



Mount Diablo Bird Alliance

The Quail

Volume 70, Number 9

November 2025

November Monthly Program Meeting: Thursday, November 6, 7 PM

Mount Diablo Bird Alliance will meet Thursday, November 6 in the Camellia Room at the Gardens at Heather Farm.

Address:

The Camellia Room @ The Gardens at Heather Farm
1540 Marchbanks Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Please note that MDBA no longer provides disposable cups at our meetings.

If you would like to enjoy water, punch, or tea, please bring your own cup.

We will have a few reusable cups available if you need one. We appreciate your cooperation.

Agenda:

6:30 PM Doors Open

7:00 PM Announcements

7:15 PM Refreshments and Raffle

7:30 PM Main Program: Pacific Flyway Center

Our Raffle table's success relies heavily on your fantastic donations! We're on the lookout for awesome bird-related items or anything similar, like books, art, collectables, feeders, bird boxes, and camera equipment. Basically, anything you think someone might be interested in buying raffle tickets for. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

If you have such items but are unable to attend meetings, please contact info@mtdiablobirds.org and we will try and arrange a pickup from local addresses.

Pacific Flyway Center

Veronica Cornette







Photos by Pacific Flyway Center

Veronica Cornett of the **Pacific Flyway Fund** will share information about the development of the **Pacific Flyway Center**, which is slated for construction in the **Suisun Marsh** in Fairfield, California.

The Pacific Flyway is one of the four major bird migration routes in North America. The Pacific Flyway Center will be front and center for this significant stopover on the north-south migration path, which stretches from Alaska to Patagonia. The Center will sit directly within this migratory corridor, offering every visitor an unparalleled opportunity to observe a great number of waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as other wetland-dependent species.

Wetlands and grasslands will serve as the Center's **primary classroom**, providing a vivid and engaging educational environment that is home to hundreds of species of native plants and animals. The **Education Center** will complement this experience with interactive displays that highlight the importance of **biodiversity** and healthy ecosystems. Ultimately, the Pacific Flyway Center will stand as a premier example of wildlife and wetland stewardship, preserving this ecological wonder for generations to come.

President's Letter

Karin Deas, *MDBA Secretary*

Jerry Britten is no longer the President of the Mount Diablo Bird Alliance as he's now settled in his new Arizona territory. The board's decided to rotate presidential duties, so you'll hear from a different board member in each issue of **The Quail!**



As the crisp air of **November** settles in, it brings exhilarating birding opportunities. This month marks a significant time for bird enthusiasts, as it heralds the arrival of our **winter migrant birds**.

Our waterways become bustling havens for migrant waterfowl, offering us a chance to observe and appreciate the diversity of species that grace our region during the colder season.

On the Waterways



Shorebirds at Wetland Edge Park

Photo by Ian Deas

Ducks, geese, cranes, and shorebirds journey from their northern breeding grounds to our relatively milder climate, seeking refuge and sustenance. The sight of these birds congregating on **San Francisco Bay and the Delta**, as well as on various lakes and rivers, is nothing short of spectacular.

Closer to Home



Golden-crowned Sparrow in Manzanita

Photo by Ian Deas

Closer to home, we witness the arrival of winter migrants in our own backyards. Under the canopy of manzanitas and coyote bushes, you might spot **Golden-crowned Sparrows, White-crowned Sparrows**, and other species that have made the journey. It's a joy to see birds finding solace and sustenance amidst familiar foliage, and it allows us to appreciate the beauty and resilience of each one.

Let us embrace this November with a sense of wonder and gratitude for the natural world around us. **Happy bird watching!**

MDBA Annual Treasurer's Report - 2025

Steve Buffi, *MDBA Treasurer*

Mount Diablo Bird Alliance (MDBA) remains in an excellent position to serve our chapter and community. We had another successful year. Our annual fundraising drive continues to be strong, and our total chapter membership is also robust.

