



# Mt. Diablo Audubon Society

## **The Quail**

VOL. 65 No. 2

OCTOBER 2019

### **Next Meeting: Thursday, October 3**

The Mt. Diablo Audubon Society will meet **Thursday, October 3**, in the Camelia Room of The Gardens at Heather Farm, 1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek.

**6:30 PM** Doors Open

**7:00 PM** Birding Info: *Nature and Wildlife Through the Seasons in Rossmoor*

**7:25 PM** News

**7:40 PM** Snacks and Raffle

**8:00 PM** Main Program: *Double-crested Cormorant Colony on the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge*

### **8 PM Main Program: Double-crested Cormorant Colony on the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge**

Mark Rauzon & Meredith Elliott



Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) are seabirds known to use urban structures as nesting habitat. The old east span of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and the eastern portion of the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge have hosted the two largest colonies of this

species in the region. Come learn what our research for the past three decades tell us about the population dynamics of this resilient species and learn about our efforts to study the Bay Area population of this adaptable, yet maligned, bird.

Mark Rauzon was with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, where he studied seabirds and endangered marine mammals in Hawai'i, Alaska, and California. Mr. Rauzon is also a research associate with **Point Blue Conservation Science** and a Geography professor at Laney College in Oakland.



Meredith Elliott is a Senior Scientist at **Point Blue Conservation Science** and has worked on a



variety of seabird monitoring and diet projects, as well as researching zooplankton communities in the Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries." (Photos JD Bergeron).

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## **7 PM Birding Info:** ***Nature and Wildlife Through the Seasons in Rossmoor*** Cassie Tzur

Cassie Tzur, active MDAS member, has put together a slide show of nature/wildlife through the seasons in nearby Rossmoor. It is based on her photo book, "The Nature of Rossmoor". She will have the book available for sale after her presentation.

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## **Presidents' Letter**

Maren Smith & Ariana Rickard, *MDAS Co-Presidents*

In August the MDAS Board and Advisory members met for a summer planning meeting to brainstorm ideas to formulate goals for 2019-2020 in five focus areas: Conservation, Education, Advocacy, Communication, and MDAS Membership. Together, we prioritized the suggestions to create immediate and long-term goals. Communication goals will be our main focus this month.



Over the summer, our communication challenges were tremendous as we searched for a Quail Editor, launched a new website, and initiated Mailchimp as our email meeting reminder and newsletter platform. Thus, the immediate communication goals involved finding a newsletter editor and additional members to support social media and the website, a communication team.

We are fortunate that Marc Desin has joined MDAS to become The Quail Editor. Marc comes to MDAS with an extensive work background in IT and upon retirement has found a second home working at Wild Birds Unlimited, so stop by to say thank you and hello. In his "spare" time he has quickly learned Mailchimp software to create this electronic Quail

complete with a modern look.

As happens with change, there will be a learning curve as MDAS moves to electronic communication and fine-tunes the format. In an effort to make the Editor position less cumbersome and time-consuming, The Quail will be sent by email and will be slimmer than the previous 12-page print copy, all while providing members current information in an easily readable format. Please bear with us as we navigate these changes.

The new MDAS website [mtdiabloaudubon.org](http://mtdiabloaudubon.org) is colorful, engaging and chock-full of information, an additional information conduit that will be linked to The Quail. To improve communication, all members who are not already in the system will need to provide an email address to the Membership Chair to receive The Quail. This can be done by signing up on the website (Newsletter) or by talking to Membership Chair, Bill Chilson, at the next meeting or emailing him (Home page, About Us, Leadership). We realize that we do not have current emails for all members, so this will be an ongoing project; we will send out letters to those without emails, but please spread the word.

In addition, other newsletter changes include the switch from Maury Stern's Observations column for bird sightings to the EBB Sightings page, a daily report of birds seen, available on the Home page towards the bottom of the page. Scroll through the entries to see what birds have shown up in the area. We thank Maury for his many years of detailed reporting and hours of data compilation. Sign up to report sightings and to receive notice of reports at [EBB-Sightings@groups.io](mailto:EBB-Sightings@groups.io).

We would also like to thank all past Quail contributors including Dal Leite for the Bird Wide Web and Jean Halford for her Q and A Bird column.

Field Trip reports are now posted on the [MDAS Facebook page](#) for timely feedback. You don't even have to join Facebook to see them! The MDAS Facebook feed appears on the website towards the bottom of the Home page. Scroll through entries to keep abreast of trip reports and birding news. Thanks to Rosalie Howarth, our social media is full of articles, MDAS activities, and trip reports. Field Trip Leaders please send Rosalie (Home page, About Us, Leadership) your trip reports, alert trip photographers to send in photos, and if you have an eBird list, she'll post that, too.

