

The Quail

Volume 68, Number 1

OCTOBER 2022

Next Monthly Program Meeting: Thursday, October 6, 7 PM

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: MDAS President Jerry Britten will present highlights of

his summer Alaskan birding trip to the High Arctic Tundra and the

Anchorage area.

7:25 PM Board Announcements

7:30 PM Main Program: Gardening for Birds with California Native Plants

8:30 PM Adjourn

Main Program:

Gardening for Birds with California Native Plants

Eddie Bartley and Noreen Weeden

You can have a beautiful native plant garden that attracts amazing birds, butterflies, and other wildlife. Learn about the benefits of local native plants, and some of the wonderful birds that are drawn to this place and these plants. We will discuss what migrating and resident birds need and

how to provide what the birds are seeking.

While there are hundreds of bird species that have been observed in Contra Costa County, learn which native plants attract which bird species and why they are attracted to them. This presentation will cover what to think about in designing your backyard and when to plant. This will inspire you to have an awesome variety of native plants for birds. Golden Gate Audubon and the California Native Plant Society have partnered on Plants for Birds which promotes several local native plants that attract local birds and are available at local nurseries. The Plants for Birds program is all about local, and each year more plants are added so that you can grow your garden while increasing biodiversity.

Eddie Bartley and Noreen Weeden are both active volunteers with the Golden Gate Audubon Society, California Native Plant Society (CNPS), and the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory.

Eddie is President of the Yerba Buena chapter of CNPS and the Farallones Islands Foundation. He is an avian researcher and instructor for the California Academy of Sciences and Golden Gate Audubon. Noreen Weeden was formerly Volunteer Director with Golden Gate Audubon and managed a habitat restoration project. She is on the board of Yerba Buena CNPS. Both Eddie and Noreen regularly lead natural history field trips. They can often be found in California's natural areas birding, removing weeds, and tending native plants.

Birding Info:

Alaskan Birding Presentation

Jerry Britten, MDAS President

MDAS President Jerry Britten will present highlights of his summer Alaskan birding trip to the High Arctic Tundra and the Anchorage area.

Webinar Access Info:

Date: Oct 6, 2022 7:00 PM Pacific Time

Time: 7:00 PM-8:30 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Location: Zoom online meeting

Access: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85230197486?

pwd=Z1hVZlpycFFmeDVtOVo2dDZBTTVCUT09

Meeting ID: 852 3019 7486

Passcode: 907370

Phone access: One tap mobile

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+1 309 205 3325 US

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 386 347 5053 US

+1 564 217 2000 US

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

+1 646 931 3860 US

Meeting ID: 852 3019 7486

Passcode: 907370

Find your local

number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kes5ZROHtA

President's Letter

Jerry Britten, MDAS President

In mid-September I made a trip to southern Michigan to visit my mother. But, early one morning I found some time to visit a local nature park to look for fall warblers. The trail went back into a flooded woods inundated by some industrious beavers, where I came across a flurry of activity as a mixed warbler flock swarmed through. It was not possible to count/identify all of them, but I was able to see and photograph a number of species, including Black-and-White, Tennessee, Nashville, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Bay-Breasted, Black-Throated Green and Yellow Warblers, along with American Redstart and Common Yellowthroat. Interestingly enough, the Yellow Warbler was the one species that eBird considered rare, due to the time of year. In the same location were all the woodpeckers as well – Pileated, Red-Headed, Red-Bellied, Hairy and Downy, and Flicker. The only thing better would be to see all these warblers in breeding plumage in the spring, but at that time of year the woods would be swampier, possibly impassable, and the mosquitoes much worse.

Chapter News

Our in-person general membership meeting in September was a big success, with about 60 attendees and a captivating program on the Galapagos. We held a raffle and members brought in plenty of treats, as in the olden days! Recall, in the spring we polled membership on their preference for our general meetings. The response was 53/52 virtual/in-person. Since there was no consensus, we decided to hold 4 -in-person meetings (September, December, March, June) and 6 virtual meetings in the remaining months (the October 6 general meeting is virtual). We did not invest in equipment or expertise to be able to provide a quality live-stream of our in-person meetings, nor did we want to, for fear that this would suppress attendance. We hope all of you are OK with this compromise.