The financial health of MDDBA, due to the generosity of our members, allows us to actively pursue our mission. Your support funds our monthly program, this newsletter, the annual Christmas Bird Count, our website, donations to like-minded organizations, and much more. You have read about these important

efforts in this and prior issues of *The Quail*. Every dollar you give is put to good use for the benefit of our community.

Fund Structure and Decisions

At the start of the 2020–2021 fiscal year, the Board decided to split the General Fund into two parts: the Reserve Fund and the Excess Fund.

- The Reserve Fund will retain a balance equal to one year of expenses, excluding donations.
- The Excess Fund balance would be used to start new programs within MDBA and to increase donations to other like-minded organizations such as land trusts, bird rehabilitation programs, and education programs.

At the April 2023 Board Meeting, it was decided to retain \$20,000 in the Excess Fund. Donations from the Excess Fund will continue until we reach this amount. Fundamental to all Board actions is maintaining the financial stability of the chapter for the long term.

Fund balances are held in checking, money market, and certificate of deposit accounts.

Fund	Gross Profit	Total Expenses	Net Income	Fund Balance 7/1/2025
General	\$44,379.38	\$13,361.45	\$31,017.93	–
Reserve	–	–	–	\$20,000.00
Excess	\$95.50	\$26,938.47	(\$26,842.97)	\$72,676.70
Total All Funds	\$44,474.88	\$40,299.92	\$4,174.96	\$92,676.70

New Members

Rochelle Fortier, *MDBA Membership Chair*

I would like to give a warm welcome to the new members who joined in September: **Carmen**

Ancinas, Orinda; **Elizabeth Gans**, San Francisco; **Robert Gee**, Orinda; **Nancy Griffiths**, Pleasant Hill; **Zandra Hertzmann**, Walnut Creek; **Gina Lutz**, Pleasanton; **Paulette Lutz**, Pleasanton; and



Mount Diablo Audubon Society Scrapbooks Available Online

Rochelle Fortier, *Membership Chair*

Our Chapter's history is now online!

We've digitized the old **Mount Diablo Audubon Society scrapbooks**, which cover the years from **1961 to 2008**. Previously stored in boxes, these pages are now easily accessible under the **Newsletter/Scrapbook tab** on our website.

These scrapbooks provide a wonderful record of our Chapter's activities through archived newspaper articles, photos, and handouts. They also chronicle important conservation topics throughout the decades.

Highlights You Can Explore:

- **1971:** Becoming an official chapter of **The National Audubon Society**.
- **1974:** The Martinez Mt. View Sanitary District creating the freshwater marsh.
- **1977 & 2002:** Celebrating our **25th** and **50th** Anniversaries, respectively.
- **1988:** The major oil spill at the **Shell Marsh** in Martinez.
- **1989:** The reintroduction of **peregrine falcons** in Mt. Diablo State Park.
- **2004:** Volunteers working to restore the natural habitat at **Heather Farm Park** in Walnut Creek.

We hope you enjoy reading through these historical pages!

Excess Fund Expenditures

Steve Buffi, *MDBATreasurer*

The Excess Fund was established by the Board in August 2020, alongside a separate \$20,000 Reserve Fund. The initial Excess Fund balance was \$110,916.93.

The Board also initially approved the ultimate depletion of the Excess Fund by the end of the 2025–2026 fiscal year, with periodic reviews to adjust the timeline as

necessary. The Excess Fund was designated for several key purposes: to start new programs within Mount Diablo Bird Alliance (MDBA), to make donations to like-minded organizations, and to support conservation efforts.

Annually, any remaining funds in the General Fund as of June 30 are transferred to the Excess Fund.

Recent Board Decisions and Current Status

At the April 2023 Board Meeting, the Board approved a change to the policy, deciding to retain \$20,000 as a permanent base balance in the Excess Fund.

The balance in the Excess Fund as of July 1, 2025, is \$72,676.70.

It is now projected that the Excess Fund will not reach the \$20,000 level by the end of the 2025–2026 fiscal year. This is primarily because annual transfers from the General Fund have exceeded expectations. The Board is committed to achieving the \$20,000 base level in the next few years.

