



Mt. Diablo Audubon Society

The Quail

Volume 68, Number 5

APRIL 2023

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

Please mark your calendar for our upcoming virtual monthly program meeting.

See **BELOW** for webinar access info.

7:00 PM Welcome and Introductions

7:05 PM Board Announcements

7:10 PM *Main Program: Ornithery: Watching Birds: not only fun, it's good for you!*

8:30 PM Adjourn

Main Program

Ornithery: Watching birds: not only fun, it's good for you!

Holly Merker



Holly Merker

Photo by Kari Oeltjen

Learn why getting your daily dose of Ornithery is just what the doctor ordered. Long to-do lists, digital demands, people to connect with-life can be busy! If we allow birds and nature to slow us down, we are practicing “selfcare”.

Research shows that exposure to nature actively reduces stress, depression, and anxiety, while helping build a stronger heart and immune system. Birds are gateways into deeper experiences with nature, magnifying these benefits. Through observation, we can learn not only about birds, but gain insight into our own lives while exploring our connection to the world around us. This fosters stewardship and bolsters conservation.

Within the program, we’ll delve into our connections to birds, how to practice Ornithery for optimal benefits, and learn about the latest research in the power of nature for overall well being.

Holly Merker is a professional birding guide, writer, and educator who has a background in art therapy, but today uses birds and nature towards the same goals delivering nature-based wellness programs for people of all ages.

In her work as an environmental educator and professional birding guide, Holly

shares her love of birds guiding for the American Birding Association, National Audubon, Hillstar Nature, and many other organizations. She is also a Certified Nature and Forest Therapy Guide (ANFT) and founded The Mindful Birding Network.

Holly is the author of the award-winning book *Ornithery: For Your Mind, Body, and Soul* (along with Richard Crossley and Sophie Crossley, Crossley Books, 2021) and was featured in a recent article in the **NY Times: The Surprising Health Benefits of Bird-Watching**. In her free time, Holly spends every possible moment practicing Ornithery herself, which she credits in helping her defeat breast cancer, restoring her health mentally and physically.



Holly Merker birding in downtown L.A.

Photo by Crossley Books

Webinar access info

Topic: MDAS April 2023 Membership meeting

Date: Apr 6, 2023

Time: 7:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Location: Zoom online meeting

Access: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87306443129?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87306443129?pwd=NDRWQ0dDazBTQ2Q0ZG5KMmF0eVZldz09)

[pwd=NDRWQ0dDazBTQ2Q0ZG5KMmF0eVZldz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87306443129?pwd=NDRWQ0dDazBTQ2Q0ZG5KMmF0eVZldz09)

Meeting ID: 873 0644 3129

Passcode: 901799

Phone access: One tap mobile

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Dial by your location

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+1 719 359 4580 US

+1 253 205 0468 US

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 564 217 2000 US

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

+1 646 931 3860 US

+1 689 278 1000 US

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

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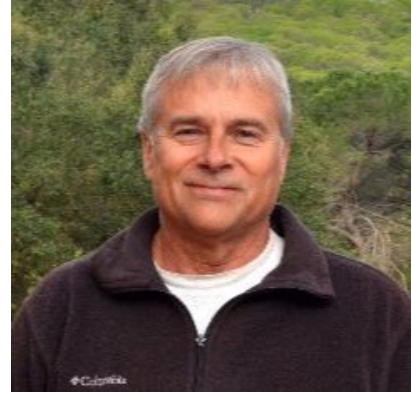
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President's Letter

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

On February 20, a local homeowner near Hillcrest Park in Antioch noticed an unusual bird at his birdbath, and alerted local birder Chris Ortega to the presence of an Evening Grosbeak! Chris got the word out on several platforms, and almost overnight Hillcrest Park went from a place no-one knew about to one of the busiest birding hotspots in the

county. This lone, beautiful male has stayed through at least March 8, offering splendid views as it feeds on Pistache berries and other things, unconcerned about birders and dog-walkers etc. Evening Grosbeaks are birds of boreal and alpine conifer forests, very rarely venturing into our area. In fact, this is the first record in eastern Contra Costa, according to eBird. There have been numerous reports lately in the lower foothill areas east of Sacramento, where the birds have undoubtedly come down from higher elevations due to the heavy snowpack, but the Antioch bird is an outlier.



If you do not get alerts to uncommon-to-rare birds in our area and would like to do so, there are a few easy ways. One is to subscribe to our EBB-Sightings email service. You can sign up by going to the link on our website at <https://mtdiabloaudubon.org/birding/east-bay-birding-email-groups/>. It's free and no password required. Additionally, you have an eBird account or want to create one, you can create rare bird alerts or personalized needs alerts for any area by clicking on the 'Alerts' tab on your 'My EBird' page.

