



# Mt. Diablo Audubon Society

## *The Quail*

Volume 67, Number 3

NOVEMBER 2021

### **Next Monthly Program Meeting: Thursday, November 4**

Please mark your calendar for our next virtual monthly program meeting.  
See **BELOW** for webinar access info.

- 7:00 PM** Welcome and Introductions
- 7:05 PM** Birding Info: *Cabin Lake Bird Blinds Photos* with Jerry Britten
- 7:25 PM** Board Announcements
- 7:35 PM** Main Program: *Owls Through the Ages* with Karla Bloem
- 8:30 PM** Adjourn

---

### **Main Program: *Owls Through the Ages***

Karla Bloem, *Executive Director* of the International Owl Center

Owls are omens of death. Owls are creator beings. Owl eggs can cure serious diseases. These are all views that are currently held in different cultures on different continents.

Why is it important to understand these different cultural beliefs? Because conservation efforts depend heavily on cultural attitudes. Where people have positive attitudes towards owls it is much easier to promote actions that are

beneficial to owls. If people fear them, they will be more likely to want to kill owls than conserve them.

Education and personal gain have both been successfully used by several innovative individuals to make the world a better place for owls. This presentation will take you on a tour around the world throughout history to see how owls have been viewed, and hear inspiring stories of people who are creatively changing negative views.

You'll also get to meet a live owl and ask questions. Karla Bloem is the founder and *Executive Director* of the **International Owl Center**.



Photos: (top left) Karla with Alice by Pat Schmid; (bottom left) Karla with Alice by Brian Plath; (right) Karla banding an owlet by Chris Sargent

---

## **Birding Info:** ***Cabin Lake Bird Blinds Photos***

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

For this month's Birding Info, *MDAS President* Jerry Britten will share some photos he has taken at the **Cabin Lake Bird Blinds** in Central Oregon.

## Webinar Access Info:

**Date:** Thursday, November 4, 2021  
**Time:** 7:00 PM–8:30 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)  
**Location:** Zoom online meeting  
**Access:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87822280929?pwd=TWFHQ2NocTNUam9KODJ2eTgyeIYwUT09>  
**Meeting ID:** 878 2228 0929  
**Passcode:** 269983  
**Phone access:** **One tap mobile**  
+16699006833,,87822280929#,,,,\*269983# US (San Jose)  
+14086380968,,87822280929#,,,,\*269983# US (San Jose)

### Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)  
+1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)  
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)  
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)  
+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)  
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)  
+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 878 2228 0929

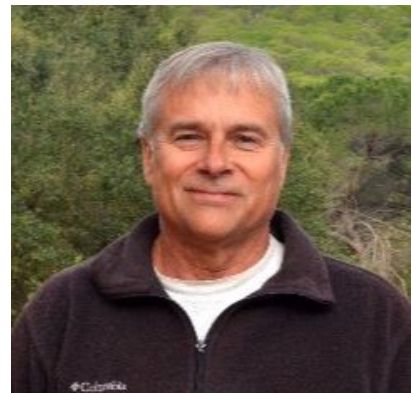
Passcode: 269983

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87822280929>

## President's Letter

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

The season is upon us where we acknowledge and thank those whose generous contributions have helped sustain Mt. Diablo Audubon and its mission over the past year, and also when we renew our fundraising efforts. Be on the lookout for our fundraising letter around Thanksgiving, and please consider supporting us again this year!



Organized activities are coming back to life. MDAS field trips are in full-swing, at full capacity in all our trips so far. The Chapter exhibited at Mount Diablo State Park's Centennial celebration on October 16 at the campus of Cal State East Bay in Concord. Our volunteers were busily engaged with the public in all matters 'Bird' at this well-attended outdoor event, and a fun time was had by all. Also, the Christmas Count season is coming up. **Read later in this newsletter** about this annual mid-December event and find out how to participate. There is still a week or two left for visitors to go on a field trip to Julie Woodruff's Owl Banding project. Contact Julie at [juliewoodruff15@gmail.com](mailto:juliewoodruff15@gmail.com) to sign up for this. Our November and December Program Meetings will remain virtual—we will be considering how to proceed with the 2022 meetings in the coming weeks.



MDAS table at Mount Diablo State Park's Centennial celebration  
(l-r) Susana de Trapaga, Alan Bade, Maren Smith, Wendy Gollop

In Chapter news, we welcome Rosemary Nishikawa as a new member of our Board, and look forward to working with her. We also say goodbye and thank you to our *Quail* and Website Editor, Marc Desin, as he goes off to explore new adventures at the end of the year.

As always, stay safe, and get out there for the birds!