Our Northern Saw-whet Owl Banding project is back again this fall, and once again we are offering field trips to get a chance to see this enigmatic little bird up close! Please see details and learn how to participate in this issue.

Membership Updates

Rochelle Fortier, MDAS Membership Chair

I would like to extend a warm welcome to **Jason Leonard** of Concord who joined in August. I hope to see you on a field trip soon or at our next in-person meeting in December!

The MDAS membership dues really make a difference to help birds. For example, our membership dues and donations help birds locally. MDAS has donated annually to the California Bluebird Recovery Program. It supports building bluebird nest boxes, and most importantly, monitoring the nest boxes during the nesting season.

And MDAS also donates to international groups such as Monitores Comunitarios Siyaj Chan in Mexico. It provides job opportunities to the local people who can work as forest monitors and guides. They help protect the wintering areas for birds such as the Bullock's Oriole and Western Tanager that we see in Contra Costa County in the Spring and Summer.

So thanks to your dues and donations, if you see a bluebird on your walk, it could have hatched and fledged from one of the bluebird boxes. And if you see a Western Tanager next Spring, it could be one that lived in the protected areas in Mexico!

As a reminder, we have our new membership brochures available. If you know someone who is interested in birding and/or bird conservation, I can mail you a couple of our membership brochures that you can give to them. Just email me at **membership@mtdiabloaudubon.org**. Also, I want to say a thank you to Steve, in San Ramon, who responded to the brochure request in last month's Quail.

Northern Saw-whet Owl Banding Field Trips

Julie Woodruff, Biologist, Northern Saw-whet Owl Banding Project

Join *Master Owl Bander* Julie Woodruff and other members of the team for an evening under the stars to observe Northern Saw-whet Owls! Learn all about how these tiny, enigmatic owls are captured and studied with a local owl bander and get an opportunity to see them (and other night creatures such as coyotes, Great Horned Owls, or bats) close-up as you get a personal experience to learn about a local research project. Visitors must be able to hike up a short, steep hill on uneven terrain, sometimes in the cold. Due to the nature of the program, guests are limited to five or fewer visitors. Please reach out to **juliewoodruff15@gmail.com** to reserve your night! The following dates and times are available:

2022 Schedule

Date of Field Trip	
Sunday, October 16	18:30 - 22:00
Sunday, October 23	18:30 - 22:00
Saturday, October 29	18:15 – 22:00
Friday, November 4	18:00 - 22:00
Friday, November 11	17:00 - 21:00

Birds Can't Vote. Be Their Voice in 2022!

National Audubon Society

"Birds can't vote, but as one of the millions of Americans who care about them—you can.

This year, in addition to federal races, state and local elections happening nationwide will have a BIG impact on our communities and the birds we love. The decision-makers who take office will have an important influence on the ways that laws are written and enacted at every level of government. **And you can make a difference**.

- Pledge to Vote For The Birds Join Audubon members across
 the country by signing our pledge to vote today. Once you do,
 we will provide additional details you will need to make your voting
 plan. Different states have different rules about registration, early
 voting, and vote by mail, so be sure you plan ahead and have all
 your ducks in a row. Then, spread the word to your friends.
- Be Sure to Register to Vote or Check Your Registration –
 Registration is an important first step to becoming a voter. Register
 or check your registration status today by clicking here. Even if
 you have voted at your current address before, you should still
 check your status and make sure you are "Vote Ready."

The best way to guarantee a brighter future for birds and the places they need is to make sure to vote on or before Election Day, which is Tuesday, November 8, 2022. Let's do this!"

—View the full message from the National Audubon Society

Mt. Diablo Audubon Merchandise for Sale at Wild Birds Unlimited!

