



# Madrone LEAVES

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

VOLUME 46

December 2012/January 2013

Number 3

## Dietary Surprises of Western Sandpipers

by Irby J. Lovette,  
*Living Bird* magazine,  
Professor of Biology at Cornell University

Have you ever watched a flock of sandpipers pecking furiously at a mudflat and wondered what they could possibly be eating? As you might predict, most foraging shorebirds are gleaning small invertebrates such as marine worms and small crustaceans from the mud. But not always: new research on Western Sandpipers has discovered that these birds rely heavily on a previously unsuspected food source.

This surprising sandpiper food is not a clam, a worm, or another small animal but rather the so-called biofilm that grows as a mat on the surface of the mud. Biofilms are a rich goo of microscopic bacteria, detritus, and sediment, along with compounds secreted by the bacteria that give the substance a mucus-like consistency. The mudflat biofilms eaten by sandpipers are challenging to feed upon because they are very thin—usually much thinner than the paper on which this magazine is printed.

A group of researchers from Japan, France, and Canada had looked closely at the bills of Western Sandpipers and Dunlins and found specialized structures

that might allow the birds to graze on biofilms. To test their suspicions, they studied Western Sandpipers feeding on mudflats during spring migration. Using high-speed video, the research team documented how these birds consume mudflat biofilms.

When eating biofilm, the birds move more slowly than they do when eating invertebrates, because there is no need to sneak up on the immobile biofilms. The birds simply place their open bill tips on the surface of the mud and collect a tiny ball of biofilm, then raise their still slightly open bill out of the mud and swallow the droplet, leaving behind tiny doubled impressions of their bill tips on the surface of the mudflat.



Western Sandpiper  
Photo courtesy of Tomohiro Kuwae

Even with the video evidence for this newly documented type of feeding, it was still possible that the birds might really just be consuming minute invertebrates contained within these tiny mudballs. To prove that the sandpipers were

Continued on page 2

### JANUARY GENERAL MEETING

Monday January 21, 7:30 PM  
First United Methodist Church  
1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa

#### “How to Garden for Birds”

Creating habitats for birds by creating habitats for insects is an area well researched by Frederique Lavoipierre. Today she is an instructor at Sonoma State University (SSU), where she coordinates the Entomology Outreach Program for the Field Stations & Nature Preserves and the Garden Classroom Program for the Environmental Studies & Planning Department. Her emphasis on watershed stewardship in both programs is inspired by Copeland Creek, which runs through the campus. She is the founding director of the SSU Sustainable Landscape Program (School of Extended Education) where she continues as an instructor.

Frederique holds a M.Sc. in Biology from SSU and is the author of “Garden Allies”, a series for *Pacific Horticulture* magazine. Her talk will encompass bird habitat in garden environments, food for insectivores, and the birds of the SSU campus.

NO GENERAL MEETING IN DECEMBER, BUT COME JOIN US ON MADRONE'S CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, SUNDAY DECEMBER 30. Details on page 7.  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

To receive *Leaves* via email in PDF format just email your request to:

**madroneaudubon@um.att.com**

You will get your copy faster and help save paper.



## WESTERN SANDPIPERS

Continued from page 1

eating bacterial biofilm, the researchers used a series of chemical assays to calculate how much of the sandpipers' overall food energy was derived from biofilms. Like plants, the bacteria in biofilms are primary producers, and this gives them a characteristic chemical signature along with a high abundance of proteins such as chlorophyll that aren't found in most invertebrates.

These comparisons showed that migrating Western Sandpipers garner up to half of their daily energy from eating biofilms. Western Sandpipers are one of the world's most numerous shorebirds, and mudflats in calm waters are nearly ideal growing conditions for biofilms. The researchers speculate that the spectacular abundance of Western Sandpipers may stem from their unusual ability to feed on this plentiful resource.



