



Mt. Diablo Audubon Society

The Quail

Volume 68, Number 7

JUNE 2023

Next Monthly Program Meeting: Thursday, June 1, 7 PM

The Mt. Diablo Audubon Society will meet Thursday, June 1, in the McHale Room of the Pleasant Hill Community Center at 320 Civic Drive, Pleasant Hill, 94523. Everyone is welcome to bring a snack to share, if they wish. Parking is free.

- 6:30 PM** Doors Open
- 7:00 PM** Birding Info: Winners of the MDAS photo contest
- 7:25 PM** Announcements
- 7:40 PM** Refreshments and Raffle
- 8:00 PM** Main Program: Antarctica

*As a conservation organization we encourage you to bring your own mug for coffee or tea.

7:00 PM Birding info: Winners of the MDAS photo contest

We reviewed your submissions, now it is time to reveal the winners of the third annual Mt Diablo Audubon Photo Contest! See who won in six categories: California Birds, International Birds, Birds in Action, Birds Dining, Worst Bird Photo EVER, and Youth: For photographers aged 8-17. (Any type of bird photo can be submitted in this category).

Winners and runners-up will be shared at the meeting, so come enjoy the best photos from our local birding community!

Main Program: Antarctica

Ariana Rickard



Gentoo Penguin Chick

Photo by Ariana Rickard

Have you been dreaming about visiting the astonishing terrain of Antarctica and seeing the famous penguins, seals, whales, and glaciers? Do you long to experience a place teeming with life that few people get to see? Ariana will take you there through photos, videos, and stories from her trip earlier this year. Learn about the adorable penguins, majestic whales, seals, sea lions, and other bird life that thrive in this harsh environment. You won't even have to cross the dreaded Drake passage to experience the wonders of Antarctica. But if you want to visit Antarctica, Ariana will share practical trips to help make your trip a reality.

Ariana is the Vice-President and Program Chair for Mt. Diablo Audubon. She also serves on the MDAS Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee. She is the Public Policy and Funding Program Manager at Sonoma Land Trust. Ariana has worked for several federal government agencies, including the Peace Corps in Ecuador, and numerous environmental nonprofits, such as Audubon California

and the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture. She earned her BA from Harvard College in Environmental Science and Public Policy and her MS from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, with a focus on Ecology.

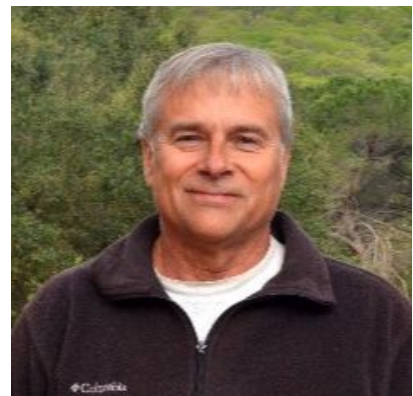


Ariana Rickard

President's Letter

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

As we head into our summer hiatus, I'd like to thank all of you who voted for our slate of elected officers during our recent election. Myself, Ariana and Steve are honored to once again serve Mt. Diablo Audubon. At this time, we do not have a successor to replace our long-time Secretary Carol Pachl, but it is not too late to volunteer for this position on an interim basis when we restart our activities in September. Please email president@mtdiabloaudubon.org if you can help us out with this.



Please come to our in-person meeting on June 1 at the Pleasant Hill Community Center (details in this newsletter) to see the results of our Members Photo Contest and see and hear Ariana's recent adventure to Antarctica! Speaking of in-person meetings, we are excited to announce that we will go back to **100% in-person membership meetings for next year!** We hope this will boost networking, strengthen our solidarity and increase engagement and participation of our members in our various outreach and community science projects. We have also concluded that by-and-large, members who have zoomed with us are the same ones attend our in-person meetings, so **we won't be livestreaming our events** for a stay-at-home audience. We also are looking forward to **returning to the Camellia room at Heather Farm Gardens** in Walnut Creek for our meetings, following the remodel of this facility necessitated by a massive water leak last year. Finally, regarding the name 'Audubon' and it's relation to our chapter, please read the summary of our recent poll on this subject later in this newsletter.

On a birding note, I was excited to identify and photograph a Gray Flycatcher at Clifton Court Forebay a couple weeks ago. Identifying Empidonax flycatchers is difficult at best, but I was treated to some excellent views and clearly observed the downward-only tail-pumping that differentiates this species from the others. At this hotspot, Pacific-Slope, Hammond's, Willow and Gray Flycatchers have been spotted within the last month.

Stay safe and get out there for the Birds!



Gray Flycatcher, Clifton Court Forebay

Photo by Jerry Britten

Membership Updates

Rochelle Fortier, *MDAS Membership Chair*

Welcome New Members! I want to give a warm welcome to new members who joined in April: **Rebecca Calzia-Bhatt**, Danville; **Marke Estis**, Orinda; **Cynthia Fritz**, San Ramon; **Douglas Fritz**, San Ramon; **Harlan Hague**, Concord; **Susan Harvey**, Walnut Creek; **Mark Janowicz**, Walnut Creek; **Gerald Lahr**, Danville; **Carmelo Salgado**, Martinez; **Jean Sillett**, Walnut Creek; **Marie Whelan**, Discovery Bay; and **Jackie Zahn**, Martinez.



