



Madrone LEAVES

Madrone Audubon Society, Inc., Post Office Box 1911, Santa Rosa, California 95402

VOLUME 55 Summer 2022 Number 6

2022 Ernestine Smith/Madrone Audubon Scholarship Award

5th Annual Madrone Audubon/Ernestine Smith Scholarship Awarded.

The 2022 Madrone Audubon/Ernestine Smith scholarship recipient is Emma Watkins. This scholarship is awarded to a student who attends or has attended Santa Rosa Junior College, transferring to a 4-year university for further education in the fields/majors of environmental studies, biological sciences, and/or life sciences.

Ms. Watkins grew up in Calistoga and graduated from Santa Rosa High School. Her academic interests in high school became our environment and conservation, sparked by multiple Earth Science and Biology courses along with the agriculture program. Her studies at Santa Rosa Junior college continued

degradation and social injustices,” Ms. Watkins shared with us in a conversation. She added, “Agroecology, a subsection of Environmental Studies that I’m also interested in pursuing focuses more closely on ecology and the interconnection of social relationships and sustainable agriculture.” Ms. Watkins expressed interest in continuing studies by entering the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology graduate program at UC Santa Cruz, focusing on Conservation and Biodiversity.

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Emma Watkins

on this path, where she has focused on Environmental Studies and Natural Sciences. Upon completing two years at SRJC, Ms. Watkins will transfer as a junior to University of California Santa Cruz. The UC Santa Cruz programs of Physical and Biological Sciences, including Environmental Studies and Agroecology, will form her Major. “This course of study focuses on understanding and addressing detriments to the environment through a multitude of disciplines, while also recognizing the connection between environmental

GENERAL MEETING

Monday, September 19, 6:30-8:00 pm

Sonoma County Wildlife and Nature

Presented by Naturalist Tom Reynolds

Join us for our first in-person membership meeting in two years! Say hello to old friends and cultivate new friends. Naturalist Tom Reynolds will share photographs and videos of the last two years of documenting our Sonoma County natural world. Tom’s photographic ethics always consider the birds, wildlife and natural settings he’s capturing on film or video. He has presented for multiple Audubon Chapters and conservation organizations as well as photo-documented wildlife for Sonoma County Regional Parks. Note the new start time (waiting to be confirmed; please check www.madroneaudubon.org in September for the confirmed start time and our meeting location – the meeting will be via Zoom if for any reason our planned in-person gathering cannot occur). We plan to follow social distancing protocols with seats in the fellowship room. Those attending our meetings must be vaccinated, and we recommend wearing a mask as well. Let’s keep ourselves healthy and safe and also be considerate of others.



Great-horned Owl
Courtesy of Tom Reynolds



AUDUBON SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Continued from page 1

Ms. Watkins has supplemented her education at SRJC through volunteering with LandPaths, Pepperwood Preserve and Bouverie Preserve. She has gained skills in several areas, including invasive species management, trail work, plant identification, native seed collection and planting, controlled burns, and a wide variety of other tasks. She explained, "Through my volunteer work, I've become especially interested in stewardship careers. This position combines my personal views regarding conservation with land stewardship practices that uphold the health of diverse ecosystems and the land in general."

In high school and college, Ms. Watkins has also participated in cross-country track. She shared, "I especially love trail running. It combines my passion for running with my love of the outdoors. I find solace in the natural world, and I love to get outdoors in local natural spaces in my free time, where I enjoy observing wildlife and a wide variety of wildflowers... I find my energy is always renewed with volunteer work in the field, as there's always noticeable change in the quality of the land at the end of the day. This experience is always extremely rewarding for me, and I find being able to apply the knowledge I gain in school to real situations helps to reinforce my confidence that I am following the best career path for my interests." When asked if there are environmentalists or conservationists who have inspired her love of Nature and her educational path, Ms. Watkins shared her parents are her inspiration. She feels fortunate to have grown up in a family that valued time outdoors, camping, and connecting with Nature.

Congratulations to Ms. Watkins as the 5th recipient of our annual Madrone Audubon/Ernestine Smith Scholarship. She was selected from a field of 23 applicants. We wish her well in her continuing studies!

We also appreciate the Scholarship Review Committee's good work on behalf of our Chapter to recommend the 2022 recipient.