## Madrone's 2013 BIRD-A-THON... coming soon

*By Marcia Johnson, Bird-A-Thon Coordinator*

February is Bird-A-Thon month, and teams have a fun day just counting birds to support our Chapter. It is hopeful that the six teams who participated in 2012 will continue this year, as this is our major fundraiser. Last year we collected over \$9,600 - all of which was used for educational and conservation programs, such as the popular Junior Audubon. The funds also provide *Audubon Adventures*, a FREE resource kit for teachers to use in their 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade classes. Lincoln School's half-day Bird Festival for all students benefits from money earned. Sponsors (you) are the backbone of a success-

ful Bird-A-Thon. Teams will contact you and ask for your support. Please be generous by sponsoring a team with a pledge of 10 cents to whatever amount per bird species, or even a set amount. The Team will contact you after their day of birding to accept your donation with thanks. If you would like to participate on a team in 2013, or form your own with friends, please see the box for information.

### How to be part of Bird-A-Thon 2013

#### For Birding Teams:

Contact BAT Coordinator, Marcia Johnson at [owlsnesttwo@att.net](mailto:owlsnesttwo@att.net) or 829-3808, and she will send you a sign-up sheet. Start signing up your sponsors.

After your "big day", tell your sponsors how many species you saw and how much they owe.

Send your checks to Marcia at 1460 Big Cedar Lane, Sebastopol, CA 95472, or bring your check to the next General Meeting.

#### For Sponsors:

Say "Yes" to anyone who asks you to pledge. If no one asks, you can sign up to support a Team at the General Meeting.

discovery walks with the second graders, bilingual nature/bird walks for higher grades and adults, bird research, and stewardship & restoration at Shollenberger Park and Alman Marsh. Obviously, there is a niche for everyone.

You would be joining a great group of docents who enjoy each other's company and are always ready to pitch in and help when the call comes. Teachers sign-up quickly for a space in our program.

Because of the economy, the Education Committee asks that applicants pay only \$20 toward the cost of materials. For more information, call Bob at 763-2934, Gerald at 763-3577, or visit [www.petalumawetlands.org](http://www.petalumawetlands.org).



## Junior Audubon

*by Scott Campbell*

We've had two successful trips, so far, in the 2012-2013 year. On Saturday 15 September there were 20+ folks who showed up to view the Vaux's Swifts; there were over 150 people watching the Swifts. The count for the evening was 6,900 Swifts with one Merlin making the evening interesting with his fly-by, but the Swifts were too fast and even turned the tables on the intruder by going after him. All in all, a wonderful evening and a wonderful sight. The Saturday October 5th trip was smaller with five students and five adults showing up at Hawkwatch Hill at the Marin Headlands. The treat for the day was three Broad-winged even though it was late in the migration for them. Lots of Red-tailed and accipiters. A banding and release of a juvenile female Cooper's Hawk was great, along with a general presentation on raptors. The start of the day was thick fog, but the end was bright sunshine.

## Don't Forget to Enrich Your Life — Become a Petaluma Wetlands Docent

*by Mary Edith Moore*

Petaluma Wetlands Alliance (PWA) new-docent training begins Thursday January 10 and continues for eight consecutive Thursdays thru February, 8:30 AM – Noon. Training sessions are held either at the Lucchesi Community Center or Shollenberger Park.

PWA has a very active wetlands program: teaching third grade hands-on activities in the classroom and in the field, nature



## Sudden Oak Death and the Central Mayacamas Region

By Sherry Adams,  
Audubon Canyon Ranch Biologist

Like many of you interested in oak trees and their ecosystems, we at Audubon Canyon Ranch have followed the issue of sudden oak death (SOD) closely. Our preserves range from the coastal Martin Griffin Preserve, which is heavily impacted with SOD, to inland properties in the central Mayacamas where the pathogen that causes SOD has only been recently documented.

At the Mayacamas Mountains Sanctuary (MMS), where Madrone Audubon members have been involved in important ways for so many years, SOD has not been documented. However, next door at the Modini Ingalls Ecological Preserve, the pathogen that causes SOD has turned up in over a dozen of the bay laurel trees we had tested this year.