---

## Welcome, New Members!

Jill Adler, Emeryville

Gail Binder, Oakland

Paulette Howard, Danville

Alisa Hagerty, Dublin

---

## Thank You To Everyone Who Gave So Generously In 2020–21

Steve Buffi, *MDAS Treasurer*

### California Condor (\$1,000+)

William D. Chilson, Lenora and Michael Robertson

### California Gnatcatcher (\$250–\$999)

Jerald Britten, Steve Buffi and Anne Waters, Sarah Cahill, Ariane Habets, Amy Herrera, Ann and Donald Hughes, Bruce and Judy Kronmiller, Lynn and Gordon Lakso, Donald Lewis, Norman and Christy Lundberg, Bruce Muirhead and Denise Pare-Muirhead, Paul and Nancy Schorr, Joel Summerhill

### California Thrasher (\$100–\$249)

Hanako and Paul R. Andrews, Gus and Gerry Argenal, Marta Bulaich, Darrell Cannon, Bill and Maureen Clark, Carolyn E. Cogan and Diana D. Herold, R. N. Compton, Don and Susan Couch, Regina Dakin, Joy Dardin, Ian and Karin Deas, Ginna Denues and Valerie Maestas, Marc Desin and Andrea Baird, Constance Diernisse, Maybelle M. Dore, Michael Eliot, Tracy Farrington, Kent Fickett and Rebecca Beemer, Pam Giarrizzo, Carol and John Harkin, Robert and Wanella Harvey, Claudia and Scott Hein, Rosalie Howarth, Marian Kirch, Richard Kleker, Dave Kwinter, Jane & Michael Larkin, Steve and Susan Loftin, Mike Loper. Pamela Alves Lorenz, Diane and Bob Malucelli, Markley Mason, Philip and Mary Neff, Sharon Noteboom, Donna Preece, Dennis Randall, Sandra S. Ritchie, Rosmarin Family, Janet and Richard Saillard, Robert G. Slyker, Julia M. Starr, Maury and Susan Stern, Del Stipe, Patricia Sullivan, Susanne Della-Rocco-Tast and John Tast, Willard Taylor, Roger Wilcox, Dean Williams, Erin M. Wilson, Marilyn Wojcik

### California Quail (\$25–\$99)

Cheryl Abel, Phillip Araki, Isaac Aronow, Lin and Dennis Ashlock, Bennett Berke, Sandra Binder, John and Diane Blackman, Daniel Campos, Marie Canane, Karen Case, Ethan and Ruth Chickering, John Corlett, William E. Davis, Jr., Lyn Diana, William T. Espey, Nancy J. Flood, Diane Fraenkel, James A. Fuller, Fenna Gatty, Jeannine Gendar, Janet M. Goodman, John S. Gravell, Carol Haglund, Jill and Eric Hedgecock, Donald and Janet Helmholtz, Elizabeth Hoople, Austin Hurst, Donna and

Richard Immel, Renate Johnson, Diana Karkiewicz, Susan Dee and Edwin F. Katibah, Matty Kilpatrick, Sandra and Fred King, Ronald Kline, Michelle Koski, Donna and Scott Kramer, Ed W. LaHay, Mona Lange, Charlotte Liniger, David Little and Lita Gloor-Little, Kathryn Martinsen, Leela McCullough, Bryan McElderry, Philip Mertz, Phyllis C. Meyer, Philip Nelson and Janie Nelson, William O'Neil and Phyllis Kay O'Neil, Margaret and Christopher Panton, Susan Peters, Susan and Clinton Phalen, Joyce Pollack, Austin and Marjorie Prindle, Charleen Raines, Anita Rama, Ariana Rickard, William and Lana Rocha, Jody Sherrard, David and Linda Shinn, Caroline Stephens, Gary Stevens, Raymond and Jerilyn Strong, Fred W. Sullivan, Stephen Taylor, Sandra Tickner, Marilyn Trabert, Dave and Bev Tucker, Kathleen Usher, Barbara Vaughn, Dr and Mrs. Milford J. Waldroup, Bev Walker, Marlana Weden, Teri and Chris Wills, Blake Wu

### **California Towhee (to \$24)**

Peter Boffey, Marlene Metropolis, Louis and Yolanda Pilastro, Jane Sedley, Ann Spaulding, Dr. and Ms. Howard Sturtz, Poppy Tanner

---

## **Vacant MDAS Positions**

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

Mt. Diablo Audubon currently has a number of vacant or soon-to-be vacant board and advisory positions that we would like to fill. Below are descriptions of these. Serving MDAS in any of these capacities is a great way to give back to the birding community and keep our chapter strong. If anyone is interested in helping out, please contact one of the current board members by clicking on their name on the MDAS website [HERE](#).

### **Outreach Coordinator**

Responsible for coordinating volunteers to staff MDAS booths and tables, etc. at local festivals and other public events at which MDAS has a presence. *This can be a Board or an Advisory position.*

### **Sales Manager**

Responsible for handling sales and inventory of publications and merchandise, conducting raffles and silent auctions at membership meetings, and maintaining financial records of sales. *This is a Board position.*