Remembering
Bryant Hichwa
 1946-2022
We Will Miss Our Friend & Colleague
 (Tribute to Bryant in September 2022 Leaves)



Planning 2022 Fall Migratory HawkWatch

by Larry Broderick

In August, we will organize the upcoming Sonoma County, Jenner Headlands Fall Hawk Migration dates, times and volunteers.

Please contact me in early August at northcoastraptor@gmail.com if interested in participating in this important citizen science project.



Rough-legged Hawk

Courtesy of Don Bartling

Scholarship Recipients

2018 – **Emily Hoeft**
 2019 – **Yesenia Lopez**
 2020 – **Luis Orozco**
 2021 – **Riley Zajonc**
 2022 – **Emma Watkins**

Spring Membership Renewals Are Due

Thank you!



Bird-A-Thon - Support our Chapter!

There's still time to donate to your favorite team or to our Chapter in general. Bird-A-Thon, our annual fundraiser to support conservation, programs and activities, continues to June 28, 2022.

Donations can be made via mail or PayPal. Please take a look at our Bird-A-Thon teams and select a team you would like to support. Here are our teams with enthusiastic leaders:

Grey-headed Seersuckers – led by Becky Olsen, Ian Morrison and Ken Wilson

March Madness – led by Gene and Nancy Hunn.

Oakmont Birding Buddies – led by Carolyn Greene (formerly the Roadrunners of Betty Groce and the late Don McCarthy).

Burrowing Owlers – led by Susan Kirks with team member Art Slater.

Featherquesters – led by Diane Hichwa. Featherquesters are taking a break this year. Diane welcomes her loyal supporters to contribute to the Bird-A-Thon with a general donation, to be divided among all of the 2022 teams.

Questions go to Carolyn Greene, cgreene@yahoo.com, (805) 443-7289. General donations to support the Chapter can be mailed to Madrone Audubon, PO Box 1911, Santa Rosa, CA 95402. Write: Bird-A-Thon on memo line. Donations made via PayPal at the Madrone Audubon website (www.madroneaudubon.org) need an accompanying note or email to Carolyn for appropriate credit to a team or designated as a general donation.



Snowy Egrets

Courtesy of Tom Reynolds

Our goal for Bird-A-Thon this year is \$3,500, to fund one or two internships with Sonoma State University Environmental Studies students for fiscal year 2022-2023. The intern(s) will be able to experience serving on our Board of Directors for one year and help with tasks to support our operations, as well as support or create a project in conservation to add to an educational portfolio. If we raise additional funds, these will support our Chapter operations and extensive conservation work in Sonoma County and the Bay Area. Every penny counts; please share whatever donation you can to support our Bird-A-Thon!

Changes in 2023

by Susan Kirks

As we anticipate gathering in person again for membership meetings the third Monday of each month at the Methodist Church fellowship room, our Audubon Chapter has begun to look for new office space. The lease for the Environmental Center on Ridgway Avenue in West Santa Rosa is expiring and will not be renewed. This address has been headquarters for Sonoma County Conservation Council, of which Madrone Audubon is a member, for many years. As the Council continues as an important environmental coalition in Sonoma County, Madrone Audubon is beginning to explore a new office address and Board of Directors meeting space. We also need minimal storage space for records and supplies. Our goal is to locate a space by February 2023. Of course, our mailing address will remain the same (PO Box 1911, Santa Rosa, CA 95402). We currently have identified three possibilities as we maintain our headquarters in Santa Rosa. Might you know of a good location for office space with minimal use and once monthly Board of Directors meetings? Please reach out to our President, Susan Kirks, at 707-241-5548 or susankirks@sbcglobal.net, with any leads or possibilities. We look forward to continuing as a member of Sonoma County Conservation Council and accessing new office space in Santa Rosa!