In Chapter News, Our February in-person membership meeting at the Pleasant Hill Community Center was very well attended. About 60 guests enjoyed a very entertaining presentation by Jenny Papka from **Native Bird Connections** and her star attractions – hawks and owls. Our next in-person meeting will be in June, where we will present winners of our photo contest (please see more details about this later in this newsletter). We are continuing our wood-duck nest-box monitoring project at San Pablo and Upper San Leandro Reservoirs, as well as our Tricolored Blackbird nest colony monitoring in East Contra Costa County. If any of you have interest in these types of projects, email me at president@mtdiabloaudubon.org.

We still have open positions on our Board and would love to have someone step in and help – please see our needs in a later section.

Stay safe and get out there for the Birds!



Evening Grosbeak, Hillcrest Park - Antioch

Photo by Jerry Britten

National Audubon Society Retains Name, Receives Blowback

by Krista Vossekuil, *Mt. Diablo Audubon Society Education Chair*

On Wednesday, March 15 the National Audubon Society's Board of Directors **announced** the organization will retain its name and commit \$25 million over five years to fund expansion of its Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging work.

The announcement came after a year-long process to look more deeply into the life and legacy of its namesake, John James Audubon, who was a talented naturalist and illustrator. Regarded as the “founding father” of American birding, he was also an enslaver and published racist. He supported slavery at a time when opposition was rising and stole human remains from Native American gravesites.

Media Blowback and Board Member Resignations

The decision received blowback in the media and ultimately led to the resignation of three National Audubon Society Board members:

· **“Audubon Society Keeps Name Despite Slavery Ties, Dividing Birders”** by Lisa Alexander. Weds, March 15, 2023. The New York Times

· **“National Audubon Society Opts to Keep Enslaver’s Name”** by Dino Grandoni. Weds, March 15, 2023. The Washington Post

· **“Backlash hits Audubon After Refusal to Drop Slave-Holder’s Name”** by Robin Branvender. Weds, March 15, 2023. Politico.com

· **“Audubon Society Won’t Change Name, Despite Namesake’s Racism. It Wants to Focus on Bird Conservation and Inclusion Initiatives”** by Dinah Voyles Pulver. Thursday, March 16, 2023. USA Today

Growing Concerns

Several Audubon chapters across the country had already initiated name changes in advance of Wednesday’s announcement. **Seattle was the first** in July 2022 followed by others including **Chicago, Portland, Madison, and D.C.**

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society’s neighboring chapter Golden Gate Audubon Society published a comprehensive **blog post** on Wednesday, March 8 detailing the issue, announcing they would soon send a survey to their members to help gauge the feelings and thoughts of the community.

Background & What This Means for MDAS

The Mt. Diablo Audubon Society (MDAS) is affiliated with the National Audubon Society, but is a standalone non-profit organization. As such, we are free to change our name if our membership and board of directors choose.

MDAS formed its **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee** in early 2022 after members of the MDAS Board (Vice President and Program Chair Ariana Rickard, Conservation Chair Juan Pablo Galvan, and Education Chair Krista Vossekuil) participated in an 8-month EDIB training offered by the National Audubon Society. The EDIB Committee now includes four additional MDAS members.

The name change topic has been discussed by the EDIB Committee and at the Board level. In its February 2023 meeting, Board members decided to learn what the National Audubon Society would do regarding their name with the hope that if they did make a change, it could preserve unity and cohesion to follow instead of lead. In light of the National Audubon Society’s announcement, the Board is divided on whether or not to proceed with a name change. The issue will be discussed again at the April 2023 board meeting and a survey will be sent to all members. In the meantime, we will continue to share updates and are available to answer questions and hear your concerns.

If you would like to submit your thoughts in advance of the survey or join the EDIB Committee, please email vicepresident@mtdiabloaudubon.org.

Membership Updates



Welcome New Members! I want to give a warm welcome to new members who joined in February: **Lisa Cantor**, San Francisco; **Sandy Gess**, Oakland; **Shiming Huang**, Palo Alto; **Ives Humpreys**, Walnut Creek; **Brad Rose**, Walnut Creek; and **Judith Thompson**, Walnut Creek.

Regarding our Quail newsletter, it is sent via email to your most current email address that is in our membership database. However, if you are changing your email, please contact me at membership@mtdiabloaudubon.org as soon as possible to ensure that you will continue to receive *The Quail*.