Expenditures from the Excess Fund are often shared with the membership via the President's Letter in *The Quail* newsletter.

Excess Fund Expenditures for Fiscal Year 2024–2025

Below is a consolidated list of expenditures from the Excess Fund for the 2024–2025 Fiscal Year:

Name	Memo/Description	Amount	Comment
For Prop 4		\$1,500.00	
Yurok Tribe	Condor Program	\$500.00	
Golden Gate Raptor Observatory		\$500.00	
Ventana Wildlife Society		\$1,000.00	
International Bird Rescue		\$1,000.00	
Lindsay Wildlife Experience		\$1,000.00	
Mono Lake Committee		\$1,000.00	
Native Bird Connections		\$500.00	
Siyaj Chan		\$2,008.84	Int Donation
Environment for the Americas	Amigos Alados	\$1,375.00	Int Donation
Saray Contreras Martinez	Agrupacion Sierra de Manantlán	\$1,500.00	Int Donation

Coqueta Sierra Atoyac		\$1,000.00	Int Donation
Feather River Land Trust		\$1,000.00	
John Muir Land Trust	Land Purchase	\$3,000.00	
Mount Diablo Interpretive Association	Peregrine Team	\$500.00	
Save Mount Diablo	Land Purchase	\$5,000.00	
Institute for Bird Populations		\$550.00	
Ventana Wildlife Society		\$550.00	
Subtotal for Donations		\$23,483.84	
MDBA Song Bird Banding Program		\$3,454.63	
		\$26,938.47	

Prior fiscal year expenditures from the Excess Fund are available for review by any member. Please contact the Treasurer Steve Buffi.

Thank You to Everyone Who Gave So Generously in FY 24/25 (7/1/24 - 6/30/25)

Steve Buffi, *MDBA Treasurer*

We sincerely thank all our members and supporters who contributed during this drive. Your generosity makes our mission possible.

California Condor (\$1,000 and above)

Maybelle M. Dore, Marta Bulaich, Donald Lewis

California Gnatcatcher (\$250 – \$999)

Anonymous, Paul R. Andrews, Jerald Britten, Steve Buffi and Anne Waters, Michael Eliot, Nell Fraser, Anastasia Hobbet, Ann and Donald Hughes, Linda Jacobs, Richard Kleker, Therese Konz, Lynn Lakso, Jane & Michael Larkin, Nathan Mih, Susan Pfau, Julia M. Starr, Nancy Wenninger, Stephanie Woods

California Thrasher (\$100 – \$249)

Gus and Gerry Argenal, Isaac Aronow, Karel Baloun, Renee Chu, Inger Coble, Lisa Cohen, Christine Cole, Heather Converse, Don and Susan Couch, Joseph Darr, Tracy Farrington, Kent Fickett and Rebecca Beemer, Tina Fletcher, Susan Heckly and Tom Howard, Claudia and Scott Hein, William Hudson, Julia Jackson, Laury Joseph, Norman Kikuchi, Maureen Lahiff, Pamela Alves Lorenz, Linda and William Maddaus, Richard/Hermine Makman, Diane and Bob Malucelli, William Maxwell, Andrew Naegeli, Patricia Najarian, Richard Nicoll, Lorraine Osborn, Carol Pacht, Jannifer Lee Puyans, Sandra S. Ritchie, Eric Schroeder, Maury and Susan Stern, Gary Stevens, Del Stipe, Patricia Sullivan, Peter Wilbut, Teri and Chris Wills, Erin M. Wilson

California Quail (\$25 – \$99)