### **Web Editor**

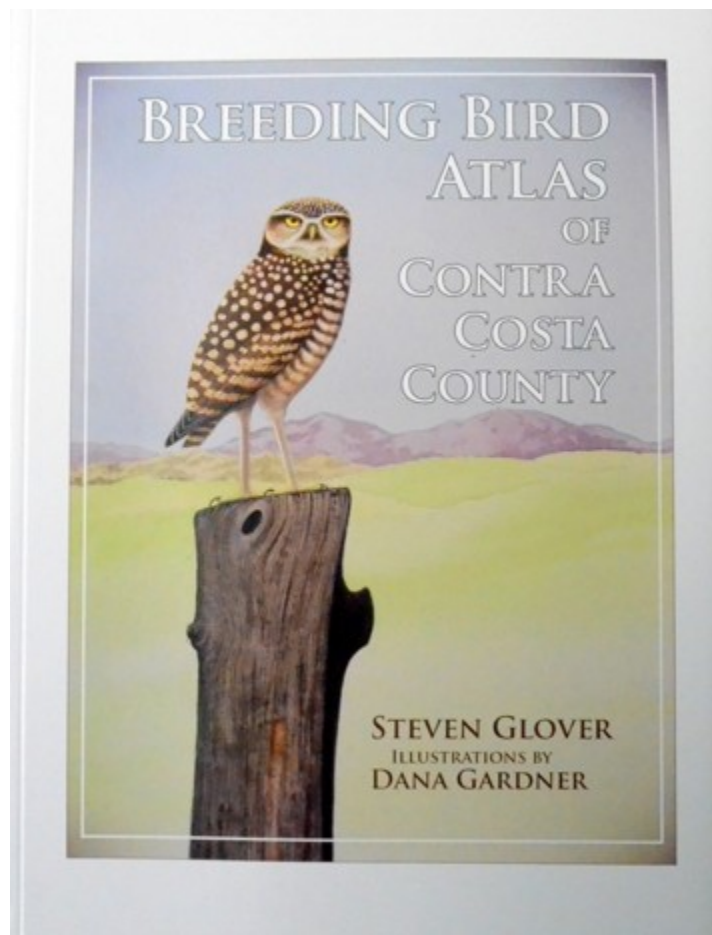
Responsible for creating and updating MDAS website content as needed. Duties include updating MDAS website content as requested by content authors, adding bird and nature-related events in the event calendar, and updating MDAS field trip information. Experience with WordPress is helpful. *This is an Advisory position.*

---

## Breeding Bird Atlas of Contra Costa County is Now Available Online!

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

Steve Glover's opus from 2007, *Breeding Bird Atlas of Contra Costa County*, published in 2009 with stunning illustrations by famed artist Dana Gardner, has been scanned and is **now available for free online from our website**. Of course, you can still order your own personal hardcopy of this beautiful 8.5x11 paperback book **HERE**.



---

## Field Trip Report

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

**Curry Canyon Joint MDAS/Save Mount Diablo Hike, October 3, 2021**

Twenty birders, including three Girl Scouts, joined three MDAS/SMD volunteers for a pleasant four mile hike up-and-back through SMD's Curry Canyon. Highlights included

Red-breasted Sapsucker, a lifer for some in the group, several Hermit Thrushes, a couple of Fox Sparrows, and excellent looks at a pair of Wrentits. 24 species were seen in total.



Photo: Red-breasted Sapsucker by Isaac Aronow

---

## Simple Changes Can Make a Huge Climate Difference

Juan Pablo Galván Martínez, *MDAS Conservation Chair*

Fighting climate change isn't all about renewable energy or getting an electric car. Some of the most important ways to avoid catastrophe have nothing to do with technology.

1. **The Power of the Fork.** Did you know that what you eat affects pretty much everything about you? Your mood, health, appearance, and energy levels all have a lot to do with what and how you eat. Eating more fruits, vegetables, legumes, and grains improves your body, sure, but it also is a HUGE part in fighting climate change. Eating sustainably is one of the easiest ways every



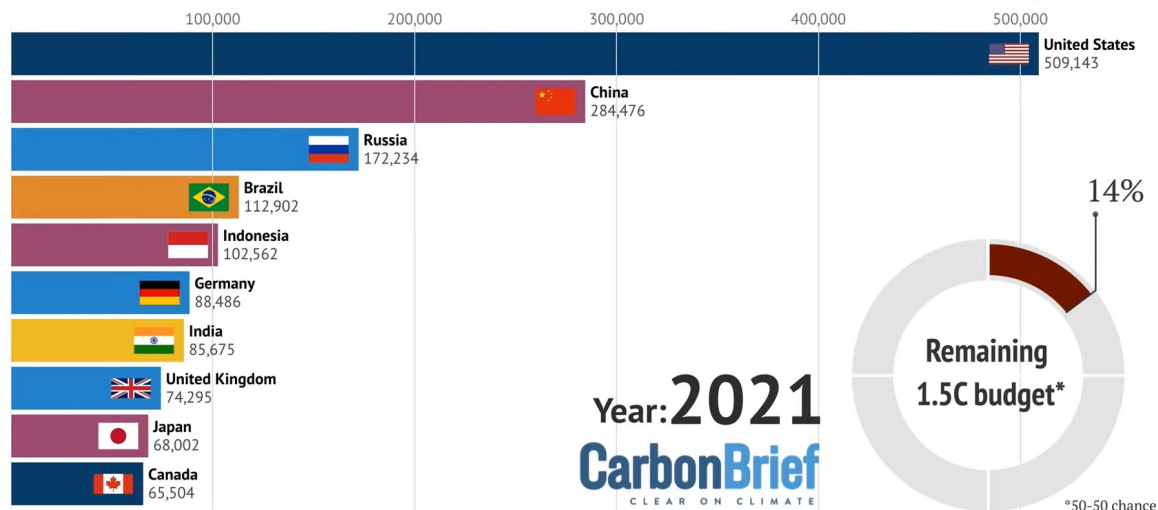
person around the world can make a better future for themselves and future generations. You don't need to go vegetarian or vegan, just eat more sustainably. Read more [HERE](#).