MDAS Photo Contest

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

Don't forget to enter your favorite photos in the 3rd MDAS Photo contest. Prizes and recognition galore! Open to MDAS members only except for Youth category which is open to anyone under the age of 18. Dust off those photos in the categories below and send them on in now! Submissions are open till May 14, 2023 for the following categories:

- **California Birds:** Photos taken in-state.
- **International Birds:** Favorites from your trips abroad.
- **Birds in Action:** flight, fight or just having a bath, for example. Photos from anywhere, any time.
- **Birds Eating:** birds dining on seeds, berries, algae, bugs, (fish, frogs, lizards? snakes??). Photos from anywhere, anytime.
- **Youth:** We'd especially like to encourage young people 8-17 to enter, and they need not be members. Any type of bird photo can be submitted in this category. Photos from anywhere, anytime.
- **Worst Bird Photo EVER:** We KNOW you've got a couple of these! Losers you still didn't delete for some reason. Extra points for humor. Photos from anywhere, anytime.

This is a casual, friendly competition; no special equipment or professional skills required (but use 'em if you got 'em). Deadline is May 14. Winners and runners-up will be shared at the June members' meeting and in the Quail.

Click the "2023 Photo Contest" link at the top of the website [HERE](#) to see Official Rules and entry link.



Marsh Wren, Sacramento Area, 2019

Photo by Jerry Britten

From 50 Years Ago:

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

A short snippet from the April 1973 *Quail*. Thanks to the efforts of our Membership Chair Rochelle Fortier and our Web Editor Alyssa Retodo, *Quail* issues in their entirety from 1971 through the present day are now accessible on our website [HERE](#).

THE AUDUBON PHILOSOPHY:

We believe in the wisdom of nature's design.

We know that soil, water, plants and wild creatures depend upon each other and are vital to human life.

We recognize that each living thing links to many others in the chain of nature.

We believe that persistent research into the intricate patterns of outdoor life will help to assure wise use of earth's abundance.

We condemn no wild creature and work to assure that no living species shall be lost.

We believe that every generation should be able to experience spiritual and physical refreshment in places where primitive nature is undisturbed.

So we will be vigilant to protect wilderness areas, refuges, and parks, and to encourage good use of nature's storehouse of resources.

We dedicate ourselves to the pleasant task of opening the eyes of young and old that all may come to enjoy the beauty of the outdoor world, and to share in conserving its wonders forever.

* * * * *

Call For Candidates

Rosalie Howarth, *Nominating Committee*

Nominations are now open for the Officer positions on the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society Board of Directors, for one-year terms July 2023 through June 2024. If you would be willing to serve as President, Vice-President, Treasurer or Secretary, or would like more information about the roles, please contact anyone on the Board or get in touch via the Contact Us button on our website [www.mt Diablaudubon.org](http://www.mt Diablo Audubon.org). Though some organizational experience is useful, there are no hard and fast requirements. Training is provided. Meetings are monthly on Thursdays via Zoom.

We are particularly searching for a new Secretary this year, as Carol Pachl, who has served in the position for 7 years, is stepping down. Thank you Carol!

The election will be held via email in early May. If you'd like to join a committed, congenial group of fellow bird lovers, we'd love to hear from you. We have other, non-Board positions available as well: Outreach Coordinator, helping organize our appearances at local environmental events, and Hospitality, in charge of setting up refreshments at our general membership meetings. We'd love to have you join our fun-loving crew and help us fulfill our mission to Connect Birds with People!



If Rains Bring Floods, Is Drought Still a Problem?

Juan Pablo Galván Martínez, *MDAS Conservation Chair*

Rain and Snow! What's It Mean?

There was snow on Mount Diablo for like two weeks! I hope many of us were able to enjoy this beautiful sight, and even get up hiking or biking on the trails to get up close to our rare snow-topped mountain. What does this season's rain and snow mean for the drought? See below.

1. **With All This Rain, Is the Drought Over?** – In short...no. All this rain helps, but the long-term drought that has affected California, and even the entire

Western US, is not over. Water storage limitations, water management decisions, and the uneven distribution of rainfall across the West means that not all this rain translates to the end of drought everywhere. But we should appreciate the rise in reservoir levels and recognize that water conservation is always a good thing. The more we save and reduce, the better. Even more importantly, restoring habitat that birds love, like floodplains, will be an even bigger benefit to all of us. Read [HERE](#) for more info. Like we talked about last time, drought and flooding happening at the same time is a sign of the changing extreme climate times.