Cheryl Abel, Bennett Berke, Beth Branthaver, James and Barbara Brunell, Margaret Campos, Karen Case, Pablo Celaya Bravo, Rick Chalk, John Corlett, Anne Dailey, Joy Dardin, Nancy Erickson, Rochelle Fortier, John S. Gravell, Alan and Tamara Hirata, Elizabeth Hoople, David Hutton and Valerie Ventre-Hutton, Donna and Richard Immel, Renate Johnson, Ronald Kline, Alan Krakauer, Dave Kwinter, Mona Lange, Margaret Lennon, Charlotte Liniger, Eric Liskay, Mike Loper, Patricia Mahoney, Claire Mailhiot, Kathryn Martinsen, John Masek and Margaret Elgin Masek, Bryan McElderry and Diane Schreiber, Terry Mead, Barbara Minneman, Sue Phalen, Joyce Pollack, Donna Preece, Dorothea Ray, Deborah Reiling, Kem and Sylvie Robinson, Linda Parks Shinn, Ann-Charlott Stenberg, Caroline Stephens, Fred W. Sullivan, Rex Takahashi, Kathleen Usher, Elspeth Wells, Leslie Yoshitani

California Towhee (Up to \$24)

Debra Austin, Jackie Bobrosky, Peter Boffey, Lyn Diana, Constance Diernisse, Carol and John Harkin, Georgette Howington, Diana Karkiewicz, Mrs. Suzanne Lutz, Louis and Yolanda Pilastro, Barbara Steck, Becky Valdez, Dana Wade and Kevin Wade, Penny Walker, Marlena Weden, Marilyn Wojcik

Note on Accuracy

Every effort was made to accurately spell all names. If your name or donation amount has not been recorded correctly or was mistakenly omitted, we offer our sincere apologies. Please contact us so we can amend our records by sending an email to Steve Buffi, Treasurer, at treasurer@mtdiablobirds.org.

Easy Action on Climate Change that Add Up



Be Energy Smart



Clean Energy Home



Shift Your Ride



Eat Green & Waste Less

1. Save Money, Earn Rewards, and Fight Climate Change

Want to lower your energy bills, receive financial incentives, and fight climate change—all at the same time?

Visit **cleanercontracosta.org** and join the **Cleaner Contra Costa Challenge**. There, you'll find programs to reduce energy consumption, rebates for switching to climate-friendly appliances, and much more. This initiative is exclusively for Contra Costa residents, providing local opportunities to save or earn money while helping the planet. Join today!

2. Renewables Outpace Coal: The Economic Driver

In early October, for the first time ever, **renewable energy surpassed coal** as the primary source of electricity worldwide. This shift is primarily driven by cost: renewable energy is already cheap and continues to become more affordable every day. Even U.S. government data confirms **this** trend.

Want to capitalize on these savings? Power your home with **100% clean energy** through the **Deep Green Program**. Enrollment is free, and it's a simple way to pay less for energy while supporting renewables!

3. Stand Up for Climate Science

Are you ready to address misinformation regarding nature and climate policy?

Click **HERE** to join the effort, fight back, and stand up for scientific facts and evidence-based truth.

Community Birding Education

Herb Long



Mount Diablo Bird Alliance (MDBA) has been actively promoting the enjoyment of birding within our community. We recently organized several pop-up birding events at Heather Farm to engage the public.

Additionally, we are partnering with local libraries to host family programs on Saturday mornings. This successful initiative began at the Concord Library, where we held multiple birding events.

The most recent program took place at the Pittsburg Library. Maren Smith's presentation focused on bird habits and identification, successfully fostering interest in birding among young children. She was assisted by Carol Pachl, Herb, and Randi Long, who utilized a nest identification game, various educational posters, and crafts. A spotting scope and binoculars were also available for attendees.

While the turnout for this specific event was small, we consider the time exceptionally well spent if we inspire even one youngster to go home and say, "Let's put up a bird feeder!"

Halloween Tips



Those stretchy, fake spiderwebs might look festive but for birds and pollinators, they're a silent trap. Each year, countless songbirds and beneficial insects get

caught, struggle, and die in them.

This season, let's make Halloween scary for the right reasons, not for the innocent wildlife in our yards. Choose safe decor, and keep the real magic alive.