Mt. Diablo Audubon caps, the Contra Costa Breeding Bird Atlas, and Flicker/Kestrel/Owl nest boxes are for sale at the **Wild Birds Unlimited Store** in **Pleasant Hill**. The caps and the book are \$20 each and the nest boxes are \$60 each. 100% of the proceeds go to supporting MDAS programs and services.

Change Is Possible: It MUST Happen Now! Do Something for Your Grandkids by Saving Their Planet and Yours

Good things are happening on climate action. A lot of bad things are happening too (map above). **Talk**, organize, and **ACT** at a level that makes a difference.

- 1. It's Election Season. That means there's a chance to get bad climate actors out of power and put good people in. Do the ballot measures in your area affect the climate and natural lands? Does your City Council or County Supervisor Candidate have anything to say about the environment? While Audubon doesn't endorse or go against candidates, other groups do. Click HERE and see if your vote can help the climate at the local level, and join larger efforts HERE to make big climate wins possible, and keep climate deniers out.
- 2. Without Massive Change, Record-Breaking Heat Is Just the Beginning. Think that week-long triple-digit heat wave was hot? That might be the coolest summer you'll experience for the rest of your life (HERE, map above). We know the solutions that will avoid climate catastrophe, from fancy new technology to simple changes in behavior and diet (HERE). Now everyone reading this needs to grow the will and political power to make them happen. Don't know where to start? Start HERE, and don't stop.
- 3. Recognize the Good News, and Act for More. California Governor Gavin Newsom recently signed 40 climate-related pieces of

- legislation into law (HERE). That's good news. It's also true that greenhouse gas emissions need to be plummeting right now to avoid catastrophe, but last year they reached their highest level ever worldwide (HERE). Read about the good news, and defend against those who want to roll back these victories. For example, an effort in California has barely started to gather signatures to repeal a great new law that requires setbacks of houses, schools, and other things from oil and gas wells. Be on the lookout for news, and don't sign of course, but don't just stop at avoiding harm. Look into climate-related laws and politics yourself and figure out how to make positive change through policies and supporting good projects.
- 4. Oil and Gas Companies' Own Documents Show They Know They're Lying. There's no such thing as sustainable oil, climate-friendly natural gas, or green coal. The fossil fuel industry knows what it says about "going green" is a lie (HERE). They're pretending and they hope people believe them. Don't let them continue to get away with it. Organize your family, community, church, school, neighborhood, and city. Get energy from wind and solar (HERE). Even better, produce it yourself. Talk to your school, employer, County, and city leaders to get solar panels on roofs, cover parking lots with them, and develop policies to make good policies that promote renewables.
- 5. Your TP Can Help Forests or Destroy Them. How Does Yours Stack Up? The paper towels and toilet paper you buy may be produced from important forests that birds and other wildlife depend on. If you buy those huge bulk squares from Costco, you're likely causing a lot of harm. The good news is that making better choices and avoiding brands that are bad for birds and the planet is just as easy as finding the ones that are great! Click HERE for a super simple guide of what to buy and what to avoid in this year's sustainability report card of TP and paper towels. Help the planet, avoid big bulk TP and paper towels, and buy products that used recycled materials, easy to find in Trader Joe's or Whole Foods.

The 2022-2023 field trip season continues! We'll be revisiting many of our traditional destinations, as well as exploring a few new ones. Descriptions of upcoming trips may be found on the Calendar on the MDAS website, along with links for registration.

Out of respect for the health of our members and community, we continue to ask trip participants to take sensible precautions. Pre-registration, currently handled online through Eventbrite, is *required* to ensure groups are not overcrowded. At present, MDAS events do not require carpooling — though participants are of course free to make their own arrangements. As the need for safe spacing limits group size, be aware of the need to sign up early to make sure you get a spot! And if you discover that you won't be able to attend a trip you've signed up for, **please cancel via Eventbrite** to open that spot up for someone else.

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.