Officer Election Results

Thanks to all our members who voted in the annual election for Officers for the Board of Directors. The slate of officers proposed by the Nominations Committee received 97.6% of the vote! Filling three of the positions next term will be:

- Jerry Britten, President
- Ariana Rickard, Vice-President
- Steve Buffi, Treasurer

We are so fortunate that these long-time members are willing to devote countless volunteer hours and leadership to help guide the chapter through this pivotal year. Take a moment to get to know them!

Jerry Britten, *President*

Jerry has served as President of MDAS since 2020. Before that he was Vice-President and Web Editor, and he continues to serve as Christmas Bird Count Organizer and Compiler.

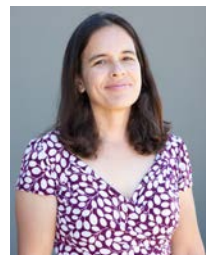


After earning a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering from the University of Colorado, Jerry worked at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory for 32 years. Retired now, he continues to work as a consultant/independent contractor in the design and manufacture of diffractive optics and thin-film coatings. Also an active volunteer for Save Mount Diablo, Jerry is an enthusiastic and talented bird photographer. He and his wife of 43 years, Carrie, live in a rural area outside Clayton. Their daughter and two grandkids live nearby, and a son and his family live in Colorado.

Jerry says: “Thank you to the membership for your confidence and trust in us as we ramp back up to full social engagement in the coming year. We have a very talented and dedicated board, especially those who are working on strengthening our Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) position as we move forward, while maintaining our passion and advocacy for birds and the preservation of their habitats”. Among his three favorite birds: Capuchinbird, Western Tanager and “the next new one”.

Ariana Rickard, *Vice President*

Ariana Rickard has served as Vice President since 2020. She has also been our Program Chair since 2012, coordinating the speakers, authors, and photographers that have educated and entertained our members. She is currently the Public Policy and Funding Program Manager for Sonoma Land Trust, working with state and federal agencies and legislators to ensure that the Land Trust’s programs and projects receive adequate funding and support. In 2020, she co-founded the Bay Area chapter of Environmental Professionals of Color to diversify



the Bay Area's environmental community.

Ariana's spark bird was Pale Male, a famous Red-Tailed Hawk who made his home near Central Park in NYC. Ariana read the book Red-Tails in Love by Marie Winn, chronicling his adventures and the fans who watched him from Central Park. She was amazed by how this one hawk brought together so many New Yorkers from all walks of life, and her fascination with birds was born.

She and her husband Pierre Bull live in Pacheco with their two sons Dimitry (8) and Nico (6) and are hoping a bluebird family will take up residence in their nest box in the backyard soon. Among her three favorite birds: Roseate Spoonbill, Acorn Woodpecker, and the Belted Kingfisher.

Steve Buffi, *Treasurer*

A great contributor to our chapter's financial success and stability has been our Treasurer Steve Buffi, whose steady hand has guided our finances since 2005. Steve and his wife Anne Waters live in Walnut Creek with their three indoor cats Lucy, George, and Phoebe. It was Anne who suggested taking up birding in 2000 and he has enjoyed traveling the country on birding road trips, learning about our nation's avian treasures, ever since. Steve also serves on the board and selection committee of the Mike Voyne Memorial Scholarship Fund, named for the famed Lowell High School football coach.



Steve's goal for our chapter's future is to remain financially secure as we navigate the choppy waters of the current economic climate, and to emerge ready to continue the vital work of bringing people together to protect birds and their habitats. Among his three Favorite Birds: Chestnut-backed Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, and Nuttall's Woodpecker.

Our sincere gratitude to Carol Pachl, who has served as Secretary of the Board for the past 8 years. Her work in organizing and modernizing our governing documents has moved the chapter forward considerably.

Now we urgently need someone to step up to serve as Secretary for the upcoming 1-year term, taking minutes at our monthly meetings September through June. Carol would provide training for a smooth transition, and you would have voting rights on major decisions that guide the future of our chapter. Two

people can share this position. To find out more about the position or to volunteer, use the Contact Us button under About Us, at www.mtdiabloaudubon.org.

The Audubon Name

Juan Pablo Galván Martínez, *MDAS Conservation Chair*

Mount Diablo Audubon Society Survey Results

The results are in! We sent out a survey to get our membership's thoughts on potentially changing our organization's name. Of our more than 400 members, 122 responded.

When asked, "Should MDAS seek a new name that doesn't memorialize John James Audubon?", 53% of respondents said YES, 36% said NO, and 11% said NOT SURE.

When asked if it was important that Audubon chapters share the same name as the national organization, 58% said it was NOT IMPORTANT, 23% said it was SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT, and 19% said they thought it was VERY IMPORTANT.