2. **Snow Is Wonderful!** – Everyone should celebrate that the Sierra Nevada snowpack has hit its highest level in 30 years. In mid-March, the snowpack is 220% of normal, meaning there's more than double the snow as in a 'normal' snowfall year. The southern part of the Sierra has been especially blanketed in the white stuff. Less so in the north. See [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) for fun interactive maps and more info. If you like to ski, you couldn't ask for a better season than this one! What does this mean for birds? If the snow persists into summer, that means there's more water all year as it melts and feeds the rivers that agriculture, people, and refuges depend on. If the spring and summer months are scorching, or if warm rain hits the snow, things might not be as good as they would otherwise be. But, for now, enjoy the white stuff and use it as a sign of hope that there's still time to act on climate change, and make this type of snowy weather a thing of the future as well as the past.
3. **Is a Hotter, Drier World Consistent With This Rainy, Snowy Season** – This is a natural question. But much like you wouldn't say a flight of stairs is level by only focusing on the flat part of one step, no one should think that climate change is a joke just because of one wet, snowy winter. The very real global warming and drying trend is taking place over longer timescales, across the entire planet. What happens in California from year to year — or even winter to winter - can vary dramatically and still be consistent with the overall worldwide pattern we've seen the last several decades ([HERE](#)). This year, the Antarctic sea ice hit its lowest level on record, and Europe experienced its third warmest January in history (and perhaps its second warmest winter overall). In fact, it's been confirmed that 2022 was Earth's 7th warmest year on record ([HERE](#)).

Call for help! Upcoming Events

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

We could certainly use some help from Membership staffing our table at the following events:

- Pollinator & Friends Event at Ruth Bancroft Gardens, Saturday April 8, 10AM-4PM;
Earth Day event at the Pleasant Hill Instructional Garden on Saturday April 22 from 1-4PM;
- Lafayette Earth Day Festival, Sunday April 23 from 11AM-2PM;
- Crockett Shoreline Festival, Saturday May 20, 11AM-4PM;
- Martinez Beaver Festival, Saturday June 24 10AM-3PM;

These events are a lot of fun, engaging with the public about all things Audubon! You can volunteer by emailing president@mtdiabloudubon.org.

Thanks for your help!

Field Trip Report

Contra Loma Field Trip

Matthew Tarlach, *MDAS Field Trip Chair*

On Wednesday, March 8-10, enthusiastic birders turned out at this lovely park on the edge of Antioch. All were very happy to see the rain stop just before we started birding, and the weather improved as the day went on. We finished with 54 species, including a Red-shouldered Hawk on and off its nest; around 200 Cedar Waxwings; and several Hermit Thrush. We spotted a Lincoln's Sparrow feeding down in some thick cover. A bright male Common Yellowthroat and some Western Bluebirds added color to the day. Gracious White Pelicans, two pairs of Common Gallinule. We had great looks at American Kestrels, at various places, a lovely, bright male Cinnamon Teal, and an Allen's Hummingbird (or maybe it was a Rufous? Discussion continues!) The highlight for many was great looks at an American Bittern out in the open! Among our other sightings were Killdeer, Lesser Goldfinch, White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows, Spotted and California Towhee, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Northern Flickers, Western Meadowlarks, Osprey and more. A great day of birding!

Ebird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S130493081>

Thanks to Isaac Aronow, Pam Lorenz, Bill Newton and Mona Lange for the images.



MDAS General Meeting

Native Bird Connections Presentation

Duy Dang



On March 2, MDAS hosted a presentation by Native Bird Connections at the Pleasant Hill Community Center. Approximately 60 members were in attendance. The presenter was the very knowledgeable, caring and highly animated Jenny Papka. Jenny, her team of volunteers and five rare raptors (European eagle owl, leucistic red-tailed hawk, Swainson's hawk, what's the other hawk?, and pigmy

owl) provided MDAS members an excellent opportunity to learn about the raptors and each bird's unique story.



MDAS Field Trips

Matt Tarlach, *MDAS Field Trip Chair*



Leading a field trip is a fun way to serve our chapter's mission, while sharing a day out in nature with your fellow enthusiasts! If you'd like to introduce us to a new hotspot, or might be willing to take over an established trip that's in need of a new leader, please contact our Field Trip Coordinator Matt Tarlach: mtar925@gmail.com

He'll send you the one-page "Guidelines for Field Trip Leaders" and outline what's required. The most important thing is to get to the meeting point on time – the bird-spotting is a group effort!

To ensure field trips are not overcrowded, pre-registration through **Eventbrite** is required. Signups generally open when the trips are announced to MDAS members in the *Quail*. Depending on capacity and other factors, some trips may be opened for non-member registration a week before the trip date. Registration for everyone closes 48 hours before the trip, so leaders can know how many to expect.

If you won't be able to attend a trip that you've signed up for, please cancel as early as possible via Eventbrite to open that spot up for someone else!

Our chapter now has an account on the **eBird** app for collecting and reporting our field trip observations. This allows us to share sightings, photos and notes more easily, and to have our sightings contribute to research that's important for conservation. *Take a look* at our field trip checklists, [HERE](#).