Note that some excursions to great hotspots we had planned to repeat this year are at risk of being skipped for want of leaders. **New leaders are always needed!** This is a fun way to serve our chapter's mission, while sharing a day out in nature with your fellow enthusiasts. We need leaders to take over trips to familiar places, and are always interested too in exploring new hotspots. If you're interested in serving as a trip leader please contact Matt Tarlach, our Field Trip Coordinator: **mtar925@gmail.com**. He will send you the one-page "Guidelines for Field Trip Leaders" and outline what's required. The bird-spotting is a group effort.

MDAS Field Trips

You can view and print a complete list of planned MDAS field trips for the 2022 season **HERE**.

Upcoming field trips include:

Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary, Alameda Wednesday, October 5: 9 AM - 1 PM

A visit to the Alameda shoreline as the tide rises should produce good views of shorebirds. A viewing platform and trails will give us excellent opportunities to study these birds at close range. We may drive to other nearby locations for additional birding.

Hike Rating: Category 1 - Easy

Elevation change: N/A

Leader: Hugh Harvey, (925) 935-2979

Meet: Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary, Broadway and Shoreline, Alameda, CA

94501

GPS: 37.753096130035445, -122.24728246225817

Directions: From Hwy 880 take exit 39A. After exiting, turn right on Fruitvale Ave. Take Fruitvale over the bridge into Alameda Turn left on Broadway, and continue through Alameda to Shore Line Drive. Consider parking along Broadway just before the intersection. Meet at the observation deck off of Shore Line Drive.

This hike is limited 15 participants. this to Register for event HERE. Participants must acknowledge **MDAS** Liability the **Waiver** (available during registration).

Five Brooks/Bear Valley, West Marin County Saturday, October 15, 9:00 AM - 1 PM

This trip visits two inland areas near Point Reyes, with environments of trees and meadows that are miles from the windswept dunes. Five Brooks is a reliable location for California Quails. All sorts of interesting birds show up around the pond at Five Brooks: Wood Ducks, Wilson's Snipe, and Merlin hawking dragonflies. Some years there are good numbers of Varied Thrush at Bear Valley.

The weather is unpredictable, so dress in layers. Bring water and trail snacks.

Hike Rating: Category 2 - Moderate. Walking on mostly level trails, about a mile at each site.

Elevation change: Minor

Leader: Maureen Lahiff, (510) 484 - 6529, MLahiff@aol.com

Meet: Five Brooks Trailhead, which is about 4 miles south of the intersection of

Sir Francis Drake Blvd and California Highway 1 in Olema.

GPS: 37.9974, -122.7579

Directions: After crossing the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, take Hwy 101 north to Lucas Valley Road. Take Lucas Valley Road west about 10 miles until it ends at Nicasio Valley Road. Turn right, go through Nicasio, and turn left at the T-intersection with Point Reyes-Petaluma Road. In about 3 miles, you will come to the intersection with the gaily painted Platform Bridge. Continue straight; when the road ends at Sir Francis Drake Blvd, turn right. At the flashing stop light in Olema, turn left on Hwy 1. In about 4 miles, turn right on the gravel road to Five Brooks Trailhead. Drive all the way to the end, curving around to the right. (This route is about 5 miles longer than taking Sir Francis Drake all the way, but can actually take less time.)

There are park-style pit toilets at Five Brooks and full-service restrooms at Bear Valley Visitor Center, about 5 miles away.

This hike is limited to 20 participants. All field trips require registration and may have a limit on the total number of participants. Participants must acknowledge the MDAS Liability Waiver (available during registration). Register for this event HERE.

Palo Alto Baylands/Charleston Slough Saturday, November 5, 8:30 AM - 2 PM

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.

Hike Rating: Category 2 - Moderate. We do some walking but drive from one location to the next.

Elevation change: Minor

Leaders: Herb and Randi Long at **herblong7@gmail.com**, (925) 948 - 5113 **Meet:** Meet at the entrance to Palo Alto Baylands on Terminal Boulevard in Mountain View at 8:30 AM.

Directions: If using Google maps, enter "Terminal Boulevard Mountain View, CA."