So, in short, a majority of MDAS members think we should drop "Audubon" from our group's name, and a majority don't think it's important that our group share the same name as National Audubon.

What Are Other Bay Area Chapters Doing About the Name?

Similar to Mount Diablo, Santa Clara Audubon Society's Board has reached consensus on approving a name change, and they will be sending out a poll to their membership soon.

Last month, 65% of Golden Gate Audubon's membership voted that changing their chapter's name was in the best interest of their group and bird conservation. The membership vote came less than a month after their Board of Directors voted unanimously (with one member absent) to remove "Audubon" from the organization's name and begin selecting a new name. A new name will be recommended by early August, with a final vote in mid-August.

It's unclear what the Sequoia and Napa-Solano chapters are doing, but the Ohlone, Marin and Madrone chapters are not taking steps related to a potential name change at this time.

Next Steps for Mount Diablo Audubon Society

We're taking a slow and deliberate approach to this issue. The Board has reached a consensus that "Audubon" should be dropped from the name, and a majority of our membership agrees. What's the next step?

We'll continue to share information from other chapters as it arises. Sometime over the next several months, the membership will be asked to formally vote on changing the name, rather than just asking their opinion. We won't be doing that before the end of summer, and no matter how that vote goes, no change will be made to the name before year's end. We are interested in hearing people's thoughts, sharing information, and working through how to best position this group to be successful and appealing to people that care about birds, nature, and taking action to protect them.

Some Quotes from our survey

In Favor of Removing the Name

Audubon was an enslaver. But beyond that, we need a name that says who we are we're an organization that is interested in birds, helping people to know more about birds, and helping birds survive.

I want to welcome people of color and young people into our organization. This is one way to do it. Audubon's legacy disgusts me. I think it would be nice to have the name that is neutral and informative. In today's world, "Audubon" is a polarizing name. And, someone who is new and unconnected to birding is going to google "bird" not Audubon.

It is more than time for the birding community to live up to the ideals of inclusiveness that we are trying to achieve. By continuing to honor Audubon in our name seems contradictory.

Through this controversy, our name is already irrevocably tainted, especially to the very people whose participation we need more of: younger people, people of color, LGBTQ+ people. There is no going back. We need to pivot. We say we are

an inclusive group so we need to have values that resonate with the community, not just our membership.

As we reach out to people in the community to join us in our love of birds and conservation, we want all to feel welcome and the Audubon name has some regrettable baggage.

We should not honor those who have enslaved and traded in human lives. The honorific, as it stands, is an offense to Black Americans. I wish to no longer be a part of it.

We can name our organization after many other people that are not enslavers and racist. I want to respect our organization for being anti-racist and inclusive and embracing of people of color.

Having the organization with the name of a someone who defended slavery is never going to seem like an organization that is inclusionary for people of color. One hundred years from now it will seem a no-brainer. Let's not be stuck in the past, if we were to choose a name now, it would not be his.

There is no need to memorialize Audubon as he was a holder of enslaved people and he collected Native American remains. He was accused of scientific fraud as well. The name change would be more inviting for people of color to join. A name with "birds" in it might be better for promoting birding and conservation to younger people who may not know what "Audubon" stands for.

Our name represents our aspirations, not our past. It should stand for everything that we dream of achieving, a world where everyone cares about birds and helps make the world a better place, not a club for an elite group.

Against Removing the Name

It is a well-known and widely recognized name and seems like a knee-jerk move to abandon the Audubon name. I don't agree with applying our current (and often also flawed) lense and reinterpretation on past situations. It is important to recognize the truth of our history.

Historical figures should not be judged by modern ethical and social standards. It's unfortunate that you are wasting time on trivialities like this instead of focusing on protecting, preserving, and appreciating birds.

It is just a name. and one that has been "memorialized" by the birding community for over 100 yrs by their active involvement in all things the name meant for birdwatching. Changing the name now doesn't invalidate all the good things that have occurred due to and under the name of the organization. Let it go.

My goodness, he's the father of birding. We all have sinned. Let's not go "woke"!

Our organization is all about protecting wildlife and that should be the only consideration. We can't make judgments on past events based on current values. The club will always be known as Audubon. Changing a name does not change history. Should we eliminate the word president from many of our early presidents who were all slave owners. Should we remove their pictures on our money and coins and melt or destroy all those.

You can't change history. If the National Organization changes its name then and only then should we think about changing our name.

Unsure of Whether to Remove the Name

I am torn. I understand the reasoning, but the name has come to mean "birding" and "conservation" and that we are a part of a bigger organization.

I have conflicting feelings about making a change. Audubon's atrocities were many years ago during a different era, but they were pretty bad.

From 50 Years Ago

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

A short snippet from the June 1973 Quail, describing how people could find local guides for birding while visiting new areas back in the day. So much easier and more immediate now, and actually cheaper! Issues of our newsletter from 1971 through the present day are now accessible on our website [HERE](#).