Out of respect for our members and community, we continue to ask trip participants to take sensible health precautions. MDAS events do not require carpooling — though participants are of course free to make their own arrangements.

Field trips are ranked according to difficulty:

Trail Rating 1: Easy, little or no walking, smooth paths.

Trail Rating 2: Moderate, 1 mile or more, possibly some rough terrain.

Trail Rating 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 2023 season [HERE](#).

Upcoming field trips include:

North Briones

Tuesday, April 4, 8:30 - Noon

This walk begins in oak woodlands with lots of spring wildflowers and birds. We then continue through grasslands ending at Sindicich Lagoons. We return the way we came, making about a 3 miles round trip with some climbing. Bring liquids & a snack if you

wish.

Rating: Category 3 - uphill climb

Elevation change: 300+ feet

Leader: Cheryl Abel, 925-957-6229

Meet: Top of Briones Rd.

Directions: Meet 8:30 AM in the parking area at the north entrance of Briones Regional Park. Take Briones Road off Alhambra Valley Road and drive up this narrow, winding road, park at the end.

The field trip is limited to 15 participants. All Participants in MDAS field trips are required to accept a liability waiver, available at registration. Register [HERE](#).

Orinda Connector Trail

Wednesday, April 5, 2023, 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM

A walk through an EBMUD property, requires a trail permit. If you have one bring it with you. We walk downhill to San Pablo Creek, then toward the face of Briones Dam. Wood Ducks are hard to find but some spring birds will have arrived.

Rating: Category 2-Moderate

Elevation change: Moderate

Leader: Don Lewis, 925-284-2906

Meet: Trail head at Camino Pablo and Bear Creek Road

Directions: Exit SR-24 at Orinda and turn north on Camino Pablo. Drive just over 2 miles to the intersection with Bear Creek Road. The trail head parking is on the right, near the northeast corner of the intersection.

Due to limited space along the trail this field trip is limited to 10 participants. All Participants in MDAS field trips are required to accept a liability waiver, available at registration. Register [HERE](#).

NEW TRIP!

Putah Creek at Pedrick Rd., Davis, CA

Tuesday, April 11, 7:30am to 2pm

This delightful, fairly short stretch of Putah Creek (~3/4 miles), can be very productive during Spring migration. It's a fairly easy walk through lovely riparian right down in the creek bed. And the occasional sandy stretch will often host several species of birds

bathing in the shallows. Expect to find a nice selection of warblers: Yellow, Black-throated Gray, Orange-crowned, Wilson's, MacGillivray's, Hermit, Townsend's, and perhaps a Nashville. And, of course, Pacific Slope Flycatcher, Western Wood Pewee, Western Tanager, and keep an eye overhead for a Swainson's Hawk. Vagrants pop up from time to time (I found a Tennessee Warbler a couple years ago), so don't discount the prospect of a nice surprise.

Trail Rating: Category 1, an easy walk.

Bring water and snacks. There are no bathroom facilities.

Leader: Tracy Farrington. 925-788-6223

Meet: Putah Creek parking lot (description to follow)

Directions: Take 680 east, cross the Benicia bridge, remain to the right, and continue on 680 for ~14 miles to Cordelia where you will merge on to 80 east. Take 80 east about 27 miles to Pedrick Road. This will come up about a mile and a half past 113 south towards Dixon. Turn north (left) at Pedrick, drive about two miles, and just as you cross over Putah Creek, turn left on to a short dirt road and into the Putah Creek parking lot, where we'll meet.

This trip is limited to 15 participants. All field trip participants must accept the MDAS liability waiver, available at registration. Register [HERE](#).

Black Diamond Mines

Thursday, April 13, 8 AM to 1 PM

Black Diamond Mines is a wonderful, varied habitat but the centerpiece of this trip is a vigorous climb up through Canyon Wren habitat. Other woodland and grassland birds are also likely. Tricky footing through the wren's rocky habitat, and no guarantees on finding them. Some spring flowers may still be in bloom. Bring liquids and lunch.

Trail Rating: Category 3, hot, difficult uphill trail

Elevation change: 600 feet

Leader: Matt Tarlach, 925 482 6129

Meet: Black Diamond Mines parking lot at top of Somersville Road.

Directions: Exit Hwy 4 at Somersville Road in Antioch. Drive south, enter the park gate and drive uphill to the last parking lot.

This trip is limited to 20 participants. All field trip participants must accept the MDAS liability waiver, available at registration. Register [HERE](#).

Pine Canyon

Monday, April 17, 8 AM to 1 PM

This field trip is especially good for beginning birders!