- 2. Is Your Stove Putting You, and the Planet, in Danger?** It's more and more clear each month: your gas stove has serious impacts to your health. It also burns what is basically methane, which is a greenhouse gas many times more potent than CO2. Give your lungs and your home on Earth a break—switch to a clean, efficient, high-performing electric or induction stove. Learn more [HERE](#).
- 3. Make Change Happen at the Level of Your Community.** Making changes to how we each live our lives is essential to combat climate change, but it's not anywhere near enough. Each of us needs to come together and act to change our communities in order to address climate change at the scale necessary to make a difference. Watch this six minute video [HERE](#) to see what we're talking about, and get ideas on how your community can make a difference [HERE](#) and [HERE](#). Interested in how housing can help or hurt the climate? Check this out [HERE](#).
- 4. Good News on Refrigerants.** The EPA is moving forward to cut harmful greenhouse gases often used in refrigerants, like in your fridge and AC. Read more [HERE](#).
- 5. Care About Justice? Then These Countries MUST Act on Climate.** The fact that entire nations may disappear due to a man-made problem they had nothing to do with is perhaps one of the greatest injustices to ever occur in the history of humanity. Which countries are most responsible for catastrophic climate change? Which ones destroy their forests vs. spew greenhouse gases from tailpipes and power plants? Find out [HERE](#).

## Which countries are historically responsible for climate change?

Cumulative CO2 emissions from fossil fuels, land use and forestry 1850-2021 (million tonnes)

Bar colours represent regions



---

## MDAS Christmas Bird Counts—Call for Participants!

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

Mt. Diablo Audubon conducts two Christmas Bird Counts, one in central Contra Costa County and one in the far east of the county. Last year we had a limited number of participants due to the pandemic, but still managed a record 161 species for the Central County count. This year, it will be tough to match this result, but with relaxed COVID restrictions, getting more participants should be a slam dunk! As with last year, the post-count get-togethers, where we go through the countdown to see how many species we have tallied, will be virtual events open to all participants, at 7:00 PM on the count day.

The East County count will be held Wednesday, December 15. You can participate by being part of a group in the field, or by doing a **Feederwatch** at your property if it is within the **East-County Count Circle**. If you'd like to participate, please send an email to [mdaseasterncbc@gmail.com](mailto:mdaseasterncbc@gmail.com).

The Central County count will be held Saturday, December 18. Similarly, you can participate by being part of a group in the field, or by doing a **Feederwatch** at your property if it is within the **Central-County Count Circle**. If you'd like to participate, please send an email to [mdascentralcbc@gmail.com](mailto:mdascentralcbc@gmail.com).



Birders in an East County CBC area at Vasco Caves Regional Park in 2018.

Photo: Maren SMith

---

## MDAS Field Trips

Hugh Harvey, *MDAS Field Trip Chair*



Mt. Diablo Audubon Society field trips are back. There are some changes from the way we used to do things, however. First, there will be a sign-up process for each field trip, accessible on our website [HERE](#). By signing up, you will be acknowledging the **MDAS Liability Waiver**. Second, some of the trips may require limited participation due to traffic/parking limitations. The sign-up process will allow us to manage this.

The biggest change to previous years is that, due to safety concerns brought about by the ongoing COVID-19 situation, MDAS will no longer organize or meet up at staging areas for carpooling. Participants are encouraged to arrange their own carpools with people they are comfortable traveling with, but must expect to provide their own transportation to meet at the trip destination. This is the main reason why participation may be limited on some excursions. Some historical destinations will be abandoned for now, as well, due to traffic/parking considerations.

As usual, the field trips will be ranked according to difficulty:

**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.

---

## MDAS Field Trips

You can view and print a complete list of planned MDAS field trips for the 2021–22 season [HERE](#).

Upcoming field trips include:

### **Charleston Slough**

**Thursday, November 6, 8:30 AM–2:30 PM**

**Leader: Beth Branthaver, 510-502-4869**

We see a variety of birds on the water on this trip. Locations might include Charleston Slough, Shoreline Lake, Palo Alto Baylands, Alviso, and Redwood Shores.

**Rating:** Category 2 - Moderate

**Distance:** We do some walking, but drive from location to location

**Elevation change:** N/A

**Leader:** Beth Branthaver, please call to confirm: 510-502-4869

**Meet:** Meet at Terminal Road in Mountain View at 8:30 AM.

**Directions:** Go south on I-680, take Exit 12, Mission Boulevard west. Continue through two traffic lights and take I-880 ramp south. Exit to SR 237, connect to US 101 north at Moffett Field. Exit at San Antonio Road, turn right (north) to Terminal Road, turn right and park. Entrance is on left. Drive time is about one hour from Walnut Creek/Danville.

This field trip is limited to 15 participants. Register for this event [HERE](#). Participants must acknowledge the [MDAS Liability Waiver](#) (available during registration).