Due to our many communication changes, we are also in need of editors to help manage content on our web page and social media accounts. If you are interested in helping expand social media (Instagram, Twitter, print media, Meetup) please contact Rosalie (Home page, About Us, Leadership). If you could help upload content to the web page, we will train you. Your involvement would be an immense help to the chapter and might be a fun way to get more involved with MDAS

After a busy summer learning the ropes of MDAS, Ariana and Maren both hit the road for much needed vacations after the September meeting. Ariana's family headed to Disneyland braving crowds while wrangling their 3 and 5-year old boys and Maren headed to the East Coast with her husband to ride bicycles from Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C. Naturally, birds were still on our minds. Maren saw Bald Eagles, flitting warblers, and a Red-bellied Woodpecker along the trail while Ariana got close-up views of Donald Duck, Scuttle the Gull, Nigel the Pelican and Zazu the Hornbill.

We are relaxed, refocused, and reenergized. We welcome your ideas and hope to see you at MDAS meetings, Outreach tabling events, committee meetings, in classes, on field trips, creek surveys, and MDAS events throughout the year.

Your Co-Presidents, Ariana Rickard and Maren Smith

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## Welcome, New Members!

<b>Donald Simonson</b>	Germantown, MD
<b>Richard Nicoll</b>	Walnut Creek
<b>Arnold Joe</b>	Danville
<b>Teresa Connell</b>	Bakersfield
<b>Marc Desin &amp; Andrea Baird</b>	Walnut Creek
<b>Holly Jessop</b>	Benicia
<b>Mary Stone &amp; Bill Duncan</b>	Walnut Creek
<b>Marilyn Scovell</b>	Martinez
<b>Susan Strong</b>	Orinda
<b>Krista Vossekuiil</b>	Martinez
<b>Steve Kass</b>	Bay Point
<b>Ethan Veneklasen</b>	Pleasant Hill
<b>Michael Sousa</b>	Concord

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## Upcoming Trips

### **Wednesday, September 25, Hayward Regional Shoreline, Winton Avenue Entrance.**

Carpool leaves Sycamore Valley Road Park and Ride lot in Danville at 7:45 AM. Meet at 8:30 AM at Winton Avenue entrance. From I-880, exit Winton Avenue, drive west 4.5 miles. Park near the trailhead just before the parking lot gate. Because traffic is so unpredictable, if no one is there, wait a while.

Passerines, shorebirds, and possible early ducks. Time permitting, we will finish at the San Leandro Marina. Bring drinks and lunch. Leader: Bob Richmond, 510-427-9843. Category 2.

**Saturday, September 28, Outer Point Reyes.**

Carpool leaves southwest corner Sunvalley parking lot at 7:00 AM. Meet 8:30 AM at Bear Valley Visitor Center in Olema. From I-80 in Vallejo, follow SR 37 19.1 miles to Atherton Avenue, exit and turn left, cross US 101 to San Marin Drive and continue about 3 miles. Turn right on Novato Blvd for 6 miles to stop sign, then turn left on Point Reyes-Petaluma Road for 7 miles to another stop sign. Turn right across the bridge, go 3 miles to SR 1. Turn left into Point Reyes Station. After a stop at the Bovine Bakery for coffee and pastries, continue out of town towards Olema, then turn right onto Bear Valley Road. Visitor Center is off Bear Valley. We are hoping for migrants and vagrants. Weather is unpredictable. Bring lunch and liquids. Leader: Hugh Harvey, 925-935-2979. Category 2.

**Saturday, October 5, Hawk Hill, Marin Headlands.**

Carpool leaves El Nido Ranch Road at 8:00 AM. Meet in parking lot by upper Rodeo Lagoon at 9:00 AM. If driver knows San Francisco, use Fremont St/ Columbus Ave/Marina/Golden Gate Bridge, pass the Vista Point and take the Alexander Avenue exit. Turn right at the bottom of the exit and then left onto Bunker Road. Pass through the tunnel 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 may demonstrate the actual banding. Carry lunch and liquids. The walk up the hill is only a few hundred yards, but it is steep. Leader: Fred Safier, 925-937-2906. Category 2.

**Friday, October 11, Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary, Alameda.**

Carpool leaves El Nido Ranch Road at 8:30 AM. Meet 9 AM at the intersection of Park/Shore Line in Alameda. Take Hwy 24 to I-980 and 880 in Oakland. Exit for 23rd Street Alameda, follow Kennedy Street to 29th Avenue, which becomes Park Street. Cross the bridge and continue on Park to Shore Line Dr. Parking may also be available near McDonald's off Shore Line. Exact itinerary to be decided the day of the trip. Leader: Hugh Harvey, 925-935-2979. Category 2.

**Saturday, October 26, Abbott's Lagoon, Point Reyes National Seashore.**

Carpool leaves Sunvalley at 7:00 AM. Meet at 8:30 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 for 6 miles to stop sign, then turn left on Point Reyes-Petaluma Road for 7 miles to another stop sign. Turn right across the bridge, go 3 miles to SR 1. Turn left into Point Reyes Station. After a stop at the Bovine Bakery for coffee and pastries, continue out of town towards Olema, then turn right onto Bear Valley Road. Visitor Center is

off Bear Valley. Be prepared to carry lunch and liquids. Lots of walking in sand. Leader: Kent Fickett, 415-269-4277, Bill Chilson, 510-619-6692. Category 3.

