was the afternoon trip when Dave drove us toward the Salmon River Mountains. We walked uphill toward a burned area and found a Three-toed Woodpecker, the second lifer of our trip. We also found more Mountain Bluebirds, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Red-naped Sapsuckers and Common Mergansers.

The next day we found Least and Cordilleran Flycatchers, heard a Pileated Woodpecker, and saw Mountain Chickadees, a Townsend's Solitaire, Cassin's Finches and a Western Tanager. Later, near the river, we found Black Terns, and both Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teal. These were mixed in with the Phalaropes, Gadwalls, Killdeer, a Spotted Sandpiper, Yellow-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds, American Avocets and a Willet. It was a weekend to remember.

After driving through the Sawtooth Range, US 20 continued into Oregon and took us through the Malheur River Valley, then south onto US 395 west of Burns, OR. Our goal for the night was Goose Lake, which straddles the Oregon-California border. After a late night arrival, it was gorgeous the following morning, filled with birds. Western Grebes, American White Pelicans and Canada Geese seemed to be everywhere. Along the shore were Willets, a Spotted Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalaropes, Gadwalls, Avocets, Caspian and Forster's Terns and numerous gulls. We saw Bullock's Orioles, House and Marsh Wrens, Robins, Tree Swallows, Western Kingbirds, Red-winged Blackbirds, American and Lesser Goldfinches, Cassin's Finches, a Northern Harrier and more!

Entering California, we drove on to the Sierra Valley and Yuba Pass, where we were to lead the Chapter field trip. At the end of our two weeks of travel, this was a birding destination, finally. The story of that field trip has already been published, "And now," as a more famous Harvey says, "you know the rest of the story." You don't have to go to special places to look for the birds, look for them where you are. We had found a total of 152 species, but Rosita complains that she "didn't find an Eastern Bluebird or an Indigo Bunting." Anyone for a quick trip to Iowa? 🐦

Acorn Woodpecker • *Melanerpes formicivorus*



These raucous birds of the western oak woodlands are remarkable for their social structure. They typically live in permanent cooperative groups of up to six breeding males, three joint-nesting females, and ten non-breeding helpers, both male and female, usually from the previous year's hatch. Most adults help to incubate and feed the young of a single nest.

At times, since a single nest may be shared by two or three females, one sister will remove the eggs of another, and store them in a nearby tree. Those eggs then will become a snack for any member of the extended family.



California Woodpecker
Melanerpes formicivorus bairdi
Birds of the Pacific States
Ralph Hoffmann • 1927

Tell the female Acorn Woodpeckers from the males by noting whether there is a black band across the forehead separating the red cap from the white. The bird at this feeder is a male, without such a band.

Acorn Woodpeckers are gregarious and have a large vocabulary of sounds to help them communicate within their family group. These groups maintain extensive granaries where they store thousands of acorns, each tightly fitted into a hole of proper size they drill in tree trunks or utility poles. This hoard of acorns will provide up to 20 percent of the birds' needs during the season when they are used. The main diet of Acorn Woodpeckers, however, is insects, particularly flying ants. That is the basis for the

scientific name, *Melanerpes formicivorus*, literally "genus of ant-eating woodpeckers." They also eat fruits, seeds, and oak catkins. They also enjoy eating poison oak berries, (as do many other bird species).

Acorn Woodpeckers generally do not migrate because they depend on their food storage caches, which they enlarge and defend year after year. They prefer habitats where there are several kinds of oaks; should one acorn crop be minimal, another kind may be more plentiful. They also like areas with pines or sycamores, which have softer wood for drilling and for excavating nest holes.

One location where you can almost certainly find these birds is at the Visitor Center at Point Reyes National Seashore in Olema.

2009 Entertainment Books are here now!

Save almost twice the \$25 price of the book by using the Safeway and Longs Drugs Coupons.

- ▶ Buy at MDAS meetings.
- ▶ Pick up at Wild Birds Unlimited, 692 Contra Costa Blvd. Pleasant Hill.
- ▶ Order on line at www.entertainment.com and enter the MDAS ID #175587.