Legacy Giving

*Helping Sonoma County's
Birds and Wildlife into the Future
Madrone's Legacy Care Program*



Black Oystercatcher at Pinnacle Gulch

Courtesy of Gordon Beebe

Please contact Madrone Audubon
707-241-5548



Spring Pelagic Trip from Bodega Bay

by Scott Carey

May 8th was a fantastic day in deep waters west of Bodega Bay, CA. Spring pelagic trips in northern California waters are tough to put on due to the rough seas and winds that pummel the coast in spring months. Captain Rick Powers and his steady



Black-footed Albatross

Courtesy of Scott Carey

and stable *New Sea Angler* took us out safely. Though large swells were questionable and winds were due to pick up in intensity, we managed to battle our way out 20 miles north/west of Bodega Bay to “the football.” Birds and marine life were slow on the way out, but as we got into deeper, bluer waters, things changed quickly. Black-footed Albatross were



Laysan Albatross

Courtesy of Scott Carey

abundant and loyal followers of the boat with a count of 125 through the day. Handfuls of Sooty Shearwater, Pink-footed Shearwater and Northern Fulmar scooped through the waves near and far. Breeding plumaged Sabine’s Gulls, Red-necked

Donations

In Memory of
George Batchelder
by James Batchelder

In Memory of
Bryant Hichwa
by Linda & Thomas Spazian

New Members

Santa Rosa
Linda Malone
John Sheridan

Sebastopol
Nancy Malon

Phalarope, and an elegant Long-tailed Jaeger were in the mix as well.

We soon had the bird many hoped for, rarely seen on deep water trips – Seven Laysan Albatross, eight Murphy’s Petrel, and a distant brief look at a Cook’s Petrel! Marine mammals were slim, but we had a California Gray Whale outside the harbor and several Pacific White-sided Dolphins in deep waters.



Murphy's Petrel

Courtesy of Scott Carey

Though some of our adventurers were a bit green on the trip, many smiles and life birds were memorable for this trip. Interesting, and for me a first, was seeing a flock of seven Wandering Tattlers at the Harbor Jetty on the way out. I'd never seen more than two together! What's a flock of Wandering Tattlers called? I'll have to research that. Thanks to Lucas Corneliuseen and Captain Rick Powers for putting our trip together. There is so much to see and discover in the deep northern California waters, especially the new frontier of spring pelagics!



Stories from Serenity Springs in Sebastopol

by Art Slater

(*Editor's note:* Many of us will fondly remember Judi Slater, Art's partner, who passed away in February 2022. Judi was a beloved member of the Sonoma County community.)

April 2022: Several years ago, Judi placed a decorative bird box from the northwest corner of our wrap-around porch. The entrance hole was too small, but over the last couple of seasons, a juvenile Downy Woodpecker enlarged the opening. This spring, I heard a male Oak Titmouse setting up a territory in the area and then noticed adults delivering nesting materials. Just this week (April 15), the adults began bringing food items! Earlier today, the male landed on the railing, called, then flew into the box, and I could hear young competing to be fed. Nice reminder of my wife, Judi, of 57 years.

Later in April: Today (April 29) at Noon, I observed six Band-tailed Pigeons 15 feet away through 10x40 Zeiss binoculars, with the Sibley's Guide to Western Birds page open to Band-tailed Pigeons. (All had yellow feet and long tails with a broad band.) My cell phone pictures taken through a window are not good, but given the close distance and excellent optics (and over 60 years of observing Band-tails), I have no doubts. My neighbor, former Executive Director of Sonoma County Bird Rescue, says they nest in conifers near her house, and I see them every year - feeding on mixed wild bird seed (on my patio) and sunflower seeds (on a hanging tray feeder). While watching the pigeons, a pair of Hooded Orioles flew into the flowering Maple next to my kitchen window. They nest in Palms and have greatly increased the amount of sugar water consumed in my three Oriole/Hummingbird feeders. Recently, just after I read about Allen's Hummingbird sightings, I began to see them foraging on some Salvia and red tubular flowers planted in containers behind my patio sliding door.

May 2022: Band-tailed pigeons (May 25) just exploded from the large Oak tree in front, followed by a Red-shouldered Hawk. Yesterday (May 24), I saw a wren, but could not identify the bird. Today, I heard a Bewick's Wren singing from the same location, telling me repeatedly, in an early season warmup version of its song who it was so that I would have no doubt! I have a bird bath that had become overgrown by a patch of Mexican Salvias and is avoided by most birds who bathe in the open pools in my backyard waterscape. However, several days ago, I noticed a Song Sparrow working its way through the overgrowth of Salvia stems, down to bathe in the secluded pool of the bird bath. I have never seen a Song Sparrow bathing in the open shallows in the streams, but this one came regularly over a week's time to the secluded bird bath, so I have bathing facilities for both shy/reclusive and bolder birds.