Pacheco Marsh Volunteer Day - November 1

Alan Bade



In last month's President's message, Rochelle wrote about the many **habitat restoration opportunities** available through local land trusts and other non-profits. I'd like to highlight one hosted by the **John Muir Land Trust (JMLT)**.

JMLT's **Pacheco Marsh** is a wonderful new restoration project that was over **20 years in the making**. You can read about its establishment and history here:

- **Contra Costa County: Pacheco Marsh**
- **JMLT: Our Places - Pacheco Marsh**

This project included planting **31,000 California native plants**. As the restoration matures, we expect a great many birds to call this area home.

However, the marsh faces a threat from **emerging invasive plants**. If left unchecked, these could severely undermine the health of this vital new public resource.

To combat this, on September 20th, a group of birders and native plant enthusiasts joined JMLT staff to pull **ice plant** and **Giant Reed** (*Arundo donax*). These are both highly invasive species.

Come join us on November 1st to help protect the marsh! Please note that rain cancels the event.

Sign up here: **JMLT Volunteer Stewardship**

MDBA Trip Report

Coyote Hills Regional Park, September 21

Report by: Elisa Fernandes-McDade



Virginia Rail

Photo by Elisa Fernandes-McDade

On **September 21**, thirteen MDBA birders walked the winding trails of **Coyote Hills Regional Park**. A layer of clouds hung low in the sky, and there was a nip in the air that would burn off before noon.

Before the walk even began, the group was treated to a show: a **Red-tailed Hawk** was eating the lower half of a **California Ground-Squirrel** for breakfast, about thirty feet away on the parking lot median.

The marsh ponds bisected by **Chochenyo Trail** produced a very obliging **Virginia Rail** and two **Soras** within minutes of the group arriving. A monochrome mass of nearly **1,000 Black-necked Stilts**—adults and first-year young—roosted in the deeper end of the pond. They were joined by a pair of **Wilson's Phalaropes**, roughly **300 Long-billed and Short-billed Dowitchers**, and about **50 Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs**. Attendees got relatively close views (less than 100 yards) and many side-by-side comparisons of these tricky-to-tell-apart shorebird species.

A cloud of **30 American White Pelicans** would occasionally lift off from the water of a distant pond and wheel overhead in slow motion.

Waterfowl seemed to have finally arrived in impressive numbers and variety: **Cinnamon Teal**, **Green-winged Teal**, and **Northern Shovelers** were present, though the males had yet to molt into their December finest.

Golden-crowned Sparrows and **White-crowned Sparrows** have also returned to the scrubby hills. On the Bayview Trail, a warbler with a yellow vent, grayish back, and

subtle eye ring flitted around in the bushes next to the road and confounded the group. A bit of guidebook sleuthing led to its identification as an **immature Orange-crowned Warbler**.

By 12:30 PM, **48 species** had been spotted. A handful of attendees visited the lovely Coyote Hills Visitor Center to bookend their experience.

Checklist [here](#).

Albany Bulb and Mudflats, October 15

Report by: Matt Tarlach

On **October 15**, about fifteen MDBA members and guests met on a gray day at the deck overlooking **McLaughlin Eastshore State Park**, also known as the Albany mudflats. As the tide went out, we watched a variety of shorebirds, ducks, and terns fly in to forage. We then continued with a walk around the **Albany Bulb**, where we added several species of passerines, finishing the day with **44 species** spotted.

A big thanks to **Elisa Fernandes-McDade** for leading this outing!

Checklist [here](#).

Alameda, October 18

Report by: Mona Lange and Matt Tarlach



Black Oystercatcher

Photo by Isaac Aronow

On **Saturday, October 18**, a dozen MDBA members and friends visited birding hotspots on the bayshore at Alameda.

Starting at **Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary**, we saw a variety of shorebirds along with a few passerines in the brush. At one point, hundreds of small shorebirds (**peeps**) took to the air as a dark **Merlin** flew past.