There is still so much we do not know about SOD and how it will impact the central Mayacamas region of which MMS is a part. Compared to coastal areas which have tanoak present and frequent fog which allows the pathogen to remain active year-round, which may have continuous bands of forest, and which may entirely lack non-susceptible oaks, the central Mayacamas may not be as seriously affected by this forest pathogen. The central Mayacamas may not be as seriously affected by this forest pathogen. For example, Oregon white oak, which has a significant presence in the MMS region, is not known to be affected by SOD. Also given what we know about how the pathogen spreads, our extensive grasslands have the potential to be natural barriers to the spread of SOD.

Working with experts in the field, we plan to expand our testing efforts as to better understand how widespread SOD is in the area and how likely it is to affect the oak

ecosystems which are a beloved and integral part of the Mayacamas landscape.

How you can help:

1. Learn about and practice good wildland hygiene. This includes brushing off any potential weed seeds from your footwear and clothes every time you prepare to leave a place, whether you are on your way to MMS or any other natural area. In the case of SOD, this means being careful to not walk around mud, particularly from an area that is known to be infected with SOD to an area that is not known to be infected. While experts think that natural spread is the main driving force behind the expansion of SOD, there are also cases where it is fairly clear that humans are the vectors spreading SOD. Don't be the one to spread it to an uninfected area! The pathogen that causes SOD requires moisture and can be transported in mud in your boots or tires. It is also found in live plant material. Take the time to carefully clean yourself off when leaving a natural area. Recommendations include... "Carry cleaning materials in your car to use at the end of your visit. An old screwdriver, stiff brush, and towel are useful items for removing mud and other debris. An additional level of sanitation can be achieved by washing with soap and water or spraying with a disinfectant, such as Lysol or a 10% bleach solution." For more tips, check out the Best Management Practices at [www.suddenoakdeath.org](http://www.suddenoakdeath.org).
2. Consider getting involved with the annual SOD blitz. This is a yearly effort, spearheaded locally through the Sonoma County office of UC Cooperative Extension, in which trained volunteers fan out to collect leaf samples for testing. This allows experts to learn more about the spread of SOD. Check out [www.SODblitz.org](http://www.SODblitz.org) for more information.

## D-Con®, Rats, and Raptors

by Gordon Beebe

Do you use rat poison to control rats and mice? After noticing an increase in raptor deaths, including the mate of famous Red-tailed Hawk Pale Male in New York City, scientists confirmed that many of the raptors had died from eating poisoned rats. The poison used in D-Con® and other products is called a second-generation coagulant product. It does not immediately kill the rat or mouse; instead, they become very thirsty and seek water before they die. Usually, this means they leave the house and venture outside, where, in their disoriented state, they become fair game for hawks, owls, and other predators. Since Barn Owls and other raptors can consume hundreds of mice or rats during the nesting season, they can build up lethal concentrations of the rodenticide in their tissues. They experience the same symptoms of thirst and disorientation, and eventually die. With more raptors dying, there are fewer constraints on the rodent population. Over time, use of rodenticides could potentially lead to an increase in the rodent population, not a decrease!

The EPA has banned direct sales of these products, but some of the manufacturers, including Reckitt Benckiser (maker of D-Con®), have filed suit. To learn more about this issue and for details on the connection between Benckiser and Peet's Coffee, go to the website Raptors Are the Solution ([www.raptorsarethesolution.org](http://www.raptorsarethesolution.org)).

Perhaps it's time to dust off that old spring-style mouse trap, or better yet, block rodent access to food on your property. Simply bringing pet food dishes inside each night can make a big difference. If you put out bird seed, see if a lot is remaining on the ground under the feeder at the end of the day. Try adjusting the amount of seed you put out in the morning until the birds "clean their plate" and finish it by dark.



## Sonoma County Will Review Wind Energy Policy

by Susan Kirks

On December 6, the Sonoma County Planning Commission will review the County's proposed Renewable Energy Policy. In 2010, Madrone formed a Renewable Energy Committee. We reviewed the County's existing Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS) ordinance. With the assistance of Garry George of State Audubon, we also researched other jurisdictions' activities related to implementing and managing wind energy and surveyed the wind industry for new, safer technologies as compared to the standard, horizontal axis system with turning blades. Marin County's updated regulations provided helpful guidelines for us.