Oak Titmouse

Courtesy of birdforum.net

Later in May: At 8:10 this morning (May 28), I saw a Barn Owl on top of the Barn Owl box in the northwest corner of my property. Its wings were spread out and arched in a defensive posture, and it was looking down and moving its head from side to side as if observing something. Then, it flew off and, as it flew about ten feet, a Wild Turkey rose up to attack it. A few feathers flew and, ten minutes later, I saw the owl flying through some nearby Live Oaks with a couple of crows in pursuit. Crows are nesting in the oaks, so not a safe place for the owl to be. Of my three Barn Owl boxes, this is the one with the most evidence of use. Two to three months ago, I discovered a molted secondary flight feather on the ground underneath the box. I can hear some harassing crows, and I hope the owl gets back to the shelter of its home soon! Turkeys are showing up on my patio more frequently. They eat snakes and the Western Fence Lizards that I introduced to reduce Lyme disease risks – nymphal ticks feeding on lizards lose their ability to transmit Lyme disease. Dr. Bob Lane, PhD, UCB, CA Vector Control, discovered this, doing work at the Hopland Research Facility a number of years ago. Later on May 28th, I went out to check on the Barn Owl about 10:20 p.m. An owl flew out of the tree behind the owl box and flew into the canopy of an adjacent Live Oak. No crows were in sight or sound, so I turned around and went back to the house. I saw American and Lesser Goldfinches at my feeders this morning (May 29) and see them almost every day. Also, on May 29th, I saw a pair of Downy Woodpeckers at my suet feeder. I do not dead-head my Verbena bonariensis (Purpletop) because Bushtits are attracted to the seeds and the arthropods they find in the old flower head.



Our Board and Conservation Committee meetings are held virtually. For Board meeting information, please contact President Susan Kirks, 707-241-5548, susankirks@sbcglobal.net. For Conservation Committee meetings and information, please contact Diane Hichwa, 707-785-1922, dhichwa@earthlink.net. Also, visit our website, www.madroneaudubon.org for updates.

Summer 2022 Outings

Thursday, June 9th

There will be no walk.

Thursday, June 23, 8:30 – 10:30 AM

Leader: Janet Bosshard

Ellis Creek Ponds, Petaluma. From Hwy 101 south, get off at Hwy 116 left on Lakeville Hwy, turn right on S. McDowell Blvd. Right turn on Cypress Drive and follow to end through the gates. Park near the restrooms. Please contact Janet if any questions at (707) 526-5883

Thursday, July 14

There will be no walk.

Thursday, July 28, 8:30 – 10:30 AM

Leader: Janet Bosshard

West County Trail, near Forestville, between Graton and Forestville. Traveling north on Highway 116, turn left on Ross Station Rd. The parking lot will be on your left. We will walk the path to the sewer ponds and back. Please contact Janet if any questions at (707) 526-5883.

Thursday, August 11, 8:30 – 10:30 AM

Leader: Janet Bosshard

Helen Putnam Regional Park, Petaluma, 411 Chileno Valley Rd. Park permit is required. We will walk the asphalt path, to the top of the park and beyond if the group would like. Please contact Janet if any questions at (707) 526-5883.



Eared Grebe

Courtesy of Tom Reynolds



Red-necked Phalarope

Courtesy of Tom Reynolds

Thursday, August 25th, 8:30 – 10:30 AM

Leader: Janet Bosshard

Santa Rosa Rural Cemetery, 1600 Franklin Ave., Santa Rosa. Meet on the corner of Pacific Ave. and McDonald Ave. (First Presbyterian Church) for street parking. We will then walk north to the entrance of the cemetery. There is always a variety of birds and native plants to see. Please be prompt to walk with the group. Please call Janet if any questions at (707) 526-5883.



Feather Fest in Petaluma

by Sheryl Nadeau

The Spring Feather Fest finally came back to life on May 7th after a two-year absence. Twenty-seven children participated, with twenty volunteers helping to make the whole day a wonderful success. Petaluma Wetlands Alliance Docent Kris Brook and her husband arrived early to set up the tent, which provided shade for Sonoma County Bird Rescue Center representatives and bird ambassadors, a Great-horned Owl and Western Screech Owl. The tent also withstood the gusty winds present that day.