Moving on to **Ballena Bay**, we had nice looks at **Elegant Terns**, **Black Turnstones**, **Pelagic Cormorants**, and **Spotted Sandpipers**. After some of the group departed to attend other events that day, the rest continued to **Crab Cove**. There, we added **Black-crowned Night Heron**, male and female **Nuttall's Woodpecker**, **Western Bluebird**, **Hutton's Vireo**, and **Townsend's Warbler**. We were also delighted to see a few **Monarch butterflies**.

We spotted **55 avian species** in total for the day.

Trip report [here](#).

MDBA Field Trip Announcements

Matt Tarlach, *MDBA Field Trip Chair*



Update from the Field Trips Coordinator

MDBA mounts dozens of Field Trips throughout the year, ranging from easy, accessible strolls around our local parks to longer expeditions to more distant sites, and including some vigorous hikes. On each field trip, one or more leaders guides our group to the best hotspots, in the best season... but the bird-spotting is really a team effort.

Come birding with us!

You can see the field trip checklists we've recorded since transitioning to electronic records [here](#).

To ensure that trips are not overcrowded, pre-registration through Eventbrite is required. MDBA members have priority, with member sign ups opening as soon as the trip is announced in our newsletter. Non-members are welcome too! Registration opens to the public a week before the trip. All registration closes 2 days 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 via Eventbrite as early as possible to open that spot up for someone else.

Field trips are ranked according to difficulty:

Trail Rating 1: Easy. Little walking, under 1 mile, on smooth paths.

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

Trail Rating 3: Challenging. Extensive walking and climbing on rough terrain!

Out of respect for our members and community, we ask participants to take sensible precautions for everyone's health when carpooling and sharing spaces.

We always need new trip leaders! It's fun, and a meaningful contribution to our chapter's mission of education and outreach. Please contact our Field Trip Coordinator, Matt Tarlach, at mdbafieldtrips@gmail.com

If you have a favorite birding spot you'd like to share with your fellow members but would like some help leading the trip, Matt can probably pair you up with an experienced trip leader.

If you're looking for still more bird-related outings in our area, the East Bay Regional Park District holds a variety of events. Go to their Birding page [here](#) and click View Activities.

Markham Arboretum

Monday, November 3, 8 AM - 10:30 AM



Markham Arboretum is a small island of riparian habitat in the middle of suburban Concord that attracts many winter visitors including Northern Flickers, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Hermit Thrushes. This is a great walk for beginner birders who want to get to know CoCo County's winter woodland birds.

We'll be walking the unpaved trail that goes alongside a small creek and garden.

Leader: Elisa Fernandes-McDade - elisa.fernandesmcdade@gmail.com

Hike Rating: 1 - Easy

Meet: Parking lot at the end of La Vista Ave, Concord, CA

GPS: 37.96249764912172, -122.00440861830769

Directions: Heading north on the 680, take Exit 50 to merge onto CA-242 North. Continue for 3 miles, then take exit onto Clayton Rd. After 2.5 miles, take a right onto La Vista Ave. The parking lot will be at the end of the avenue. Carpooling is encouraged.

This location is 13 minutes from the Clayton Rd+Farm Bureau Rd bus stop on the 10 line.

Sign up [HERE](#).

Lodi Lake

Thursday, November 13, 9 AM - 2 PM



Blue Heron

Photo by Warren R.

We'll bird first at Lodi Lake and its riparian area alongside the Mokelumne River. Plan to see waterfowl and a variety of bird species, including Woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatches, Cedar Waxwings, Herons, Warblers, and Wood Ducks. (We've had Varied Thrush in the past, but cannot guarantee a sighting!)

From Lodi Lake, we'll move on to Woodbridge Ecological Reserve, where we expect to see more waterfowl and other birds, including hopefully some early-arriving Sandhill Cranes.

Note on Woodbridge Reserve: The state requires a CDFW Lands Pass for entry. The fee is \$10 per car (or \$6 for seniors). You must have a day pass or an annual Lands Pass, which can be checked on the CDFW website.