In 2010, we submitted recommendations to the County to amend the existing ordinance. This past summer, County Planning Staff concluded formulation of the proposed Renewable Energy Policy. Madrone received a copy of the policy, including wind energy recommendations.

We are advocating for a Bird and Bat Study for any new wind energy system, complete avoidance of environmentally sensitive areas, post-installation biological monitoring, and are recommending leadership in Sonoma County – incentives for use of new, effective technologies for small, wind energy systems, which are safer for flying and ground-based wildlife. We strongly recommend prohibition of large, wind energy conversion systems in Sonoma County.

• • • • •

### Interested and willing to help? Our Chapter needs you!

As we plunge into our season of activities, we can use some help at Madrone Audubon. Please consider the following activities and contact us for more information

or to offer your help.

- On your own time schedule, help as a membership assistant to mail letters to new members, letting them know about our Chapter.
- Keep our membership records on the database, so we can mail newsletters promptly and maintain our base of members, National and Local.
- Be willing to work in the field on restoration and cleanup projects.
- Schedule and host a hike series for spring at the Mayacamas Mountains Sanctuary, northeast of Healdsburg.
- Publicize upcoming walks and talks in area newspapers.
- Represent us in the environmental/conservation community.
- Inform us of conservation and environmental issues.

--OR let us know what you would be willing to do! For more information or to volunteer, please contact Susan Kirks at [susankirks@sbcglobal.net](mailto:susankirks@sbcglobal.net), Gordon Beebe at [gdbeebe@earthlink.net](mailto:gdbeebe@earthlink.net), or Diane Hichwa at [dhichwa@earthlink.net](mailto:dhichwa@earthlink.net).

• • • • •

### STRAW for the Baylands?

by *Leia Giambastiani and Diane Hichwa*

PRBO Conservation Science's Students and Teachers Restoring A Watershed Program (STRAW) have been awarded a Toyota/Audubon Together Green grant in partnership with Madrone Audubon. This grant will enable STRAW to expand the re-vegetation of the salt marsh-to-upland edge or ecotone along northern San Pablo Bay near the mouth of the Petaluma River.

The project is located at Sonoma Baylands, which is a 320-acre tidal marsh that was returned to tidal action in the 1990s by the California State Coastal Conservancy and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The property is owned by the Conservancy, which is in the process of transferring ownership to U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

This restoration will provide cover for the listed threatened, endangered, and species of concern that live in this area, including the California Clapper Rail. The project location is within San Francisco Bay which is a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network site of Hemispheric Importance (supporting over 1,000,000 shorebirds each year), a site of International Importance recognized by the Ramsar Convention and a National Audubon Society Globally Important Bird Area (IBA).

Although salt marsh vegetation has been re-colonizing the site, the habitat where salt marsh transitions to upland grassland is very limited and much of it is confined to the sides of levees. There is a need to restore this transition zone habitat which provides critical refugia for marsh-dependent wildlife during high tides and extreme storms, as well as nesting, breeding, and feeding habitat for wetland wildlife. Over 1 million shorebirds and 250,000 ducks use the San Francisco Bay wetland each year. Transition zone habitat (between the upland and the wetland) affects the entire marsh by controlling erosion and runoff, improving quality of the habitat, and providing refuge during high tides and extreme winter storms. Current transition zone habitat does not provide suitable cover for wildlife when these high tide and storm events flush marsh species, such as Clapper Rails, to higher ground. Wetland birds are then predated upon by opportunistic upland predators. In addition, climate change predicts an increase in extreme storm events and greater sea level rise – both will increase the importance of the transition zone as high tide refugia for wildlife.