---

### **Mt. View Sanitary/McNabney Marsh**

**Tuesday, November 23, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM**

**Leader: Randy Huey, 925-518-8439**

We expect to see a variety of water birds here, from grebes and ducks, to waders and peeps. Marsh passerines and raptors might also be present.

**Rating:** Category 2 - Moderate

**Elevation change:** N/A

**Leader:** Randy Huey, please call to confirm: 925-518-8439

**Meet:** Meet at Mt. View Sanitary Visitor Center at 10:00 AM.

**Directions:** Exit from I-680 southbound at Arthur Road, turn left and go under the freeway. Exit I-680 northbound at Pacheco Blvd, turn right onto Arthur Road and go

under the freeway. Arthur Road will turn left. At 0.4 miles turn sharp left onto Mt. View Sanitary's private road. Follow the road through the entry gate, alongside the freeway and through the tunnel under I-680. Park and sign in at the Visitor Center.

This field trip is limited to 20 participants. Register for this event [HERE](#). Participants must acknowledge the [MDAS Liability Waiver](#) (available during registration).

---

### **Sacramento/Colusa National Wildlife Refuges**

**Saturday, December 4, 8:15 AM–5 PM**

**Leader: Beth Branthaver, 510-502-4869**

All the migratory birds will have arrived for the duration of the winter and we expect to see plenty of waterfowl, raptors, other birds, and hopefully Sandhill Cranes. We will drive the auto tour routes at both of these refuges and visit a couple of other nearby locations.

**Rating:** Category 1 - Easy

**Distance:** Little walking, but plenty of driving, 250–300 miles.

**Elevation change:** N/A

**Leader:** Beth Branthaver, please call to confirm: 510-502-4869

**Meet:** North Dunnigan rest area on I-5 at 8:15 AM

**Directions:** Go north on I-680, cross the Benica Bridge (toll), merge onto I-80 East at Cordelia. At Vacaville, merge onto I-505 North, follow for 34 miles and merge onto I-5 North just south of Dunnigan. Continue past the town to the rest stop. This is an all day trip and we will not be home until after dark.

This field trip is limited to 15 participants. Register for this event [HERE](#). Participants must acknowledge the [MDAS Liability Waiver](#) (available during registration).

---

### **American Canyon Wetlands**

**Monday, December 6, 9 AM–Noon**

**Leaders: Chris & Teri Wills, 925-408-5364**

A walk out to the wetlands, ponds and sloughs along the Napa River produces many exciting birding opportunities. We expect plenty of waterfowl, raptors, waders, shorebirds and passerines. The parking lot porta-potty was removed in July and may or may not have been replaced.

**Rating:** Category 2 - Moderate

**Distance:** We may walk 2–3 miles depending on the route decided.

**Elevation change:** None

**Leaders:** Chris & Teri Wills, please call to confirm: 925-408-5364

**Meet:** Meet at parking lot at the end of Eucalyptus Drive at 9 AM

**Directions:** Go north on I-680 to Benicia, merge left onto I-780 west to Vallejo, exit to I-80 East, merge to Hwy 37 west (Exit 33). Exit at CA 29/Sonoma Blvd toward Napa. After 1.5 miles turn left on W American Canyon Road, at end turn right on Wetlands Edge Road. Turn left on Eucalyptus Drive and into parking lot.

This field trip is limited to 15 participants. Register for this event [HERE](#). Participants must acknowledge the [MDAS Liability Waiver](#) (available during registration).

---

## More Field Trip Destinations

In addition to the scheduled MDAS Field Trips, you may want to consider birding on your own at the following birding destinations.

### [Hayward Regional Shoreline](#), Hayward

This is a very popular location for walkers, anglers, and birders. Parking at the Winton Avenue parking lot is best at the first area before entering through the open gate. One can walk to the low, elevated mound known as "Mt. Trashmore." Can you guess what is below the dirt and short grass vegetation? It is about a half-mile out to the edge of San Francisco Bay along the flood control channel. Going north past another landfill area brings one to a large, mostly dry mudflat known as "Frank's Dump." This can be shorebird heaven in late summer and fall, as they either gather for the winter or use the area as a stopping point during their southerly migration. One can see Willets, Marbled Godwits, Red Knots, Short-billed Dowitchers, Ruddy Turnstones, Black-bellied Plovers, and the occasional Pacific Golden-Plover. Migrant passerines may be seen in the trees and weedy areas near the parking lot; raptors can be anywhere.

### [Outer Point Reyes](#), Point Reyes

The Outer Point Reyes area is a wonderful place to find fall migrants, many of them Eastern passerine vagrants. The best places to check are the trees around the visitor center and monument at Drake's Beach, the trees at the Mendoza Ranch, the trees at the Nunes Ranch, the trees around the residence at the Fish Docks, and the trees near the residence above the lighthouse. Some of the specialty migrants have included Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Chestnut-sided, Connecticut, Black-and-white, Magnolia, Prothonotary, Yellow-throated, and Black-throated Blue Warblers. We have seen Yellow-green, Red-eyed and White-eyed Vireos, Orchard Orioles, Ovenbirds, American Redstarts, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Peregrine Falcons, and Broad-winged Hawks. Look on the water for Common Murres, Pigeon Guillemots, Cormorants, and Loons.