Six birding teams divided evenly to bird around Shollenberger Park and Ellis Creek. The team with the highest number of identified birds counted 44 species. Though Ellis Creek had most of the water and scored everything from Double-crested Cormorants to a Barn Owl, the Shollenberger teams did nicely with a Green Heron, an Avocet with chicks, and a Brewer's Blackbird.

New additions to this year's Feather Fest were a free raffle of a painted owl and bird book and the visiting bird ambassadors from Sonoma County Bird Rescue. After birding, the traditional pizza lunch and cookies for dessert were enjoyed together. There was



Feather Fest in Petaluma

Courtesy of Len Nelson

plenty of food to go around for everyone, and some came back for seconds! All in all, this was a wonderful, at last in-person, event. We look forward to 2023!

(Feather Fest and the Christmas Bird Count for Kids are hosted each year by Petaluma Wetlands Alliance.)

School Garden Network and Habitat Gardening

by Susan Kirks

How heartening to know The School Garden Network, based in Sebastopol, is supporting many public schools in Sonoma County in food gardens and habitat gardens (https://www.schoolgardens.org/schoolyard_habitat-859621.html). I recently completed a site visit with artist and teacher Catherine Sky at McNear Elementary School in Petaluma. The students designed the school's habitat garden, appropriately situated in a peripheral area away from human activity, and the students also planted the garden. Teachers are utilizing both art and science to provide a holistic introduction to the experience of habitat gardening. In Fall 2022, Madrone Audubon anticipates supporting the habitat gardening experience with bird and wildlife information and being a partner for this exemplary habitat garden project. I also anticipate a site visit to an East Petaluma

school, Loma Vista Immersion Academy, to observe their habitat garden and engage with teachers to support this location. Many of our members are familiar with Salmon Creek Elementary School in West Sonoma County. This is one of the early and

sustaining locations for gardening supported by the School Garden Network. Do you live in Petaluma and would you like to assist our Chapter 1-2 hours a month beginning in the Fall? Please contact me, 707-241-5548, susankirks@sbcglobal.net. Our members may also recall reports about habitat damage at the Paula Lane open space property in West Petaluma. This is ongoing— a year after the damage occurred. Of course, it is unacceptable that wildlife, especially American Badger, were displaced from their home, their habitat, as a result of heavy construction and human encroachment. The long-planned education program at this property has been to engage Petaluma Junior High School, a public school about a 12-minute walk to the open space land, in food gardening and habitat gardening. Madrone Audubon continues to support the effort to right a severe wrong and move forward with accountability and habitat restoration. Adding the intended Paula Lane Nature Preserve to the School Garden Network would also be an awesome and meaningful plus.



Bewick's Wren

Courtesy of Dennis Luz

**See our Tree & Vegetation
Planting Guide**

[https://madroneaudubon.org/pdf/
Tree and Plant List.pdf](https://madroneaudubon.org/pdf/Tree%20and%20Plant%20List.pdf)



Tree Swallow and Western Bluebird Monitoring

by Len Nelson

Andy Lacasse built and then went about installing ten Tree Swallow houses at Shollenberger Park in Petaluma in the early spring of 2004. He was amazed that Tree Swallows were competing for these structures as soon as he had installed one and had hardly stepped away to install another.

Such is the plight of these cavity nesting birds in an environment that is practically devoid of natural cavities

hatched and how many of those had been fortunate enough to fledge.

In the fall of 2006, we were beckoned by Melissa Pitkin of Point Blue (then PRBO) to pay her a visit to discuss the Tree Swallows. She challenged us to monitor the nests, using the protocol of the Golondrinas de las Americas project.

It involved a lot of note-taking at each nest and input to Excel spreadsheets. Learning this, Andy exclaimed, "That sure isn't me!" But I responded, "That sure is me!" You see, that is the kind of work I had been involved in for many years as a large accounts casualty underwriter for a major insurance company up until 2001 when I retired.

Since then, I have been engaged in Tree Swallow monitoring and now tend to 60 houses located at Shollenberger Park, Ellis Creek and Tolay Lake Regional Park.