OPERATION NATURE GUIDE is a people-to-people service for Audubon members as they travel the length and breadth of this country. A directory, listing names of people from 30 western chapters, willing and eager to guide visiting Auduboners to local natural habitats to see birds--or wildflowers, trees, or other interests--is available by writing to: Operation Nature Guide, 34915 4th Ave. So., Federal Way, WA 98002, and enclosing 25¢.

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Forest News!

Juan Pablo Galván Martínez, *MDAS Conservation Chair*

- 1. Good News for the Amazon Rainforest** – While A LOT of work needs to be done, and the situation is still bad, there is some recent good news about the Amazon Rainforest. Under the new President, Lula da Silva, deforestation in April 2023 dropped by 68% this past April compared to April 2022. That drop comes after higher deforestation in February over March, but year over year, deforestation is still down 40% overall. Some credit goes to Lula, who began reinstating policies to protect the forest and indigenous people when he took office. Previous President Jair Bolosnaro implemented atrocious environmental policies, with deforestation reaching its highest level in 15 years under his administration. Slashing and burning usually picks up in the summer months, so experts aren't announcing a downward trend yet. Deforestation must not just slow, but be completely stopped and reversed (rainforest restoration) for birds, biodiversity and the climate. Want to help out in a big way? Organize your community to stop consuming Brazilian beef, a key driver of Amazon deforestation ([HERE](#)).
- 2. Climate Fingerprints on Wildfires in Western US** – I hope none of us forget the awful wildfires that have hit, year after year, California and many other parts of the western US in recent times. A study by the Union of Concerned Scientists ([HERE](#)), found that almost 40% of the area burned by wildfires in this region since 1986 can be blamed on the carbon pollution spewed into the atmosphere by 88 of the world's major fossil fuel producers and cement manufacturers. That is a VERY real link between life and death, and the carbon emissions the world's worst polluters make billions off of every day. Read more [HERE](#).
- 3. Where Will Climate Change be Worst in the US?** – Human-caused climate change IS bad for everyone. The longer we delay making the massive change needed to prevent catastrophe, the worst it will be. Even the US, with all its wealth and technology, will experience severe impacts without big changes right now. Each region, every state, will experience disaster and increasing risks, but some places will have it worse than others. Read the where and what [HERE](#).

Farewell to Paul Schorr

Rosalie Howarth



Paul with granddaughter thrilled with her catch

MDAS Past President, Vice-President, and longtime “No Child Left Inside” program chair Paul Schorr passed away on April 12. He was a dedicated and devoted chapter leader, and was much-loved among membership for his fun and folksy style in leading our program meetings throughout 2016, 2017 and 2018.

Former Field Trip Chair and longtime MDAS Board of Directors member Hugh Harvey wrote this moving tribute:

In Memoriam, Paul Schorr

Teacher, summer national park ranger, school administrator, fisherman, story teller. These describe what a person did in life, but do not tell who they were.

Paul Schorr was all of these and more. Early in married life he took Nancy and their two children to Bryce Canyon and Yellowstone National Parks where he worked as a summer ranger. His main fields of interest in the Cathedral of the Great Outdoors were plants, birds and fishing. Being a natural teacher, he passed his knowledge to his students. In time his leadership abilities led to school administration.

Following his retirement Paul transferred his leadership to Mount Diablo Audubon Society. He served as our vice-president and president for many years. His biggest program at MDAS was the No Child Left Inside program. He introduced MDAS to Jack London Elementary School in Antioch. Under his leadership many of us worked to connect fifth graders to the outdoors by introducing them to birds. Every year the highlight was a field trip to Contra Loma Reservoir. He also shared his time with Kiwanis in Antioch, helping to organize annual dinners.

But who was Paul? More than anything he was a husband to Nancy, father to a son and daughter, and a grandfather five times. Family was the center of his life, be it school graduations, sports or outdoor life.

He had an extended family of many friends, of which I was one. We spent time birding, conversing, sharing meals near home as well as in the mountains. These treasured times usually included Nancy and Rosita. His friendship was truly a blessing and we will miss him greatly.

- Hugh Harvey

Paul was also an avid bird photographer and won accolades in our 2020 and 2021 MDAS Photo Contests. Here are a few of our favorite shots of his:



Top left: American Robins Cedar Waxwings, Mobbing in birdbath
Top right: Western Kingbird Nest

Bottom left: Great Horned Owl, Parent and Chick
Bottom right: Great Blue Heron, winner of "Humorous" category,
2021 MDAS Photo Contest
All photos by Paul Schorr

Field Trip Report

East County Field Trip

Randy Huey

On Monday, May 15, seven motivated birders showed up in Oakley for a 5-hour field trip, including an excursion along the north end of the Marsh Creek Trail, followed by another at Piper Slough on Bethel Island. We started the outing at the ungodly hour of 7am (ostensibly to avoid the late Spring heat) however, we were all thankful for warm jackets to ward off the morning coolness. The walk along Marsh Creek was both enjoyable and rewarding, highlighted by a repeat of last year's sighting of a Blue Grosbeak. Although we were all surprised by a lack of the usually ubiquitous egrets and herons in the Creek, we were nonetheless rewarded with appearances by a California Quail, a couple of Northern Harriers, a Red Tailed Hawk, some American Kestrels, many Barn and Cliff Swallows, and a couple of Western Kingbirds. Our subsequent visit to Piper Slough was, if anything, even more rewarding than Marsh Creek. Highlights included a couple of Western Tanagers, a Bullocks Oriole, a Hooded Oriole, and a Black-headed Grosbeak. Other sightings included Anna's Hummingbirds, Swainson's Hawks, Downey and Nuttall's Woodpeckers, a Spotted Towhee, and a couple of Cedar Waxwings.