Pine Canyon, which includes the Castle Rock EBRPD recreational area, and the Diablo Foothills Regional Park just beyond, provides rich habitat and resources for spring migrants passing through, as well as for many returning and nesting summer residents. We should expect to find nesting pairs of Bullock's Orioles and House Wrens. Warbling Vireos, along with their cousins, the Cassin's Vireo, nest within the canyon. Rufous-crowned Sparrows are to be found, and if we're lucky, Lazuli Bunting. We'll look (and listen) for Black-headed Grosbeaks and Western Tanagers. Western Wood-Pewees and Pacific-slope Flycatchers pass through. We might get lucky with an Olive-sided Flycatcher. And the warblers: breeding plumage Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Gray, Wilson's, Yellow, Nashville, MacGillivray's, Hermit, Orange-crowned, and Townsend's.

Bring water and snacks. This should be a wonderful springtime field trip.

Trail Rating: Category 2–Moderate with creek crossings

Elevation change: 150-200 feet

Leader: Tracy Farrington, 925-788-6223

Meet: Diablo Foothills Regional Park trailhead parking lot

Directions: From Ygnacio Valley Road, drive south on either Walnut Avenue or Oak Grove Road to the traffic circle. Continue south on Castle Rock Road, pass Northgate High School, then drive to the end of the road.

This field trip is limited to 20 participants. Participants must acknowledge the MDAS Liability Waiver. Register [HERE](#).

Mitchell Canyon

Thursday, April 20, 8 AM to 1 PM

We will walk into Mitchell Canyon on the lower slopes of Mount Diablo State Park. Many spring birds are possible here, warblers, hummingbirds, flycatchers, gnatcatchers and more. Spring flowers should still be blooming.

Trail Rating: Category 3, hot, dusty trail, 3+ miles

Elevation change: up to 400 feet

Leader: Sandy Ritchie, (925) 381-2514

Meet: Mitchell Canyon parking lot

Directions: From Ygnacio Valley Road in Concord, turn south on Clayton Road. Turn right onto Mitchell Canyon Road and drive past quarry to end. A \$6 parking fee is

required.

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

Del Puerto Canyon

Monday, April 24

Our route drives up a canyon in the Diablo Range, west of Patterson. Birds seen on past trips include: Black-headed Grosbeak, Lark & Savannah Sparrows, Horned Lark, Swainson's Hawks and Golden Eagles; Rock & Canyon Wrens, swallows, hummingbirds, Western Kingbirds, orioles, Loggerhead Shrike, Ash-throated Flycatchers, Phainopepla, Barn Owl, swifts, Belted Kingfisher; Magpies, Phainopepla, Rufous-crowned Sparrow; egrets, herons, Road Runner; warblers, vireos, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Lewis's Woodpecker.

Depending on weather in the months preceding, wildflowers can be a nice bonus. It can get hot!

Leader: Steve Buffi

Trail Rating: 1 - Easy walking, mostly driving.

Meet: Carpool leaves at 7:30 AM from Sycamore Valley Road Park and Ride.

OR, meet on Del Puerto Canyon Road west of I-5 at 9 AM at Patterson Exit (Diablo Grande Parkway and Sperry Road) off I-5 (56 miles from Sycamore Valley Road). Take I-580 east to I-5 south to the Patterson exit. Turn right at the exit and onto Del Puerto Canyon Road.

We will stop at the Larry Combs Rest Area near Westley, as there are no facilities on this trip until our lunch stop. Looking for Canyon Wren, Costa's Hummingbird, Greater Roadrunner, and other goodies. Usually very warm! Bring lunch and plenty of liquids as this trip takes us further from conveniences than most of our outings.

Due to the extremely limited parking at several stops along our route this trip is limited to 12 participants. All participants must acknowledge the MDAS liability waiver, available upon registration. Register [HERE](#).

Mines Road

Saturday, April 29

This is an all-day trip and often hot! Phainopepla, Lewis' Woodpecker and Lawrence's Goldfinch and many spring migrants are possible, plus great spring wild flowers. Entry fee required for Del Valle Regional Park.

Bring lunch, snacks, and plenty of liquids, as this trip takes us further from conveniences than most. Bathrooms may be far between.

Due to the extremely limited parking at several stops along our route this trip is limited to 12 participants, and solo drivers *cannot be accommodated*.

Leader: Matthew Tarlach, mtar925@gmail.com

Meeting point TBA. Check the [Eventbrite](#) registration page for updates.

All participants must acknowledge the MDAS liability waiver, available upon registration. Register [HERE](#).

Mount Diablo State Park

Tuesday, May 2, 8 AM to 1 PM

MDSP is a treasure trove for birders. Although every season in the park has its special qualities, late spring on the mountain has its own beauty, as wildflowers add color to the vistas. Usually hot! Bring lunch and drinks. Many migrant and nesting species are possible including Sage Sparrows, California Thrashers, woodpeckers, raptors and warblers.