The chance to see migrants is very much dependent on the weather; the absence of winds from the northwest and an overcast night sky will help trap these land birds at the Outer Point. Be sure to check the [National Park Service Point Reyes website](#) for road closure information.

### **Hawk Hill**, Marin Headlands

The fall southward migration of raptors can be quite spectacular if one is in a particularly good location. As birds fly south along the California coast, they eventually arrive at the Golden Gate, the one-mile-wide opening to our bay. They don't quite know what to do, as birds don't like flying over the water. As a consequence, raptors congregate at what is now known as Hawk Hill above the Golden Gate Bridge, before finally making the jump across the gap. The [Golden Gate Raptor Observatory](#) conducts a count every fall of all the raptors. This year, the area where the counters stand is closed to the public, but anyone can stand nearby at Battery 129, where in normal times public demonstrations occur on Saturdays. Parking should be easier on a weekday. Before going, check the [GGRO website](#).

### **Abbotts Lagoon**, Point Reyes National Seashore

We generally visit this location later in the month of October, but any time would be good. It requires driving to Point Reyes and turning onto Pierce Point Road. A one-and-a-half mile walk through the coastal habitat brings one to a bridge over the upper lagoon. Another ½ mile walk across sand and along the edge of the outer lagoon will bring one to the beach. A more rigorous 5,100 mile swim will take one to Japan. Birds we often see on this trip include sparrows, shorebirds, and raptors. The outer lagoon frequently has a good selection of shorebirds that will stay most of the winter. Snowy Plovers nest along the beach and south of the outer lagoon—they are often easy to find. American Pipit flocks need to be checked for possible Red-throated Pipits. Later in October, we often have a good selection of raptors including Red-tailed and Ferruginous Hawks, Northern Harriers, and White-tailed Kites. Check the [Point Reyes National Seashore website](#) for access updates. While some Point Reyes sites are closed as of this writing, Abbotts Lagoon is open.

### **Bodega Bay**

Not only is Bodega Bay famous for its role in the Hitchcock movie *The Birds*, but it is also famous for the many birds that can be found there. Starting in early fall and continuing through the winter, many shorebirds and waterfowl make Bodega Harbor their winter home. Any number of locations around the harbor can be visited for birding opportunities: The Tides Restaurant, Porto Bodega, the Rail Pond, Gaffney Point, Owl Canyon, Campbell Cove, and Bodega Head, among others. Food is available at The Tides, Lucas Wharf and Terrapin Creek restaurants, the crab shack at the Spud Point Marina, and some items at Diekmann's Store. A detailed description of bird-watching spots may be seen at [this website](#).

Other bayside locations to try are:

- **Coyote Hills Regional Park**
- **San Leandro Marina**
- **Oakland Middle Harbor Shoreline**
- **Emeryville Marina**

Within Contra Costa County, you might try:

- **McNabney Marsh**
- **Martinez Regional Shoreline**
- **Valle Vista south of Moraga** (EBMUD pass required)
- **Contra Loma Reservoir**

---

## **East Contra Costa County Birding Spots**

### **Clifton Court Forebay**

This is one of the most productive birding hotspots in the entire county, with over 200 species recorded on eBird. This can easily be an all-day birding expedition. During the fall, winter, and spring, thousands of gulls, scaup, and coots, along with myriad other waterfowl are present here. During the summer months uncommon birds and rarities such as Western Sandpiper, White-faced Ibis, and Bank Swallow can be found. Good numbers of raptors are always present, including resident Bald Eagles. Great Horned Owls are often seen. Otters and even sea lions can frequently be observed. The parking area is at the end of Clifton Court Road off of Highway J4 a few miles southeast of Byron. It's an out-and-back trip, as the paved levee road goes 90% of the way around the reservoir, leaving an open stretch of water between you and your car. Going to the end of this road and back is an approximately 16-mile roundtrip, so it is best explored with a bicycle, electric scooter, or other mode of transportation. A 5–6-mile roundtrip takes you to out to Eucalyptus Island, where there are large rookeries of Double-crested Cormorants, egrets, and herons in-season. Out here are also good-quality dirt levee roads, connected to the paved road, that overlook very productive marshland, slough, and brush habitat along Italian Slough and Old River. The entire route is exposed with no shade, and it can be windy at times.

### **Round Valley Regional Park**

This 2,191-acre preserve contains non-native grassland, oak woodland/savannah, shrubland, and riparian woodland plant communities. The park entrance is off of Marsh Creek Road between Deer Valley Road and Camino Diablo intersections. The park has become very popular with local residents, so the large parking lot often fills up on weekends. According to eBird, 145 species have been recorded here. Typical woodland birds can be found, as well as grassland birds in the open valley that makes



up a large fraction of the park. Sometimes, large flocks of Long-billed Curlews forage in the valley during the fall and winter. The best birding is at the back of the park, along its southwestern edge that abuts Morgan Territory Regional Preserve and Los Vaqueros Watershed land. This is about 3 miles from the trailhead, so a mountain bike trip is a good way to explore it along the mostly gently sloping Miwok Trail. Back in this area Lewis's Woodpeckers have been reliable for several years. As many as a dozen at one time have been recorded. There are a couple of stock tanks in this area, which are good for loitering near to watch several species of birds come to take a drink. The steep ridgeline at the park's southwestern border was scorched, and, in some areas, burned to bare dirt by the August 2020 wildfires. It will be interesting to see how this impacts local birdlife during the next several years.