Andy built most of those houses and I have built the others and have repaired and replaced houses as the need arose. With the help of other Petaluma Wetlands Alliance (PWA) docents, I endeavor to monitor each house weekly from mid-April until the first week of August when the season concludes.

Over the 15 years of monitoring, I have recorded 5,262 eggs laid, 4,336 chicks hatched, 3,387 chicks fledged, with a mortality rate of 21.9%. (In future articles in *Leaves*, I will be able to expand upon these details.)

Lastly, I want to say that, without the inspiration, insights and education I absorbed from Andy Lacasse, I would not be doing this today. I owe him a great deal; his knowledge and experience that he shared enables us to better understand and support our birds and wildlife.

(Len Nelson is the Research Chair of Petaluma Wetlands Alliance and a long-time member of Madrone Audubon)

(Andy Lacasse, the knowledgeable Naturalist whom so many of us also knew as a dear friend, passed away at home on May 23, 2022.)



Andy Lacasse cleaning nest box (2006)

Courtesy of Len Nelson

such as old trees that have lost some limbs, leaving a cavity in their wake that creatures over the ages have learned to move into.

It is the general inclination of most people to remove dead or dying trees from their environment for aesthetic reasons or to provide wide open spaces to plant crops. Sadly, these actions, of course, remove the natural habitat for cavity dwellers and many other creatures.

In the fall, Andy and I would visit each of his Tree Swallow houses to roughly clean them out in preparation for the next year's swallow nesting season. As we did so, we'd find that some had unhatched eggs and others dead chicks of various ages, and as we went about this work I wondered how many eggs had actually been laid and how many chicks had

Remembering

Andy Lacasse
1942-2022

Rest in Peace



NEWS UPDATE

Donate to Support Opposition to Farallon Islands Poison Drop – Madrone Audubon is the fiscal sponsor of the large coalition of organizations and individuals who have come together. This coalition opposes the proposed use of Brodifacoum, a second generation anticoagulant poison, targeting the Southeast Farallon Island, to attempt to eradicate the mouse population. In 2022, utilizing such a deadly poison, which would also result in high numbers of non-target species bykill and risks of infiltrating the marine sanctuary and aquatic life as well as infiltrating the food chain to the mainland, is contraindicated. A multifaceted alternative, including mouse fertility management, careful capture of 6-8 Burrowing Owls claimed to be a main problem by proponents (over-wintering and hunting mice, then Ashy Storm-Petrel eggs and chicks if the mouse population wanes), and careful long-term planning and action, is consistent with less harmful and more sensible action in this most sensitive island ecosystem. If you would like to support the coalition’s efforts, including building a fund for administrative and possible legal expenses, write your check to Madrone Audubon, include “Farallones” on the memo line, and mail to our post office address: PO Box 1911, Santa Rosa, CA 95402. Or, donate via PayPal at our website (www.madroneaudubon.org) and be sure to include a note, “Farallones.”).



Madrone Audubon
Sonoma County

Find us on Facebook for conservation alerts, birdwalk reminders, special announcements and more.



Humpback Whale

Courtesy of Tom Reynolds

The coalition continues to be very active and very concerned about a December 2021 CA Coastal Commission meeting where inaccurate information was submitted by proponents of the proposal, seeking an approval of consistency with the CA Coastal Act, and multiple questions and concerns remain unanswered by both the proponents and the CA Coastal Commission staff now almost six months following the December 2021 hearing.

Bay Area Audubon Council (BAAC) Upcoming Meeting – The quarterly BAAC meeting will be held virtually via Zoom on Friday, June 10. BAAC is comprised of the 8 Bay Area Audubon Chapters, representing our 9 Bay Area counties. Sequoia Audubon and Mt. Diablo Audubon will co-host the June meeting. Topics to be considered include a request to the State organization, Audubon California, to coordinate with and seek input and agreement from Chapters when Audubon CA wants to initiate a project or engage in an activity in one of our counties and recent concerns expressed about PG&E’s tree cutting and removal in the Bay Area in the context of power line clearance. This concern was brought to Madrone’s attention by Nancy Hair, former Madrone Audubon Board member. The BAAC meets quarterly and over the years our Chapters have united to express positions and interests on a variety of environmental and bird and wildlife appreciation issues.