Take I-680 South 24 miles to Exit 12 for Mission Boulevard/State Route 262

(second Mission Blvd exit so that you head west on Mission Blvd). Keep right at the fork; follow signs for Mission Blvd West and merge onto CA-262 South/Mission Blvd. Continue through two traffic lights and take the I-880 ramp South. In 3 miles, use the right two lanes to take CA-237 toward Mountain View. Connect to US-101 North toward San Francisco. Once on US-101 North, take Exit 400C for San Antonio Road. Turn right on San Antonio. Continue for about 0.4 miles and turn right onto Terminal Road and park. The entrance to Palo Alto Baylands is on left. There is a bathroom at the entrance. Drive time is about one hour, 5 minutes from Walnut Creek/Danville.

Bring lunch!

This hike is limited to 15 participants. All field trips require registration and may have a limit on the total number of participants. Participants must acknowledge the MDAS Liability Waiver (available during registration). Register for this event HERE.

Shadow Cliffs Regional Park Tuesday, November 15, 8:15 AM - 12 PM

Expect to see a good variety of different birds. In years past Bald Eagles, Osprey, Herons, Kingfishers, various ducks, owls, hawks, Grackle, and many smaller birds have all been seen here.

Hike rating: 1 - Easy **Elevation change:** Minor

Leader: Steve Taylor, (925) 828 - 8810

Meet: at the park at 8:15 AM, in the parking lot to the left side after passing the Kiosk. There is an entrance fee, currently \$6, or you can use your East Bay

Regional Park pass.

Directions: To reach Shadow Cliffs drive South on Highway 680 and then East on Highway 580. Take the Santa Rita Exit and go right. Drive about a mile South to Valley Ave. make a left on Valley Ave and in less than a half mile make a left on Stanley The park entrance will be on your right about a mile on Stanley.

This hike is limited to 20 participants. All field trips require registration and participants must acknowledge the MDAS Liability Waiver (available during registration). Register for this event HERE.

Trip Reports

Jewel Lake, Matt Tarlach

On September 1, a dozen eager birders opened the 2022-23 season with our traditional kickoff field trip to the Tilden Nature Area in the hills between Berkeley and Orinda. Over the mile-and-a-half stroll to Jewel Lake and back we tallied 32 species, including a Red-shouldered Hawk and a Coopers who were sharing the same snag, perched almost within wing's-length of each other; a charismatic Swainson's Thrush; and representatives of all three local Nuthatch species: White-breasted, Red-breasted, and Pygmy. The butterflies were out in force, too — the lovely specimen in the photo was ID'd as a California Sister.

McNear Brickyard, Hugh Harvey

Seven members or guests visited the McNear Brickyard in San Rafael for swift viewing. Arriving about 5 PM, the swifts were already flying around the chimney they use for night roosting. They started dropping into the chimney in small bunches after a bit, and that continued until at least 7:30 when the last of us left. We have no idea how many birds it was, only that it was a very high number. Also seen well was a Red-shouldered Hawk, a Red-tailed Hawk, and a Turkey Vulture as part of a seven species total.

Events

Be sure to check the **MDAS website** for the most up-to-date listing of events.

Bird Photo Big Day! How Many Birds Can We Get?

October 1, 2022

Since 2020, Bay Area birders have banded together each spring and fall to photograph as many birds as possible for the Bird Photo Big Day. The goal is to collectively capture photos of as many species as possible in one day, all as ONE distributed team!

Head over to **Facebook and join the group**; that's where all the action takes place. Don't want to take photos but still want to participate? You can join in on the fun, too! We need folks to watch the number of photos grow during the day, identify bird species, and let the birders in the field know what bird species we are missing! If you aren't on Facebook, email your pictures to **slao@sfbbo.org** and we will post them for you (see rules at bottom of page).

Some of our best birds have come from folks who only took a few shots but got birds we needed! Any camera will do, and every bird counts!