To view all upcoming trips, see “Field Trips” under Birding at <http://www.mtdiabloaudubon.org>

Trips open to members and non-members, beginners to advanced birders. No dogs. Contact leader with questions. MDAS encourages carpooling (riders help with gas, tolls, or entry fees). Drivers who carpool should carry proof of liability insurance in their vehicles.

**Category 1:** Easy. Little walking, smooth paths.

**Category 2:** Moderate, more than one mile, possibly rougher terrain.

**Category 3:** Difficult, extensive walking on rough terrain.

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## Nature Event Saturday, October 5

Mike Eliot, *Member-at-Large*

This is Wild Birds Unlimited’s 28th year anniversary and Nature Event. From exciting visitors like Native Bird Connections with a live Bald Eagle and our treasured naturalist, Gary Bogue, we will be ready to have a huge event that you won’t want to miss. Lots of nature, environmental, and animal groups will be on hand along with artists, authors, and more. Contests and drawings will give you and your kids opportunities to have fun, win prizes, and learn more about the outdoors in our area. Everything happens from 10 AM to 4 PM Saturday, Oct. 5 at WBU in Pleasant Hill.



Participants know the ins and outs of observing and living with wildlife, hiking our myriad of trails, parks, streams, and bays. Learn about native plants, insects, gardening for wildlife, and how to attract or deter animals in your garden. Both fun and educational, everyone will learn something. Talk with Joan Morris, who writes the bird and animal column for the Times newspapers. Meet illustrator Chuck Todd, who with Gary Bogue, has produced several great children’s books, such as *There’s a Skunk in My Backyard*. Meet children’s author Merci Martin, and Greg and Laurie Wilson, nature photographers, who will be offering their works for sale.

**Mt. Diablo Audubon Society** will be represented, along with such groups as **International Bird Rescue, Martinez Beavers, Contra Costa Avian Society, Native Bird Connections, Lindsay Museum and Hospital**, TH Apiaries,



Pleasant Hill Instructional Garden, Mt. Diablo Interpretive Association, Mickaboo Companion Bird Rescue, and many more.

WBU's goal is to help them disseminate their information and help the public learn more about our natural resources, birds, and wildlife — how to enjoy them, and how to preserve them for future generations. Hope to see you there.



## Events

**2019 Coastal Cleanup Day**  
**McNabney Marsh, Martinez**  
**Saturday, September 28, 2019, 9:30 AM–12:00 PM**



**Back to Nature Event**  
**Wild Birds Unlimited, Pleasant Hill**  
**Saturday, October 5, 2019, 10 AM–4 PM**

This is Wild Birds Unlimited's 28th year sponsoring a Nature Event, giving you the chance to meet and learn about organizations working to protect our local wildlife and environment. This will be a family event even the kids will love, with a live Bald Eagle, birds, bugs, snakes, and spiders. Nature artists and authors will show their creations. Mt. Diablo Audubon will have a table, along with many area conservation groups. To volunteer, contact Susana de Trapaga at [outreach@mtdiabloaudubon.org](mailto:outreach@mtdiabloaudubon.org).

**Project FeederWatch**

### **Saturday, November 9, 2019**

Consider joining the Cornell Lab's Project FeederWatch this year. You'll probably get hooked. This year's season begins soon—Nov. 9 - and runs for 21 weeks to April 3, 2020. To receive your kit in time, now is the time to sign up at [feederwatch.org](http://feederwatch.org).

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### **Central County Bird Count Saturday, December 14, 2019**

Mark your calendars: This year's Central County Bird Count will take place Sat., Dec. 14. The East County Count will follow on Wed., Dec. 18. Previous participants who plan to come out again this year should contact CBC Chair **Elizabeth Leite**. If you are new to Mt. Diablo Audubon Society and interested in participating, start by checking out **National Audubon's Christmas Bird Count**. Look for more details next month.

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## **New Fall Classes**

### **iNaturalist, a Tutorial for Citizen Scientists by Kendall Oei**

November 12 @ 7:00 PM–9:00 PM

To register for this, or other upcoming classes, see "Birding Classes" under Education at [http://www.mt Diablobaudubon.org](http://www.mt Diablo Audubon.org)

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JD Bergeron, executive director of **International Bird Rescue**, describes how he and a team of volunteers counted



Jenny Papka from **Native Bird Connections** showing a Northern Goshawk. (Photo Maren Smith)



albatrosses on Midway Atoll. (Photo Maren Smith)



Karen Shackleton from **Native Bird Connections** showing a Swainson's Hawk. (Photo Maren Smith)



Young birder participating in the **Thinkers and Tinkers Fair** at the Pleasant Hill Library. (Photo Alan Bade)



Young birders participating in the **Thinkers and Tinkers Fair** at the Pleasant Hill Library. (Photo Alan Bade)

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**Mt. Diablo Audubon Society Leadership**

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