### **Creekside Park (including Creek Road), Brentwood**

This is the birding hotspot for fall, winter, and spring rarities in East County. Several species are regularly seen here that are uncommon though findable farther west, but very scarce in East County. Such birds include Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Chestnut-backed Chickadees. Often, scarce winter warblers such as Townsend's, Black-throated Gray, and Orange-crowned are recorded. Over-wintering Western Tanagers as well as vagrant Hammond's Flycatchers, Red-naped Sapsuckers, and Scaly-breasted Munias have also been seen. The southern terminus of the Marsh Creek Regional Trail begins at the trailhead at the intersection of Concord Ave. and Creek Road in south Brentwood. A walk north from the trailhead up Creek Road along the riparian corridor of Marsh Creek is quite productive. Less than ½ mile north of the trailhead, looking through a fence onto a golf-course pond can provide views of several waterfowl species. A few yards north from here, there is usually water in the creek that many birds come to for bathing and drinking. Continue along Creek Road, looking over the field to the left for raptors and other fly-bys. Following this is a section of the road with a lot of toyon and other berry-bearing shrubs where Purple Finches, Cedar Waxwings, Hermit Thrushes, and other frugivorous birds can be found. Past this, continue along Marsh Creek Trail over the pedestrian bridge spanning the canal, and enter Creekside Park. This park, especially the riparian habitat along the eastern edge, continues to be productive. Continue along this edge of the park to its end at Crescent Drive. In the fall and winter of 2020–2021, many observers saw the vagrant Plumbeous Vireo along this section. This is about a 3-mile, flat, out-and-back roundtrip, and is the southern end of the Marsh Creek Regional Trail System that extends another 8–10 miles all the way to Big Break Regional Shoreline in Oakley.

---

## **San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory Seeking Volunteers**

Kristin Butler, *SFBBO Outreach and Communications Director*

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (SFBBO) [www.sfbbo.org](http://www.sfbbo.org) is a nonprofit organization in Milpitas, CA, with the mission to conserve birds and their habitats through science and outreach. SFBBO is seeking volunteers to help with the following activities:



**Remote Data Entry:** We are looking for volunteers to help with remote data entry for our Snowy Plover research program. Volunteers will receive training from our Snowy Plover team and work can be done from home and the hours are flexible.

**Social Media Analytics:** We are looking for a volunteer with previous experience and expertise tracking and analyzing social media analytics (primarily Facebook and Instagram, and possibly also Twitter and YouTube) to help create a strategy to understand the impact and reach of our current social media program and help us develop plans to increase our reach and follower engagement. This work can be done from home and the hours are flexible.

**Social Media Influencer Program:** We are looking for a volunteer with previous experience and expertise engaging and managing social media influencers to help us grow our pilot social media influencer program to increase our reach on our Facebook and Instagram platforms.

For information, please contact [outreach@sfbbo.org](mailto:outreach@sfbbo.org). Thank you!

---

## Events

Be sure to check the [MDAS website](#) for the most up-to-date listing of events.

### Winter Sparrows Workshop 2021

November 1 & 3, 2021

This workshop will be a basis to identify the wintering sparrows in California, with a focus on the Bay Area. We hope to also give you a background to understand a bit about the biology, evolutionary history, migration, and behavior of our sparrow fauna. With regards to identification, we will give more details on the trickier species. Although this is not a bird sound workshop, we will dabble in the vocal aspects of sparrows, particularly those useful for identification or that are particularly interesting, such as the recent song change that is racing through populations of White-throated Sparrows.

Apart from the classic field guide, “field mark” approach to identification, we will try to short-cut to holistic ways to identify sparrows by looking at the entire bird, shapes, impression, and facial expression to aid in identification. We are lucky to have a really varied set of sparrows in California that remain with us through much of the winter or move south towards us during this season. Unlike the warblers where most of them are gone in winter, the sparrows are often more abundant and diverse in winter in many spots in the continent, so take this workshop to prepare for the Christmas Bird Counts and a winter full of sparrow watching!



# WINTER SPARROWS WORKSHOP

WITH  
ALVARO JARAMILLO



**NOVEMBER 1 & 3, 2021**  
**6:00 - 8:00 PM**  
**\$100 | VIRTUAL | SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE**

**Date:** November 1 & 3, 2021  
**Time:** 6:00 PM–8:00 PM  
**Location:** Zoom online meeting  
**Presenter:** Alvaro Jaramillo  
**Sponsor:** **San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory**

**Cost:** \$100 for both sessions  
**Registration:** [Click here to register online](#)

---

## **The Falconer—An Online Film Screening**

November 5, 2021

Join Peninsula Open Space Trust for a special free online screening of “The Falconer” in honor of the Fall Raptor Migration Season! The event is free but registration is required. Guests who register for the event will receive a viewing link and password to access the film anytime between 7pm Friday, November 5 through midnight on Wednesday, November 10th.