While restoring habitat, we will be educating K-12 students in restoration science and salt marsh wetland ecology. Students will participate in activities to connect the science with a real experience and install plants above the salt marsh. STRAW works with schools from a variety of demographics to bring learning outdoors with hands-on productive activities. Many of the students at these schools qualify for



# December 2012 calendar

All walks and meetings are open to the public. Bird walks are recreational and educational in purpose, and all levels of expertise are welcome. Bring field equipment and wear comfortable shoes and layered clothing for variable weather conditions. Please carpool whenever possible. Forecasted heavy rain cancels. There is no charge for activities unless otherwise specified, but some parks have day-use fees.

**CONSERVATION COMMITTEE** exchanges information by phone and email as soon as possible when an issue surfaces. Please contact Diane Hichwa at 785-1922 or dhichwa@earthlink.net.

*Wednesday December 5, 7:00 PM*

**BOARD MEETING.** Sonoma County Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa. For agenda information, contact Susan Kirks at susankirks@sbcglobal.net.

*Wednesday & Thursday, December 5 & 6*

**SACRAMENTO VALLEY WILDLIFE REFUGES.** Auto birding tours (with stops at designated observation points) at Sacramento Valley National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Meet at the Sacramento NWR headquarters at 9:30 AM on Wednesday. Bring lunch. Exit from Interstate 5 at Princeton (approximately 17 miles north of Williams), turn north onto the county service road, and proceed to the NWR headquarters on the right. Driving time from Santa Rosa is about 2.5 hours. Many of us will stay in Yuba City at Bonanza Inn Magnuson, 530-674-8824 (formerly Best Western Bonanza Inn) on Wednesday night and bird Gray Lodge State Wildlife Management Area on Thursday. Information: Tom McCuller, sisypus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

*Saturday December 8, 9:30 AM - dusk*

**CENTRAL VALLEY - GRAY LODGE and SACRAMENTO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE.** This is our annual winter trip to the Central Valley to enjoy the enormous concentrations of waterfowl, raptors, cranes, geese, and other interesting birds seldom seen in Sonoma County. Directions to Gray Lodge: from the junction of Interstate 5 and Highway 99, take Highway 99 north to Live Oak. Turn west onto Pennington (North Butte) Road. Turn right onto Almond Orchard Avenue and continue to entrance. The distance from Live Oak is about eight miles. After birding Gray Lodge, we will go to the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge for the afternoon, hoping to enjoy good views of the fly out at dusk. Some of our group will stay overnight in Yuba City Friday and/or Saturday to visit parts of the nearby Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. For more information, call one of the leaders: Bill Doyle, 483-8773 or Ken Wilson, 665-5127.

*Saturday December 8, 9:00 AM*

**SHOLLENBERGER PARK.** Petaluma Wetlands Alliance/Madrone leads a nature walk. Meet at the first kiosk. Rain cancels. Contact Gerald Moore at 763-3577.

*Wednesday December 12, 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM*

**BODEGA BAY.** Bird Walk. From the center of the town of Bodega Bay, drive north on Highway 1, turn left at East Shore Road (the Bodega Head turnoff), turn right at the stop sign, and continue 0.3 miles to the unpaved parking lot on the right. Bring lunch. Information: Tom McCuller, sisypus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

*Saturday December 15, 10:00 AM*

**SHOLLENBERGER PARK.** Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads two children/family nature walks. One-to-two hours, dependent on age of children. Meet at the first kiosk. Rain cancels. For the children/family walk in English, contact Gerald Moore at 763-3577; for the walk in Spanish, contact Connie Peabody at 338-2237.

*Thursday December 20, 8:30 AM - Noon*

**SPRING LAKE REGIONAL PARK.** Bird Walk. Parking fee (\$7) for non-permit holders. From Summerfield Road in Santa Rosa, go east on Hoen Avenue, turn left onto Newanga Avenue, turn right inside the park entrance gate, and meet in the parking lot near the restrooms at the top of the hill. Information: Tom McCuller, sisypus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

*Saturday December 22, 9:00 AM*

**ELLIS CREEK WATER RECYCLING FACILITY, PETALUMA.** Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads a walk at the Ellis Creek ponds. Go to the end of Cypress Drive and through the gates. Parking lot is on the left. Rain cancels. Contact Bob Dyer at 763-2934.