NEWS FROM WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED



Seed & Suet Sale

October 8-26, 2008
Stock up and get ready
for fall and winter birdfeeding!



On Saturday, October 11
we are celebrating our 17th anniversary.
Please come and help us celebrate!

- ▶ Many FREE gifts.
- ▶ See a Bald Eagle.
- ▶ Discounts on every transaction.
- ▶ Plants for attracting birds and butterflies to your garden.
- ▶ FREE prize drawings.

Optics Weekend

Saturday 10/25-Sunday 10/26

Eagle Optics will be here to present their entire line of birding optics. We will also have other high-end optics for you to compare: Leica, Zeiss, Swarovski, and Stokes.

Birding Classes with Denise Wight

The focus will be on fall migration and returning winter birds. Denise Wight has been a birder for 24 years. She is a longtime member of Mt. Diablo Audubon Society and is considered one of the best birders in the SF Bay area. Her ability to identify birds by ear is incredible.

These classes are designed for advanced-beginner (knowing your backyard birds) to intermediate birders. Adults only, please.

- *When:* Four consecutive Wednesday nights starting October 1, 7-9 PM
- *Where:* Wild Birds Unlimited
- Birdwalk on Sunday, Oct. 19 to Pt. Reyes with Denise. This is a great treat! Don't miss it.
- Cost \$65.00. • Pre-registration is required.

Call (925) 798-0303

Feeding Tips:

As fall gets into full swing, we should see feeder activity increase. There will be less natural food available. Some species will be eating more seeds, suet, or peanuts, and fewer insects. Something new to try is our exclusive Bark Butter. It is composed of peanut butter and other highly nutritious ingredients. It can be applied to special feeders or just spread on a tree trunk! We have been using it in our yard and have found all the suet-eating birds like it often better than suet. Warblers, wrens, sparrow, kinglets and other birds are also readily attracted to it.



Mike and Cecil Williams
Wild Birds Unlimited
692 Contra Costa Blvd.
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
925-798-0303

Visit us at www.wbupleasanthill.com

Ornithological Opportunities

Golden Gate Audubon Society is looking for people to join a year-long study group in Bird Biology. Formed around the Cornell Lab of Ornithology home study course, the course would cost about \$365, and would be limited to about 16 people. For information, contact Kristen Bunting at kbunting@goldengateaudubon.org, (510) 843-2222.

The Seventh Annual **Hi Mountain California Condor Campout and Open House**. Saturday October 11, Hi Mountain Condor Lookout, Los Padres National Forest, San Luis Obispo County. For driving directions and the open house schedule visit the website at condorlookout.org. Approximately 70 Condors re-introduced into California can be tracked from Hi Mountain, flying between Big Sur in Central California and the Sespe Condor Sanctuary in Southern California. This is a great chance for you to learn more about Condors and the effort to return these magnificent birds back to the wild. Hi Mountain Lookout has been restored as a field research station and interpretive center. The day will include California Condor radio-tracking demonstrations, native plant identification field trip, bird watching, geology overview, and in the evening guest speaker presentations and

astronomy observations of the evening sky. Overnight camping is optional. We will have wildlife posters and other fun stuff to give away. You may purchase tickets for raffle prizes. There will be Condor t-shirts and other merchandise for sale with the proceeds going for research efforts. To register for the event please call Steve Schubert at (805) 528-6138 or e-mail to s_schub@webtv.net.

Western Field Ornithologists (WFO) Annual Meeting. October 9-12, San Mateo. WFO is a unique organization that seamlessly blends birding with ornithology. WFO meetings are only occasionally held in Northern California. So, if your interest in birds goes beyond just adding another tick to your list, don't miss this one. Workshops will cover topics like sketching birds and using GPS in the field. Scientific sessions will give you a glimpse into the most current ornithological research. www.wfo-cbrc.org/

Festival of the Cranes. November 18-23, Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, south of Socorro, NM. The Festival of the Cranes celebrates the return of the Sandhill Cranes and the Snow Geese to the Refuge for the winter. Educational workshops, including lectures, hands-on, and field-trip experiences combined with the beauty of the northern Chihuahuan desert make this a great destination for birders from all over the world. Phone: (575) 835-1828. E-Mail: festival@sdc.org.