Marsh Creek, CA



Top left: Northern Harrier
Top right: California Quail
Left bottom: Black-headed Grosbeak
Right bottom: Bullock's Oriole
Photos by: Isaac Aronow

Piper Slough, CA



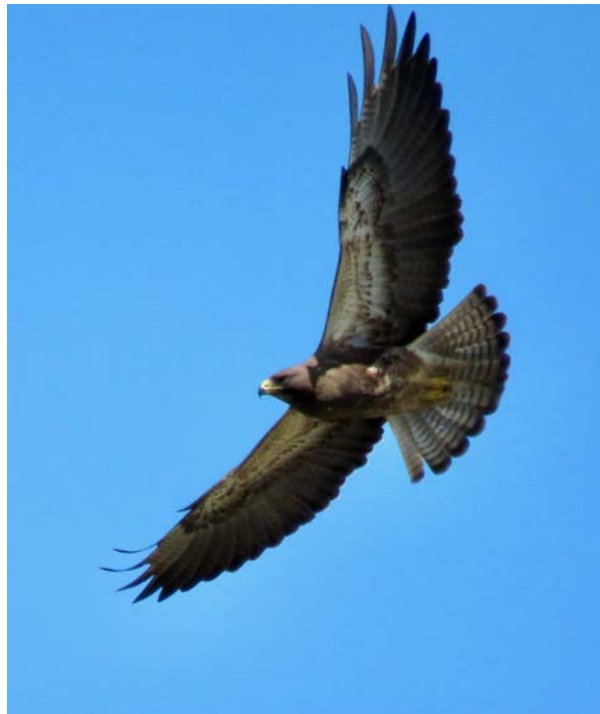
Trip report from Putah Creek (at Pedrick Road), April 11, 2023

Tracy Farrington, Trip Leader

A field trip to the Putah Creek Riparian Preserve was suggested by my wife, who did her graduate work at nearby UC Davis. This particular stretch of creek (which flows out of Lake Berryessa) runs east from Pedrick Rd., and is noted for its easy trail, rich riparian habitat, and abundance of migrants throughout the spring. Our trip might have been a little early for peak migrant activity, but it was the only date we had in a busy April field trip schedule to scout a new location.

As it turned out, it was a balmy spring day - if not particularly birdy. Seven birders basically did a "beta test" for the location, and all agreed it would be a worthwhile addition to our annual MDAS field trip calendar. A highlight bird was a Swainson's Hawk - a species we can't see without traveling from our core area of central Contra Costa.

I hope that MDAS members who have not birded this area will explore it. We will be returning next spring - perhaps in greater numbers!



Swainson's Hawk

Photo by Isaac Aronow

Mitchell Canyon, April 20

Sandy Ritchie, Trip Leader

We had beautiful weather for our spring walk at Mitchell Canyon. The bird activity was a little slow in the shady areas when we first started, but we began getting some warbler activity around the intersection where the Globe Lily trail starts. We also had a good variety of wildflowers that added to our enjoyment. The White Canyon area was where we had our most interesting sightings. A Golden Eagle was a very nice surprise, along with fantastic looks at a California Thrasher that sat perched in the open for about five minutes. A Wrentit also made a brief appearance, and five different warblers were seen. There were multiple sightings of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Hammond's Flycatchers and Pacific-slope Flycatchers, and the Ash-throated Flycatcher serenaded us, but was not actually seen. The blooming Black Sage, Lupines and California Poppies provided us with a chance to see a variety of hummingbirds. The Anna's was the one mostly seen, and a few birders were lucky enough to also see the Calliope and Rufous Hummingbirds. Twelve participants saw a total of 44 species.



California Thrasher

Photo by Matt Tarlach and Isaac Aronow

Del Puerto Canyon – April 24, 2023

Steve Buffi

Nine participants spend a beautiful day in Del Puerto Canyon. The birding was relatively slow. At the Westley Rest Area, we picked up our first Bullock's Oriole and Western Kingbird of the day. In the grassland area of Del Puerto Canyon, the group saw 3 Golden Eagles, a Horned Lark, and 2 Loggerhead Shrikes. In the lower canyon, the highlight was a Yellow-billed Magpie. In the middle canyon, the group picked up Phainopepla, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and Black-headed Grosbeak. A brief view of a Yellow Warbler was the highlight at lunch. At the pond at the 22+ mile point, Eurasian Wigeon and Ruddy Duck were the highlight. A group of 9 Tricolored Blackbirds made an appearance on San Antonio Valley Rd. A total of 51 species were seen or heard.