*Sunday December 30, dawn - dusk*

**MADRONE AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT.** See page 7.

**Are you a National Audubon member?**  
You're halfway there! Become a full Sonoma County environmentalist!  
Join our local chapter, Madrone Audubon!  
(see membership form, back page)

**Welcome New Friends of Madrone Audubon Society**

---

**Mendocino**  
Ronnie James, Woodlands Wildlife

**Novato**  
Anne Brussok, Birkenstock USA

**Santa Rosa**  
Gordon Beebe, Walter S. Dayton, Andrea English, Barbara and Joe Ferrari, Ilse Gudehaus, Diane Miller, Verne and Marian Oberbeck, Linda Romero, Caroline Sloan, Sharon Wagner, Kathy Walker

**Sausalito**  
Anne Roughton

**Sonoma**  
Jill Koenigsdorf, Patricia List

**Windsor**  
Pamala G. Milia





# January 2013 calendar

**CONSERVATION COMMITTEE** exchanges information by phone and email as soon as possible when an issue surfaces. Please contact Diane Hichwa at 785-1922 or dhichwa@earthlink.net.

## *Wednesday January 2, 7:00 PM*

**BOARD MEETING.** Sonoma County Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa. For agenda information, contact Susan Kirks at susankirks@sbcglobal.net.

## *Thursday January 3, 8:30 AM - Noon*

**ELLIS CREEK WATER RECYCLING FACILITY.** Bird Walk. We will bird the wetlands and adjacent areas of this facility in Petaluma. From Santa Rosa on Highway 101, take the Highway 116 exit (Lakeville Highway), go left under Highway 101, turn right (south) at the South McDowell traffic light, turn right onto Cypress Drive, which ends at the facility gate. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

## *Saturday January 5, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM*

**PETALUMA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT FOR KIDS.** See article on page 7.

## *Wednesday January 9, 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM*

**ISENBERG CRANE PRESERVE AND COSUMNES RIVER PRESERVE NEAR LODI.** Bird Walk. Meet at McDonalds in the Sunset Shopping Center in Suisun City at the intersection of Highway 12 and Sunset Avenue/Grizzly Island Road. Driving time to meeting point from Santa Rosa is approximately 1.25 hours. Bring lunch. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

## *Saturday January 12, 9:00 AM*

**SHOLLENBERGER PARK.** Petaluma Wetlands Alliance/Madrone leads a nature walk. Meet at the first kiosk. Rain cancels. Contact Gerald Moore at 763-3577.

## *Thursday January 17, 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM*

**RUSH CREEK AND LAS GALLINAS PONDS, MARIN COUNTY.** Bird Walk. Meet at Rush Creek Preserve at Novato. From Highway 101, drive east on Atherton Avenue, turn left onto Bugelia Lane which becomes Bahia Drive. Continue to the Rush Creek trailhead at end of Bahia Drive. Bring lunch. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

## *Saturday January 19, 10:00 AM*

**SHOLLENBERGER PARK.** Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads two children/family nature walks. One-to-two hours, dependent on age of children. Meet at the first kiosk. Rain cancels. For the children/family walk in English, contact Gerald Moore at 763-3577; for the walk in Spanish, contact Connie Peabody at 338-2237.

## *Saturday January 19, 8:30 AM - Noon*

**LAKE SONOMA.** Beginners Bird Walk. Meet at the Lake Sonoma Visitor Center. From Highway 101, take Canyon Road to Dry Creek Road, and then Rockpile Road to the Center. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115.

## *Monday January 21, 7:30 PM*

**GENERAL MEETING.** "How to Garden for Birds", presented by Frederique Lavoipierre of the Sonoma State University. First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa. Please see the front page announcement. The public is always invited to attend these programs.