the Quail

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Mount Diablo Audubon Society

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

MDAS Board of Directors

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Jean Richmond, 837-2843
Quail Editor: Ellis Myers, 284-4103
215 Calle La Mesa
Moraga, CA 94556-1603
ellis.myers@earthlink.net

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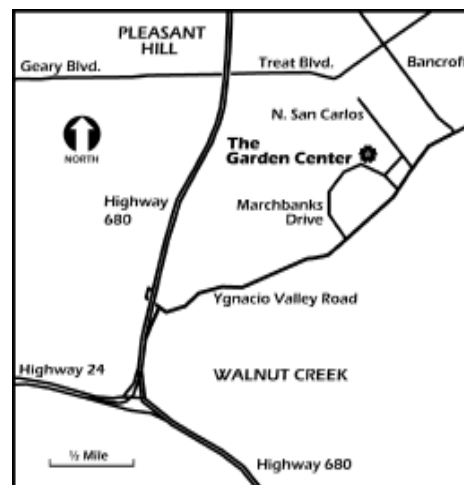
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The Garden Center

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.



Mount Diablo Audubon Society
P.O. Box 53
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Hugh and Rosita Harvey observed Trumpeter Swans at Grand Teton National Park. This family, however, was photographed at Crex Meadows Wildlife Area, Wisconsin, by Ellis Myers.

A Quick Trip to Iowa

By Hugh Harvey

Birding can be enjoyed at almost any time and in almost any place in the world. Almost no preparation is required, though the number of tour companies, field guides and birding equipment options available to us certainly increase our chances of seeing a good number and variety of species. Still, what does one do when driving across the country on a trip that has no specific birding destination? Why, look around where you are and take advantage of what is there.

This June Rosita and I took a quick two-week trip to Iowa, returning in time to lead the Chapter trip to Yuba Pass. We were to visit our 84-year old friend, Norman Johnson, and to take him a sweater Rosita had knitted. We followed US Highway 50 east across Nevada, Utah and much of Colorado. We then drove US 36 across most of Kansas and into Missouri, before turning north towards Marshalltown, Iowa. Returning, we drove northwest to Fort Dodge, Iowa, the town where I was born. We then followed

US 20 into Oregon and south to California. Along the way we saw many birds, natural vistas and historical sites.

East of Fallon, Nevada is Grimes Point, an interesting archeological site where many petroglyphs dot the area along the shoreline of an ancient lake. Joining us for lunch were some archeologists, a Black-throated Sparrow with a large green worm and a Rock Wren feeding fledglings. As we followed the Loneliest Highway in America to Ely we saw Ravens, Red-tailed Hawks, Black-billed Magpies, Sage Thrashers, Mountain Bluebirds, a Common Nighthawk on a fence post and Pronghorns with young.

East of Ely is Comins Lake, a popular fishing site. Numerous birds also use the lake. Yellow-headed Blackbirds, White-faced Ibis, Black-necked Stilts, Eared Grebes, Redheads and a Great-tailed Grackle were just some of the species seen.

After an overnight in Grand Junction, CO, we continued southeast and east to Gunnison. Cerro Summit was beautiful with green slopes and spring flowers. Patches of snow still dotted the surrounding mountains. We stopped to see Green-tailed

Towhees, Yellow Warblers, a singing Cordilleran Flycatcher and a Warbling Vireo.

It was about midday when we arrived at the Wuanita Lek, a favored spot to see Gunnison Sage-Grouse, but they were not in evidence. Higher up the road we found a nice creek and a Willow Flycatcher. We crossed the Continental Divide at Monarch Pass, but we were not lucky enough to find any Rosy-Finches.



We left US 50 and drove to Colorado Springs, where we met former MDAS members Pat and Paul MacEachern, who moved there three years ago. Pat and Paul are doing very well, though they have both suffered some of the same health issues as the rest of our aging population. We visited

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