Mines Road Field Trip Report - Saturday April 29

Matthew Tarlach

On Saturday April 29 five intrepid birders traveled down Mines Road south of Livermore, following the trail of Joaquin Murrieta into the wilderness of far eastern Alameda and Santa Clara Counties. Just south of Livermore we watched a pair of Bullock's Orioles collecting webbing from some kind of insect cocoon to add to their nest. At Lake Del Valle, we spotted a pair of Clark's Grebes on the water along with their more usual Western cousins. We also had a beautiful Purple Finch singing above one of the picnic areas.

Heading south on upper Mines Road we pulled off several times to bird from turnouts along the way. Some of our highlight birds were a pair of Cal Thrashers

that posed to give us lovely views, a half-dozen Phainopepla, and a Lark Sparrow. In an area of chapparal that escaped the 2020 fires that burned much of this area we tried to draw out Bell's Sparrows, but without luck. We did enjoy a spectacular display of wildflowers!

After lunch, three of us continued down Del Puerto Canyon Road into Stanislaus County, where we added Black-headed Grosbeak, House Wren, and Lawrence's Goldfinch to our list. In all five birders tallied 64 species, along a 180 mile circular route from Walnut Creek.

EBird checklists:

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S135508961>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S135508959>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S135508958>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S135508955>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S135508954>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S135508952>



Photos by Michael Sullivan, Isaac Aronow, and Alex & Beata Milhano

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:

Outer Point Reyes

Saturday, June 3, 8:30 AM to 3 PM

Point Reyes is one of the premiere birding locations in Northern California, a great spot to find rarities during migration---like the Prairie Warbler pictured on the registration page (image by Beth Branthaver). MDAS tries to visit at least twice a year. On this trip we hope to see northbound migrants, as well as resident birds in their spring plumage. We will stop at the lighthouse overlook and spend some time above the fish docks. Bring water and lunch, as the area is remote.

Rating: Category 1 -- some walking through grass under trees and on paved roads

Elevation change: N/A

Leader: Matt Tarlach 925 482 6129

Meet: Bear Valley Visitor Center, Olema

Directions: From US 101 north of San Rafael, take Lucas Valley Road to Nicasio. At the reservoir turn left. Follow signs to Point Reyes Station. Traditionally we've stopped for coffee and pastries at the Bovine Bakery. Next, drive to Olema and the Visitor Center.

From the Concord/Pleasant Hill area it may be advantageous to cross the top of the Bay on SR 37, exit at Atherton Avenue, turn left and cross US 101 to San Marin Drive. Turn right at the high school and drive about 6 miles to stop sign, turn left on Point

Reyes-Petaluma Road for 7 miles to another stop sign. Turn right at the painted bridge, drive 3 miles to SR 1 and turn left into Point Reyes Station.

Due to limited parking at several stops on the Outer Point, this field trip is limited to 10 participants. Sharing a car is helpful. Participants must acknowledge the MDAS Liability Waiver (available during registration). Register [HERE](#).

Hayward Regional Shoreline, Frank's Dump

Friday, July 21, 3:30 PM to 6 PM



For a shorebird spectacle, we will visit the hotspot known as "Frank's Dump" in late afternoon when the sun will be at our backs, allowing good viewing of shorebirds congregating on the dry flats at high tide. At this time of year many of the returning shorebirds still have much of their breeding plumage. Some of these birds will stay the winter, some will continue a southerly migration.

Bring water and snacks. There is no shade on the trail, so bring appropriate clothing and sunscreen. There is a pit toilet at the Winton Ave lot.

This hike is limited to 20 participants. All Field Trips are first-registered, first-served. Participants must acknowledge the MDAS Liability Waiver (available during registration).

Hike Rating: 2. Up to 3 miles walking on flat unpaved trails.

Elevation change: N/A

Leader: Hugh Harvey, 925-935-2979

Meet: Winton Avenue entrance for Hayward Regional shoreline.

Directions: From I-880, exit Winton Avenue, drive west 4.5 miles. Park near the trailhead just before the parking lot gate. We will walk about a mile to our viewing site. Register [HERE](#).

Bodega Bay

Saturday, August 19, 9 AM to 3 PM



The last trip of our annual field trip calendar, but sometimes considered the first trip for fall birding. At Bodega Bay we'll encounter flocks of shorebirds including Black Oystercatcher and Marbled Godwit, as well as terns, gulls, cormorants, near-shore pelagics and more - perhaps a Wandering Tattler. Bring liquids, lunch and sunscreen.

Rating: Category 1--moderate walking

Elevation change: N/A

Leader: Hugh Harvey, 925-935-2979

Meet: Back deck at The Tides Restaurant

Directions: From Concord/Pleasant Hill, take I-680 across the Benicia Bridge, go west on I-780 to Vallejo, then I-80 toward Sacramento. Exit to SR 37, then drive about 15 miles to Lakeville Road. In Petaluma, turn left on E. Washington Street and continue on Bodega Road, Valley Ford Road and SR 1 to Bodega Bay. Walk through or around The Tides Restaurant to find the group on the back deck overlooking the harbor. Bring lunch, liquids and sunscreen.