Dress in layers. Bring water, snacks and lunch if so choose.

Leader: Mona Lange 510.414.2959

Hike Rating: 2 - Easy to moderate loop of 1.5 - 2 miles on level ground with some paved areas. A few very short off-trail lookouts with easy to moderate slope

access. There are a few benches to rest on as well.

Elevation Change: N/A

Meet: Lodi Lake parking lot (1101 W. Turner Rd) (bathroom at parking lot). Bring cash to pay the parking fee of \$10/car or \$6/car for seniors. Exact change required.

Directions: Hwy 4 East toward Antioch/Rio Vista. Go over Antioch bridge (toll). At stop light make RIGHT onto Hwy 12 toward Lodi. Stay on 12 East past interstate 5. About 2 miles past I-5 make a LEFT on DeVries Rd (the light after the RR tracks.) Carefully and safely watch for Yellow-billed Magpies in the area. At the second stop sign make a RIGHT onto W. Turner Rd. When in town, stay in the left lane. After crossing the RR tracks start looking for the Lake entrance on your LEFT. (On the other side of the Do Not Enter Sign.)

This trip is limited to 12 participants. Rain cancels.

Sign up [HERE](#).

McNabney Marsh & MVSD

Saturday, November 15, 8:30 AM - 12 Noon



Photo by Alan Bade

Moorhen Marsh, maintained by the Mt. View Sanitary District in Martinez, was one of the first water treatment facilities in the U.S. designed to offer quality habitat for

migrating birds. The marsh is usually only open for visits by appointment, Monday through Friday, so this is an unusual chance to visit on a Saturday. We hope to see resident and overwintering ducks, geese, herons, and passerines.

Just across the freeway, McNabney Marsh, also known as Waterbird Regional Preserve, hosts many more waterbirds and shorebirds as well. Marsh passerines and raptors might also be present.

We'll meet at the observation deck near the south end of McNabney Marsh, off Arthur Road, and scan with our scopes. After that, we'll move the cars a short distance and take a walk around the artificial marshes operated by the Mt. View Sanitary District.

Trip Leader: Matt Tarlach, mdbafieldtrips@gmail.com

Hike Rating: 1, Easy. Under 1 mile on flat terrain. Paths are unpaved paths and potentially muddy, if it's rained recently.

Meet: The observation deck off Arthur Road at 8:30 AM.

GPS for meeting point: 8.019304268086714, -122.09612963848679

Directions: From I-680 northbound, exit at Pacheco Blvd, turn right onto Arthur Road and go under the freeway. Arthur Road will bend left. Where Arthur Road ends the paved road turns sharp left through a gate onto MVSD's private road. Drive about .3 mile to the gravel parking lot just before the one-lane tunnel. The observation deck is to the right (east) of the road.

Limited to 15 participants. Participants acknowledge the MDBA Liability Waiver (available during registration), and will be required to sign a release of viability in order to enter the MVSD facility.

Register [HERE](#).

Pacheco Marsh

Monday, November 17, 8:00 AM - 12 Noon



Common Yellowthroat

Photo by Pam Lorenz

Pacheco Marsh is a recently restored wetland along the Carquinez Strait, east of Martinez, that has been opened to the public by the John Muir Land Trust (JMLT).

To facilitate the best birding, JMLT is giving us early access at 8:00 AM. We'll meet at the parking lot, where restrooms are available, and walk the flat two-mile loop trail out through the wetland to the open water.

Leader: Matt Tarlach and Cheryl Abel, mdbafieldtrips@gmail.com

Hike Rating: 2 - Flat, easy loop walk of about 2 miles. There are one or two benches to rest on.

Meeting Point: Pacheco Marsh parking lot.

GPS: 38.030853445360215, -122.08803004897656

Directions: Hwy 680 to Waterfront Road, last exit northbound before the Benicia Bridge. Head east on Waterfront Road. In 1.4 miles the entrance to Pacheco Marsh will be on your left.