Trail Rating: 1– Easy walking, mostly driving on mountain roads.

Elevation change: minimal

Leader: Steve Taylor, 925-828-8810

Directions: From I-680 southbound, exit at El Pintado, turn right and right again; park along the open space on left. From I-680 northbound, exit El Cerro, turn left, then right at second light onto La Gonda. Continue 1/2 mile north on La Gonda from El Cerro to the wide section where there's free parking.

Meet at 8AM on La Gonda, as described above. If you miss us there we'll be passing through the Southgate entrance into the park at about 8:45AM, after birding Southgate Road.

Park entry fee is required.

Due to extremely tight parking at several stops along the mountain roads this field trip is limited to 12 participants. If there's someone you're comfortable sharing a car with, that's highly encouraged.

Participants must acknowledge the MDAS Liability Waiver (available during registration). Register [HERE](#).

Events

Russian Ridge Hike

Sunday, March 26, 8AM



SAN FRANCISCO BAY
BIRD OBSERVATORY

Join SFBBO biologists for a hike at Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve! In addition to getting some fresh air and exercise while looking for birds and other wildlife, you'll learn about our recent work studying Burrowing Owls at the preserve. We will hike ~2.5 miles which includes getting great views from Borel Hill, the highest named point in San Mateo County.

This event is limited to 12 participants and registration is required. Additional details will be sent in the confirmation email. We will also ask all participants to fill out a short health self-assessment form 24 hours before the event as part of our COVID-19 safety protocols.

Questions? Contact Sirena Lao at slao@sfbbo.org. **If this event is full, you can [add yourself to the waitlist here](#) and we will contact you if a spot becomes available.**

This program is possible thanks to support from the [Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District](#). **If you need assistance getting to the location, we may have limited funds available to help offset the cost of transportation - please [contact us](#) to inquire.**

Date:	Sunday, March 26, 2023
Time:	8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Location:	Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve, Redwood City CA
Cost:	Free
Registration:	Click here for more information

Nature Walk 3: Birds, Butterflies and Blooms

Wednesday, March 29, 2023



Join naturalist Dan Fitzgerald for a nature walk in the Mitchell Canyon area. We will be looking for birds, butterflies, and some early/late Spring flowers. Bring water, snacks, and binoculars if you have them. The walk is about 3 miles with some elevation gain. We ask participants who are not vaccinated against COVID-19 to please wear a mask.

Limited to 15 participants.

Fee: \$6 per vehicle/\$5 for seniors - exact change only. Payable at the entrance to the Park by the stop sign.

Leader(s): Daniel Fitzgerald

Date: Wednesday, March 29, 2023
Time: 9:00AM - 1:00PM
Location: Meet in front of the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center
(96 Mitchell Canyon Road, Clayton)
Sponsor: **Mount Diablo Interpretive Association**
Cost: \$6 per vehicle/\$5 for seniors
Registration: **[Click here to register](#)**

Birdy Hour - Birding the Bay Area Part 1 with Golden Gate Audubon, Mt. Diablo Audubon, and Ohlone Audubon

Tuesday, April 4, 2023

BIRDY HOUR SPEAKER SERIES

BIRDING THE BAY AREA PART 1

with Golden Gate Audubon,
Mt. Diablo Audubon, and Ohlone Audubon

Tuesday, Apr 4, 2023 • 6:30pm Pacific • Free Virtual Event

**GOLDEN GATE
AUDUBON SOCIETY**

*Ohlone
Audubon
Society*

**Mt. Diablo
Audubon Society**

**MIDPENINSULA
REGIONAL
OPEN
SPACE**

Bullock's Oriole by Yadira M. Joy

With hundreds of bird species found throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, we are fortunate to have several birding organizations dedicated to appreciating and conserving the birds here. In the first part of SFBBO's Birding the Bay Area series, **Golden Gate Audubon**, **Mt. Diablo Audubon**, and **Ohlone Audubon** will each share a few of their favorite birding hotspots in the areas they serve, which include the counties of San Francisco, Contra Costa, and Alameda. Join us to learn about great spots to check out, some of the birds you can find, and what makes these areas special!

Speakers:

- *Jerry Britten, President of Mt. Diablo Audubon Society*
- *Whitney Grover, Deputy Director of Golden Gate Audubon Society*
- *Bob Toleno, Field Trip Chairperson of Ohlone Audubon Society*

Please register - the Zoom link will be sent in the confirmation. If you have any questions, contact Sirena Lao, Environmental Education and Outreach Specialist, at slao@sfbbo.org.