This field trip is not limited in number of participants. All must acknowledge the MDAS Liability Waiver (available during registration). Register [HERE](#).

Pelagic Cruise out of Half Moon Bay

Saturday, August 26, All-day

Still a few seats left! Join fellow members of MDAS on a day-long cruise out of Half Moon Bay, in search of pelagic birds like migrant Arctic Terns and Long-tailed Jaegers, Scripps's and Craveri's Murrelets, various Petrels and perhaps Laysan Albatross.



Alvaro Jaramillo is one of the most well-reputed birding guides based in Northern California. He's set aside fourteen seats for MDAS on one of his pelagic cruises, in the heart of the prime season, so we can be assured of sharing the experience with some of our fellow chapter members. More details are available at the registration link.

Booking is directly through Alvaro's Adventures. ***MDAS members must register via our private link, [HERE](#).***

If you register for the cruise, please email the MDAS fieldtrips chair to let him know: mdasfieldtrips@gmail.com

If there's interest we'll organize additional birding along the San Mateo coast on the day before or after the cruise.

Jewel Lake, Tilden Park

Thursday, August 31, 7:30 AM - 11 AM



Our traditional first field trip of fall - a short walk along Wildcat Creek and around Jewel Lake in Tilden Park. Possible highlights include fall warblers, Red-Breasted and Pygmy Nuthatch, Pacific Wren and maybe a Varied Thrush.

This trip is suitable for beginners. Bring binoculars if you have them, or if you need to borrow a pair contact the leader beforehand so he knows to bring them.

Hike Rating: 2, Moderate. About 2 miles walking on flat trails.

Elevation change: N/A

Leader: Matt Tarlach, 925 482 6129

Meet: Parking lot at the end of Central Park Drive in Tilden Regional Park.

Directions: Highway 24 to Fish Ranch Road. Go up the hill 0.7mi and turn Right on Grizzly Peak Blvd. Follow Grizzly Peak for 4.1mi. Turn Right on Muir, then after just 100 yards turn Left on Park Hills. Watch for signs to "Little Farm" which is near the meeting point. Continue 0.3 miles, then turn Left on Central Park Rd. Continue about 1 mile to the meeting point in the parking lot.

This hike is limited to 15 participants. All Field Trips are first-registered, first-served. Participants must acknowledge the MDAS Liability Waiver (available during registration). Register [HERE](#).

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

Birdy Hour Speaker Series with Joanna Wu

Tuesday, June 6, 2023




SAN FRANCISCO BAY
BIRD OBSERVATORY

BIRDY HOUR SPEAKER SERIES

**THE MOST
OVERLOOKED
BIRDS IN
NORTH AMERICA:
FEMALES**

by Joanna Wu

Tuesday, Jun 6, 2023
6pm Pacific
Free virtual event


MIDPENINSULA
REGIONAL
OPEN
SPACE

Female birds are typically more drab and inconspicuous than males, leading over time to an unconscious bias towards male birds in birdwatching, photography, and even in our ornithological knowledge. Join us to explore the history of focus on male birds, female vocalizations, conservation implications of overlooking female birds, and female bird identification tips!

Joanna Wu is a PhD student studying female birds in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at UCLA. She previously worked at the National Audubon Society and is a member of the Galbatross Project, a group of birders, scientists, writers, and conservationists who are passionate about spreading awareness about female

birds.

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

Date: Tuesday, June 6, 2023
Time: 6:00 - 7:00 PM
Location: Zoom, Virtual Presentation
Cost: Free
Registration: [Click here to register](#)

Least Tern Colony Viewing 2023

Saturday, June 23, 8AM - 11AM



Least Tern Colony Viewing 2023

June 23, 2023, 8am

Join SFBBO biologists at Eden Landing Ecological Reserve to view one of the few California Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum browni*) breeding colonies in the San Francisco Bay! California Least Terns are endangered ground-nesting seabirds, and SFBBO biologists and volunteers actively monitor the colony breeding on enhanced former salt production ponds at Eden Landing. We will look for adults incubating nests, young downy chicks being fed by their parents, older feathered chicks running around the colony, and fledglings learning to fly!

We will provide some spotting scopes for attendees to use, but please bring spotting scopes if you have your own. Families are welcome, but please note that all attendees will need to stay together throughout the duration of the event and that a restroom will only be available at the beginning and end of the event. Please expect to stay for the duration of the event.

This event is limited to 20 participants. In accordance with SFBBO's COVID-19 safety protocols, we ask participants to fill out an online health self-assessment form the day before the event. We also ask participants to bring a face mask for carpooling as we will want to pile into fewer vehicles.

To learn more about SFBBO's plover and tern work, check out [our website](#). Questions? Contact Sirena Lao at slao@sfbbo.org.