This trip is limited to 20 participants. Rain or high winds cancel.

Register [HERE](#).

East County Specialties at Los Vaqueros

Sunday, November 30, 8:03 AM - 1 PM



Western Meadowlark

Photo by Pam Lorenz

The Los Vaqueros Reservoir is a relatively remote area managed by the Contra Costa Water District. The open savannah and grassland surrounding the reservoir make it an excellent location to observe grassland species, including American Kestrels, Meadowlarks, Horned Larks, and Prairie Falcons. Rarities such as the Mountain Bluebird, Lewis's Woodpecker, and Burrowing Owl occasionally appear here as well.

We will primarily explore the Kit Fox Trail and may also visit the dam area if time permits.

This trip requires more hiking than most of our outings. The trail is mostly unpaved and there is only one restroom at the trailhead. Please bring lots of water, sunscreen (there is little shade on the trail), an extra layer (it will almost certainly be cold and possibly windy), a snack, and any other equipment you need to hike. Plan accordingly. Scopes are helpful here. The trip leader will have one to share, and if you have one of your own feel free to bring it.

Day parking is \$6 per vehicle.

Leader: Elisa Fernandes-McDade, elisa.fernandesmcdade@gmail.com

Hike Rating: 3 - Long and Hilly.

Meeting Point: Walnut Staging Area

GPS: 37.8600370201877, -121.69675961271844

Directions: From Clayton, take Marsh Creek Road out past Round Valley. At the T-intersection where Marsh Creek turns left toward Brentwood, continue straight onto Camino Diablo. About a mile farther, turn right onto Walnut Blvd and continue to the entrance kiosk. After you pay the fee, the meeting point is to the right.

This trip is limited to 12 participants. Rain cancels.

Register [HERE](#).

Sacramento/Colusa National Wildlife Refuges

Saturday, December 6, 8:15 AM - 5:00 PM



Photo by Jerry Britten

The Sacramento and Colusa National Wildlife Refuges are premier locations to witness massive flocks of Snow and Greater White-fronted Geese and countless other waterfowl, raptors, and birds. They are must-see annual winter destinations.

We will drive the official auto tour routes and stop at the viewing platforms at both of these refuges, and also visit a couple of other nearby birding locations.

Leader: Steve Buffi 925-200-4555 and Ted Robertson 925-899-1872

Hike Rating: 1- Easy, Little walking but plenty of driving, up to 300 miles.

Meeting Point: North Dunnigan rest area on I-5 at 8:15 AM

GPS: 38.892453020152, -121.9774519444179

Directions: Go north on I-680, cross the Benica Bridge (toll), merge onto I-80 East at Cordelia. At Vacaville, merge onto I-505 North, follow for 34 miles and merge onto I-5 North just south of Dunnigan. Continue past the town to the rest stop.

This is an all-day trip and we will not be home until after dark. Participants who desire to stay overnight may find lodging in Williams. Bring Lunch and Liquids. The trip is limited to 15 participants.

Register [**HERE.**](#)

November Gallery & Media

CornellLab
Birds of the World

BOW Discovery Seminar:

The Social Life of Cliff Swallows

Insights from a 45-year field study

Featuring:

Dr. Charles Brown, University of Tulsa, OK



Cliff Swallow (pyrrhonota)
Petrochelidon pyrrhonota pyrrhonota
Art by Hilary Burn

The Social Life of Cliff Swallows

See the full video [HERE](#)

Bats Catch Migratory Birds and Eat Them in Midair



Read the article [HERE](#)



Reddish Egret / San Diego, California, United States

Photo: **Mel Senac** / Macaulay Library ML 643550014



House Finch / Marin California, United States

Photo: **Becky Matsubara** / Macaulay Library ML 643567891

If you'd like to stay in touch more than once a month, sign up for our private email **discussion group**!

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Mailing address:

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

Email address:

info@mtdiablobirds.org

Mount Diablo Bird Alliance

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