EARTHSeed Farm in Sebastopol Available for Appointments and Enjoyment - June through November 2022 on selective Saturdays, appointments are available to go to the farm, pick your own fresh fruit and enjoy the wonderful farm environment. More info: www.earthseedfarm.org/visitus.

\$3,750,000 in Fines Recommended for Vineyard Developer’s Destruction - A Sonoma County vineyard executive, Hugh Reimers, and Krasilas Pacific Farms have been fined up to \$3,750,000 for extensive tree removal and destruction of a wetland on rural land east of Cloverdale.

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NEWS UPDATE

Continued from page 9

The fines are recommended by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Reimers and Krasilas Pacific Farms face the multi-million-dollar state fine for allegedly cutting 40 acres of oak woodlands on the 2,278-acre property in 2018 for vineyard development, adding to already completed unpermitted work. The destruction allegedly damaged the Russian River watershed, leading to fine sediment discharge into tributaries to Little Sulphur Creek, Big Sulphur Creek and Crocker Creek. According to the Water Board, the destructive actions and degradation of state waters still threaten fish and other aquatic species in the area. We acknowledge the extensive and sustained advocacy and work of Friends of the Atascadero Watershed (FAW), the group pressing for accountability and also exceptionally responsible in informing the public. In early August, the Water Board will hold a public hearing to decide on approval of the recommended fines. (Sources: Bay Area media, Friends of the Atascadero Watershed)

Beavers Get Some Respect – Our members may remember the great monthly meeting presentation in 2019 (3 years ago) on Beavers and Birds by Kate Lundquist of Occidental Arts and Ecology Center’s WATER Institute (OAEC). Brock Dolman and Kate Lundquist have been real champions for beaver advocacy and conservation. They are joined by longstanding national efforts of Martinez’ beaver nonprofit, Worth a Dam. In Sonoma County, collaboration to understand and support habitat and beavers, with amazing, now better understood, beaver contributions to streams and watersheds, has been exemplary among OAEC, the Sonoma County Water Agency, Sonoma Ecology Center (Sonoma Creek), and many other conservationists, including our Chapter President, Susan Kirks. Tom Rusert and Darren Peterie of Sonoma Nature were also early beaver advocates in Sonoma Valley. Years of education and proactive conservation efforts have resulted in the CA Governor’s revised 2022-2023 budget including a new Beaver Restoration program, to be established within the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife. As we go to press, a hearing will be underway for the final budget approval. If approved, the Department will recruit and hopefully add five permanent staff members to begin and manage this program statewide. This new program will add to the long-needed enhancement of the Department of Fish and Wildlife’s mandate for conservation of California’s wildlife. Excerpts from the Governor’s budget proposal: *“To be successful in our efforts to protect biodiversity, the Department must take a proactive leap towards bringing beavers back onto the landscape through a concerted effort to combine prioritized restoration projects, partnerships with local, federal, and state agencies and tribes, and updated policies and practices that support beaver management and conservation throughout the State...Beavers are known for their ability to build dams and change waterways – but the ecosystem benefits provided to other*



Flow control device for beaver dam

Courtesy of Brock Dolman

native species in the process may be less recognized. It might be odd, but beavers are an untapped, creative climate solving hero that helps prevent the loss of biodiversity facing California. In the intermountain West, wetlands, though they are present on just 2 percent of total land area, support 80 percent of biodiversity... Beavers are remarkable at creating more resilient ecosystems – and therefore thinking through approaches to maximize their unique skills throughout California will benefit our landscapes and help drive more cost-efficient restoration...” We particularly acknowledge Brock Dolman and Kate Lundquist of OAEC, Richard Dale, Caitlin Cornwall and the staff of Sonoma Ecology Center, and Heidi Perryman and everyone with Worth a Dam in Martinez.

(Sources: Occidental Arts & Ecology Center/Water Institute, 2022-23 CA State Budget)

Are you a
National Audubon member?



Please consider joining our local
chapter, Madrone Audubon.