Date: Saturday, June 23, 2023
Time: 8 AM - 11 AM
Location: Eden Landing Ecological Reserve, Hayward CA 94545
Cost: Free
Registration: [HERE](#)

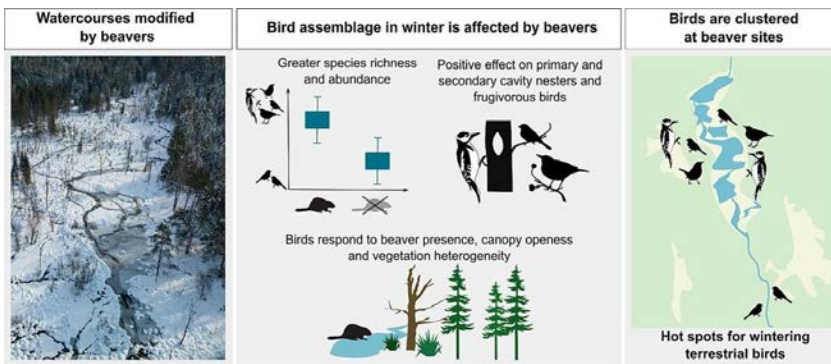
MO BEAVERS = MO BIRDS!

Heidi Perryman

Saturday June 24th is the date of the 14th Beaver Festival in down Martinez, celebrating the arrival of some uninvited engineers that turned out to be good news for the city ecologically and socially. When the beavers came to Alhambra creek their dam-building produced a cleaner stream, more invertebrates, more fish, more frogs and more birds. Visits from river otter, muskrat and mink became commonplace, and the stream that once dried up every summer became a year round oasis for wildlife. The beavers have since moved on but Martinez remains proud of its role in showing that coexistence is not only possible, but mutually beneficial.



Just this February [a study published in Poland](#) found beaver dams not only increase the number of birds over-wintering along the riparian corridor, but in fact boost bird species density and diversity in forests as far as 80 meters away! "The greater species richness and abundance of both the entire assemblage and certain ecological groups of species in areas modified by beavers suggest that



the presence of these animals rearranges the winter distribution of birds at the local scale.”

Join the beaver festival for a day long celebration of these animals and their dramatic effects on ecosystems and stream health. There is live music, wildlife exhibits, a silent auction and children’s activities. A talented chalk artist highlights the day with a dramatic wildlife mural in the plaza. This year’s festival will focus on beaver role in helping us mitigate the effects of climate change showcasing how their dams reduce fire, combat drought, slow flooding and cool stream temperatures. You might have seen some of the many articles this year describing beavers as climate change superheroes. This is your chance to learn all about why that’s true.

The free festival is in Susana Park in downtown Martinez at the corner of Susana and Estudillo streets from 10:00-3:00. Join us for a dam good time!



Common Poorwill Twilight Hike

Friday, July 21, 2023



We'll start the evening at Mitchell Canyon listening for bird calls. As twilight approaches we plan to be in the upper portion of White Canyon looking for bats flying low overhead. Next comes the sounds of the Common Poorwill & Owls. The returning walk in the dark may turn up some interesting wildlife!

Bring flashlight, binoculars, liquids, and hiking poles if you use them. Please dress for the weather. Hike is about 3 miles round trip, with some elevation gain. We ask that participants not vaccinated against Covid 19 please wear a mask. Please register with the leader. Limited to 15 participants.

Leader(s): Denise Wight and Leslie Contreras

Reservations required at blkittiwake@yahoo.com

Date:	Friday, July 21, 2023
Time:	7:00 PM - 10:30 PM
Location:	Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center (96 Mitchell Canyon Road, Clayton, CA)
Leader(s):	Denise Wight and Leslie Contreras
Cost:	Fee: \$6 per vehicle/\$5 for seniors - exact change only. Payable at the entrance to the Park by the stop sign.

Nature Walk 7: Birds, Butterflies and Blooms

Wednesday, August 2, 2023



Join naturalist Dan Fitzgerald for a nature walk in the Mitchell Canyon area. We will be looking for birds, butterflies, and some Summer 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 10 participants.

- Date:** Wednesday, August 2, 2023
- Time:** 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
- Location:** Meet in front of the Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center (96 Mitchell Canyon Road, Clayton)
- Leader(s):** Daniel Fitzgerald, Naturalist
- Cost:** Fee: \$6 per vehicle/\$5 for seniors - exact change only.
Payable at the entrance to the Park by the stop sign.

June Gallery & Media



MDAS May 16 Membership Meeting
View the virtual meeting [HERE](#)



Life Of The Great Grey Owl, The Largest In America
See the full video [HERE](#)



Cities have a role to play in bird conservation

“If you want to understand what’s happening with bird populations, you need data across the entire landscape”

Read the article [**HERE**](#).

Photo: [**Dimitris Salas / Macaulay Library ML423133811**](#)



Western Tanager / Bear Divide, Los Angeles, California, United States

Photo: **Marky Mutchler / Macaulay Library ML572817681**



Western Screech-Owl / Blanchard Home, Sonoma, California, United States

Photo: **Malcolm Blanchard / Macaulay Library ML573243141**

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Mt. Diablo Audubon Society Leadership

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