The Falconer is a documentary feature that captures beauty and hope in the story of master falconer Rodney Stotts on his mission to build a bird sanctuary and provide access to nature for his stressed community. Under his organization, Rodney’s Raptors, Mr.



Stotts creates interactive and educational programming, allowing adults and children of all ages to experience the excitement that comes from holding a live bird of prey.

This is a story of second chances: for injured birds of prey, for an abandoned plot of land, for a group of teenagers who have dropped out of high school, and for Rodney himself. The Falconer weaves Rodney’s present-day mission with the story of his past, both of which are deeply rooted in issues of social and environmental injustice, and consistently orient the viewer to his worldview: nature heals.

**Date:** November 5, 2021  
**Time:** 7:00 PM–9:00 PM  
**Location:** Online  
**Sponsor:** [Peninsula Open Space Trust](#)  
**Cost:** Free  
**Registration:** [Click here to register online](#)

---

## WOW Presents: Mount Diablo State Park Centennial

November 10, 2021

Rising almost 4,000 feet from the valleys of Contra Costa County, Mount Diablo is one of the most recognized geologic features of the San Francisco Bay Area. This year, Mount Diablo State Park is celebrating 100 years since being established in 1921. Join Wonders of the World (WOW) for a webinar that will explore the human history of the mountain from its humble beginnings to present day, including the historic Civilian Conservation Corps who built most of its infrastructure. Discussions include the history of early Native Americans, cattle ranching, horse racing, automobile racing, and tourism on the mountain. Learn how the park has grown in size thanks to visionaries like Mary Bowerman and Raymond Force. See how different organizations protect the mountain like Mount Diablo Interpretive Association (MDIA) and Save Mount Diablo (SMD). The speaker will be Steve Smith, *MDIA President*.



<b>Date:</b>	November 10, 2021
<b>Time:</b>	2:00 PM–3:00 PM
<b>Location:</b>	Zoom online meeting
<b>Presenter:</b>	Steve Smith, <i>MDIA President</i>
<b>Sponsor:</b>	<b>Friends of Lafayette Library</b>
<b>Cost:</b>	Free
<b>Registration:</b>	<b><a href="#">Click here to register online</a></b>

---

## Birds of the San Francisco & San Pablo Bays

November 14, 2021

San Francisco Bay, the largest and one of the most important estuaries along the Pacific Flyway, is right in our own backyard. Join us as we cruise from Berkeley toward the Golden Gate Bridge and north into San Pablo Bay, hugging the shorelines and waters that are home to thousands of wintering birds. We will pass ten islands, under two bridges, and up two creeks in four counties in search of migrating and resident waterfowl, shore-birds, and marine mammals. This trip offers water bird and marine mammal viewing in stunning locations, many of which can only be seen by boat. In addition to the many ducks, loons, pelicans, and gulls that come into the Bay for the winter, we can also expect to see resident cormorants, grebes, terns, and murre.



**The trip is limited to 25 people.**

**All participants must be fully vaccinated.**

**There will be a waiting list if this trip sells out, and you will be notified if space becomes available.**

<b>Date:</b>	November 14, 2021
<b>Time:</b>	9:00 AM–4:00 PM
<b>Location:</b>	Berkeley Marina
<b>Sponsor:</b>	<b>Marin Audubon Society</b>
<b>Cost:</b>	\$120
<b>Registration:</b>	<b><a href="#">Click here to register online</a></b>

---

## Climate and Birds in California

November 18, 2021

North America's bird populations have declined by approximately 3 billion birds since 1970 and two-thirds of North America's bird species now face an even greater risk of extinction due to climate change. Mike Lynes will discuss the threats California birds face from climate change and how Audubon California is working with chapters, allies, and decision-makers to implement climate-smart, nature-based policies like California's "30 by 30" initiative aimed at expanding open spaces to meet climate goals and benefit human communities.



About the Speaker: Mike Lynes is *Director of Public Policy* for Audubon California and formerly served as *Executive Director* of Golden Gate Audubon Society.

Photo: Acorn Woodpeckers by Alicia Shaffer

**Date:** November 18, 2021  
**Time:** 7:00 PM–8:30 PM  
**Location:** Zoom online meeting  
**Presenter:** Mike Lynes  
**Sponsor:** **Golden Gate Audubon Society**  
**Cost:** Free  
**Registration:** **[Click here to register online](#)**

---

## October Gallery



MDAS October 7 Monthly Program Meeting:  
Lee Pauser presents photos and videos of eighteen species he has been monitoring in his nest boxes over twenty seasons.  
View the virtual meeting [HERE](#).



Watch episodes of Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society's Education Specialist Carolyn Knight where she highlights a specific family or bird on her YouTube playlist.

## **MDAS Field Trip Report: Elsie Roemer and Ballena Bay**

October 4, 2021

See Hugh Harvey's field trip report [HERE](#) to learn about what birds were seen on this trip.



Enjoy Cassie Tzur's photos from the trip below.





---

*Copyright © 2021 Mt. Diablo Audubon Society, All rights reserved.*

**Mailing address:**

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

**Email address:**

[info@mtdiabloaudubon.org](mailto:info@mtdiabloaudubon.org)

**Mt. Diablo Audubon Society Leadership**

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can **update your preferences** or **unsubscribe from this list**.