(see membership form, back page)

**Observations**Winter-Spring 2022 • Dan Nelson • 479-2918 • birdsurf64@sbcglobal.net

“Cackling” Goose (600+)	4/2	Flying W. over Petaluma	DN
Forster’s Tern (2)	5/6	A Place to Play Park, Santa Rosa	LV
Swainson’s Hawk (1)	5/1	Petaluma Outlet Mall	DN
Swainson’s Hawk (3)	5/7	Hwy 37, Sears Point area	DN et al
C. Black x Red-shouldered Hawk	5/6	Santa Rosa Creek trail	BW
Western Screech Owl	5/5	Inhabiting nest box at Glen Ellen residence	MB
Spotted Owl	3/25	Limantour Rd.	DN
Sandhill Crane	4/29	“C” Ranch, Pt. Reyes	DW, et al
Least Bittern	4/12	Ellis Creek	PC
Red-necked Phalarope (50+)	5/6	Bodega Farm Pond, Hwy 12	L Hug
Wilson’s Phalarope (2)	5/7	Shollenberger Park	JV, MB et al
Red Phalarope (1)	4/1	Brazil Beach, Marin Co.	PC
Pacific Golden-Plover (8)	2/28	Drake’s Estero	D & DH
Lesser Yellowlegs (1)	5/1	Spring Hill Rd., W. Petaluma	MS, LS
Common Poorwill	4/9	Sugarloaf Ridge S.P.	JS
Calliope Hummingbird (fem)	4/10	Pine Flat Rd.	LS
Calliope Hummingbird (fem)	4/18-19	Forest Knolls, Marin Co.	DDe S
Calliope Hummingbird (male)	4/18	Napa residence	D & DH
Rufous Hummingbird	3/11	5th St. West, Sonoma	CB
Rufous Hummingbird	3/13	A Place to Play Park, 3rd St. Santa Rosa	DK
White-throated Swift (1)	5/3	Queens Lane residence (new yard-bird)	AW
Bank Swallow (1)	4/10	Spring Hill Rd. W. Petaluma	LC
Western Wood-Pewee	4/25	Platform Bridge Rd.; E. of Tocoloma	DW
Olive-sided Flycatcher	4/28	Furlong Rd.	BD
Ash-throated Flycatcher	4/15	Paula Lane, Petaluma	DN
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	4/12	Paula Lane, Petaluma	DN
Hammond’s Flycatcher (1)	5/1	Pine Flat Rd.	LS, GP, et al
Say’s Phoebe (breeding)	4/21	S.W. Santa Rosa (1st Breeding for Sonoma Co.)	DB, et al
Say’s Phoebe	4/28	Santa Rosa Creek trail	DF
Rock Wren	2/26	Hudeman Slough	DK
Swainson’s Thrush	4/16	Pocket Canyon	JS
Swainson’s Thrush	4/20	Muddy Hollow	LH
Cassin’s Vireo	4/7	Inverness Park	DW
Warbling Vireo	4/10	Limantour Rd.	DN
Yellow Warbler	4/13	Paula Lane residence (singing, non-vis)	DN
Wilson’s Warbler	3/26	Limantour Rd.	DN
Nashville Warbler	4/16	Pine Flat Rd.	DK
MacGillivray’s Warbler	4/28	0.5 mi. up M. Green Gulch trail, Muir Beach	LN
Yellow-breasted Chat	5/4	Kenwood residence (singing, non-vis)	RR
Western Tanager	4/28	Coleman Valley Rd.	BD
Summer Tanager (fem.)	3/13	2nd yr. returnee; A Place to Play Park, W. 3rd St.	DK
Hooded Oriole	3/28	5th St. W., Sonoma	CB
Hooded Oriole	4/7	Paula Lane residence, Petaluma	DN
Harris’ Sparrow	4/13	Yuba Drive, Santa Rosa (private residence)	SC
Clay-colored Sparrow	2/26	E. of Petaluma Blvd. N.	DF
Lawrence’s Goldfinch	3/27	Pine Flat Rd.	LS
Lazuli Bunting	4/16	Chileno Valley Rd. Petaluma	DN
Lazuli Bunting	4/21	Big Rock area, Lucas Valley Rd., Marin Co.	L Helfman
Black-headed Grosbeak	4/4	Inverness Park, Marin Co.	DW

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Madrone Audubon Society

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Summer 2022

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MADRONE LEAVES



Madrone Audubon Society meets on the third Monday of each month, except in June, July, August, and December. Meetings start at 7:00 PM at First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa. All membership meetings and walks are open to the public. Information: e-mail - info@madroneaudubon.org.

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