## *Wednesday January 23, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM*

**CLEAR LAKE STATE PARK, LAKE COUNTY.** Bird Walk. Note 9:00 AM start time. Meet at the park entrance, 3.5 miles northeast of Kelseyville on Soda Bay Road, north of Calistoga. There is an \$8 park entrance fee. Bring lunch. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

## *Saturday January 26, 9:00 AM*

**ELLIS CREEK WATER RECYCLING FACILITY, PETALUMA.** Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads a walk at the Ellis Creek ponds. Go to the end of Cypress Drive and through the gates. Parking lot is on the left. Rain cancels. Contact Bob Dyer at 763-2934.

## *Thursday January 31, 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM*

**SEBASTOPOL AREA.** Bird Walk. We will search for wintering birds in the northeast Laguna, Ragle Park, or other interesting local spots. Meet at the Sebastopol Community Center, 390 Morris Street. Bring lunch. Information, contact Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

## *Saturday February 2, 8:30 AM - Noon*

**HUDEMAN SLOUGH.** Beginners Bird Walk. Meet at the Sonoma County Water Agency property on the northern edge of the Napa-Sonoma Marshes. From the town of Sonoma, drive south on Highway 12/121. Turn south onto Ramal Road and drive approximately 2.4 miles until you reach the entrance to Hudeman Slough. There is a large hay barn on the right and a parking lot in front of the barn. To carpool, please arrive by 7:30 AM at our Santa Rosa meeting place, the Safeway parking lot at the northeast corner of Highway 12 and Calistoga Road. We will park at the edge of the parking lot, bordering on Calistoga Road. Rain cancels. Leaders: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115 and Bill Doyle, 483-8773.

## *Wednesday February 6, 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM*

**HUICHICA CREEK UNIT OF NAPA-SONOMA MARSHES/HUDEMAN SLOUGH.** Bird Walk. Meet at the Huichica Creek Unit parking lot. From Sonoma, take Highway 12 (Carneros Highway) toward Napa, turn right (south) onto Duhig Road, turn left onto Las Amigas Road, and then turn right onto Buchli Station Road which leads to the wildlife area. We will bird the Hudeman area in the afternoon. Bring lunch. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

## Memorial and Honor Gifts

**In memory of Louis Coker**  
Erna Coker

**In memory of Phyllis Schmidt**  
Janet Bosshard and Judy Temko

**In honor of Lisa Peters' birthday**  
Carolyn Metz



### STRAW

Continued from page 4

a free lunch program. Through this project Madrone will be leading field trips including a Junior Audubon outing and a bird walk at Sonoma Baylands. Keep your eyes posted for events in the next newsletter. To learn more about the STRAW project visit [www.prbo.org/straw](http://www.prbo.org/straw). We are excited to join this project and we welcome your help. For more information call Leia, 781-2555 ext. 363.



## Calling All Birders for Christmas Bird Counts (CBC)

**Madrone Audubon's 46th CBC**  
*Sunday December 30, dawn - dusk*

There is still time to sign up for our Western Sonoma County Christmas Bird Count—Audubon's 113th. The quickest and easiest way to sign up is by using our website at [audubon.sonoma.net](http://audubon.sonoma.net). (See map of count area.)

There will be a delicious catered dinner following the count at the Sebastopol Community Center. Out to Lunch catering is providing an Italian vegetarian meal that promises to be very satisfying after a day spent outdoors. A \$5 donation per person to help offset the cost of the catered dinner is requested. Madrone is asking counters and others who come to the dinner to please bring a dessert. Also please bring your own glasses, cups, plates, utensils, and beverages (wine and beer are OK). We are in dire need of volunteers to help with setup and cleanup of the dinner. Please contact Veronica Bowers at [vlbowers@gmail.com](mailto:vlbowers@gmail.com) or 484-6502 for more information or to volunteer.

**Point Reyes 43rd CBC**  
*Saturday December 15*

Sponsored by the Marin Audubon Society. This CBC is a big count with 31 territories and usually over 200 participants, so we request your help with attention to

dates and timely responses. Sign up online at [www.forestdata.com/cbc](http://www.forestdata.com/cbc). You can contact the compilers, John Longstreth and Tom Gaman, at [ptreyescbc@gmail.com](mailto:ptreyescbc@gmail.com). Please put "CBC RESPONSE" on the subject line.