Don't want to take photos but still want to participate? You can join the fun, too! We need folks to watch the number of species grow during the day, help identify birds, and cheer the team on.

Date: Saturday, October 1, 2022

Sponsors: San Francisco Bird Observatory

Cost: Free to participate, but donations welcomed

Registration: Click here to register online

The Early Bird Gets The Worm

October 1, 2022

This bird walk will be slow enough for us to see the birds which make themselves available to us. With fall migration over we'll be looking for wintering migrants such as the Varied Thrush, Hermit Thrush, and Townsend's Solitaire.

During early October Warbler's may be possible, such as Orange Crown, Townsend's, and Hermit Warblers. Late September towards early October can bring interesting raptors. Mount Tam State Park is on the winter migration path for many species of raptors, we'll keep our eye on the sky also. Of course, we keep listening for Pileated Woodpeckers, Cedar Waxwings, Purple Finches, and Red-Crossbills too.

Date: Saturday, October 1, 2022

Time: 7:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Location: Rock Spring Trailhead, West Ridgecrest

Boulevard,

Stinson Beach, CA 94970

Sponsors: Friends of Mt. Tam in Partnership with California

State Parks and One Tam

Cost: Free

Registration: Click here to register online

Life in the Egg

October 5, 2022

Have you ever wondered how chicks develop within an egg? This informative lecture will take you through avian reproduction, how eggs are produced, incubation and the development of a chick within the egg. Stephanie will also touch upon the different types of development within the bird world. You will never look at an egg the same way!

Stephanie Ellis is the Executive Director at Wild Care, a wildlife rehabilitation hospital located on Cape Cod, in Eastham, MA. Stephanie has a passion for wildlife rehabilitation and conservation that spans both coasts. Prior to Wild Care, Stephanie served as Executive Director of the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society in Cupertino, CA, and the Interim Executive Director of the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory. She is happiest in her homeland of Massachusetts, and has a special affinity for birds and mice. In her spare time, she can be found teaching dance as a tool for empowering women.

Date: Wednesday, October 5

Time: 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Location: Zoom online meeting

Presentor: Stephanie Ellis

Sponsor: San Francisco Bird Observatory

Cost: Free

Registration: Click here to register online

Celebrating 50 Years of Conservation

October 8, 2022

On June 30th, 1972, Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge was officially established as part of the National Wildlife Refuge system and became America's first and largest urban national wildlife refuge! As part of the celebration, we are throwing a birthday party! Celebrating 50 Years of Conservation: Past, Present, and Future aims to celebrate and honor the past, present, and future and inspire people to experience, connect with, and protect our cultural and natural resources. There will be fun for the entire family including, ranger walks and talks, face painting, history talks, activities, refreshments, and more!

Date: Saturday, October 8

Time: 11 AM - 3 PM

Location: 1 Marshlands Rd. Fremont, CA 94555.

Sponsor: US Fish & Wildlife Services

Cost: Free

Registration: Click here for more information

Bat Fest

October 22, 2022

It's Saved By Nature's biggest and most exciting event of the year – Bat Fest! Join us for an evening festival celebrating local animals of the night, with live bats, owls, and other creatures. It's a fun time under the stars! With a special guest speaker, food trucks, live music, festival games, arts and crafts, mini-pumpkin patch, REI lounge, and booths from community partner organizations. Be sure to bring your own blankets and lawn chairs to enjoy popcorn, cotton candy, and your favorite drink while watching the movie *Addam's Family* (1991) under the night sky.

This family-oriented community event will be held in the meadow at Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve in Morgan Hill and will feature a live bat presentation by Northern California Bats and a live owl, turkey vulture, and opossum presentation by the Wildlife Education & Rehabilitation Center.

Date: Saturday, October 22

Time: 4:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Location: Rancho Cañada del Oro Open Space Preserve

Sponsor: Saved By Nature

Cost: Adults (16+): \$20

Children (6-15): \$5

Children (5 & under): Free

Registration: Click here to register online

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Mt. Diablo Audubon Society Leadership

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