Date: Tuesday, April 4, 2023
Time: 6:30PM – 8:00PM
Location: Zoom, Virtual Presentation
Sponsor: **San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory**
Cost: Free
Registration: **[Click here to register online](#)**

Outdoor Explorer Presents: Birds of Sierra Valley

Thursday, April 6, 2023



As the headwater of the Feather River, Sierra Valley is a magnet for birds, and the surrounding mountains provide additional habitats. Award-winning photographer Bob Lewis has led birding trips there for over 20 years, and he'll show you some of the birds and creatures that inhabit one his favorite birding spots.

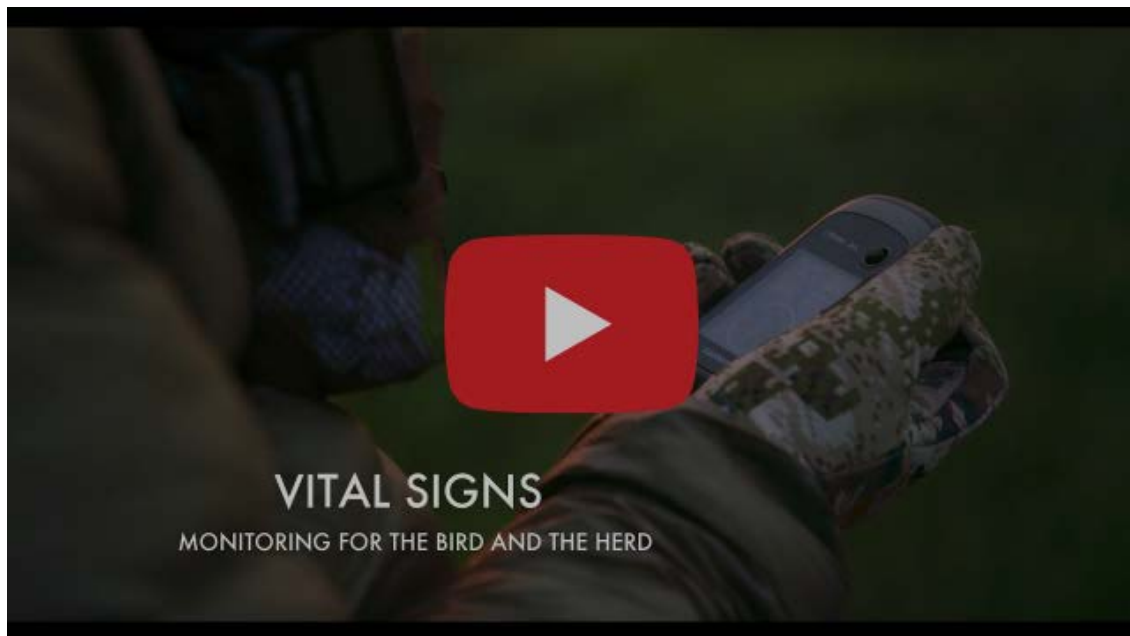
Bob has taught birding classes in the Bay Area for over 25 years and served as the chair of Golden Gate Audubon's Adult Education Committee. He's photographed birds in more than 40 countries, and his life list is over 5000 species.

Register with your email on this page. You will receive information on how to access the Zoom event on the day before the program. Closed captioning will be provided for this program.

By attending an event in this online program series, you will have the opportunity to enter our drawing for outdoor recreation equipment. There will be one winner chosen at the conclusion of each talk, and winners will be notified by email within 3 business days. Prizes will be sent to the library most convenient to the winner to be picked up. You must attend an event in full to be eligible to enter and win. Photo ID or library card needed to claim your prize. Good luck!

Date: Thursday, April 6, 2023
Time: 6:30PM - 7:30PM
Location: Zoom, Virtual Presentation
Sponsor: **Contra Costa County Library**
Cost: Free
Registration: **[Click here to register online](#)**

April Gallery & Media



Cornell Lab of Ornithology / VITAL SIGNS

Monitoring for the Bird and the Herd



Yes, that's a toucan flying around Walnut Creek

From the San Francisco Chronicle, "I looked up and said: 'Is that what I think it is?'
"Renee Velasquez said, recalling her first sighting of the toucan." Are we in Costa Rica?"

Read the article [HERE](#).

Photo: Mark Rauzon / McCauley Library ML543517431



Northern Parula (adult male), Francis Beidler Forest, Harleville, SC, USA

Photo: Mike K/Flickr ([CC BY-NC 2.0](#))



House Finch, Park Trails, Licking, Ohio, United States
Photo: Matthew Plante/[Macaulay Library ML299081031](#)



California Scrub-Jay, House at City Creek Rd/Highway 330, San Bernardino, California,
United States
Photo: Andre Moncrieff/[Macaulay Library ML131038501](#)

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info@mtdiabloaudubon.org

Mt. Diablo Audubon Society Leadership

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