**Santa Rosa CBC**  
*Sunday December 16*

To participate, contact Bill Doyle at 483-8773.

**Sonoma Valley CBC**  
*Friday December 28, dawn – dusk*

All area birders are welcome for the eighth annual count in beautiful Sonoma Valley. The wild and bird rich Petaluma and Sonoma watersheds are always filled with holiday surprises. Over 165 species are typically recorded during this highly ranked "inland" CBC by 35 plus teams on assigned routes led by helpful experienced birders. Last year birders from many greater Bay Area birding organizations celebrated citizen science, great fun, music, and an

unforgettable old-fashioned, hearty, pot-luck tabulation dinner.

Visit [www.sonomabirding.com](http://www.sonomabirding.com) and pick a birding area where you can be most helpful. Email your name, address, zip, and phone number to Tom Rusert or Darren Peterie at [sonomanature@gmail.com](mailto:sonomanature@gmail.com) or call 939-8007.

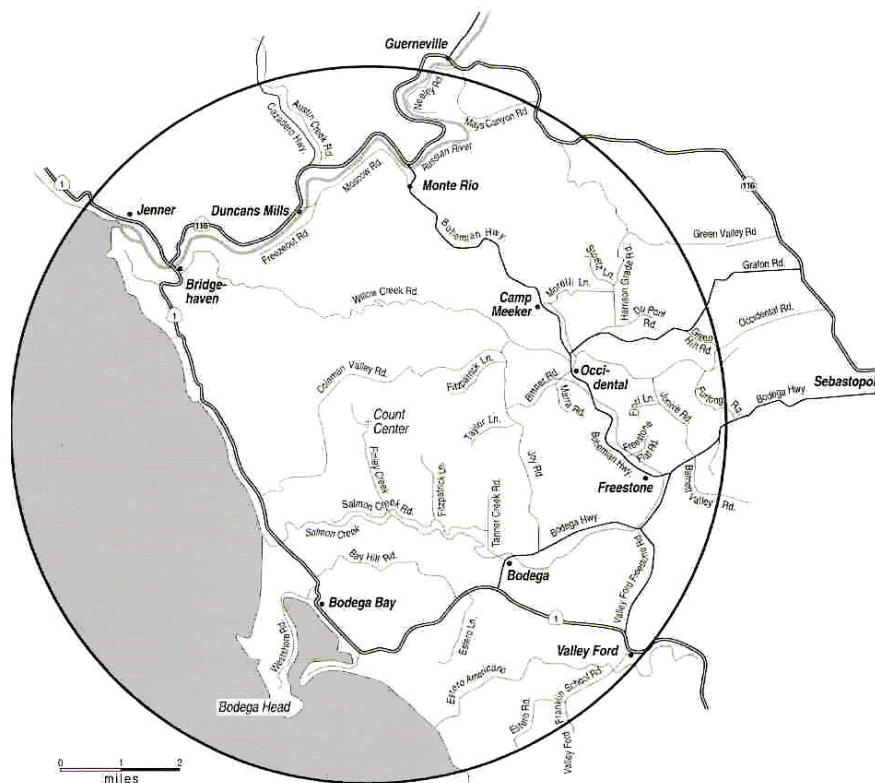


## Madrone Audubon is a recipient in the Nickels for Nonprofit donation program

*by Susan Kirks*

Madrone Audubon is a featured nonprofit organization in Coddington's Whole Foods Market in northwest Santa Rosa, 390 Coddington Mall, 1 October 2012 through mid-January 2013. Shoppers who bring their own bags can donate a nickel at the checkout stand for Madrone Audubon. Please consider taking your bag to Whole Foods Coddington and shopping for Madrone Audubon.

**Madrone Audubon Christmas Bird Count Area**





## Celebrate the holiday season with kids birding

### **Petaluma CBC for Kids**

*Saturday January 5, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM*

The Petaluma Wetlands Alliance is currently planning the fourth annual Petaluma Christmas Bird Count for Kids. This event is co-sponsored with the City of Petaluma Parks and Recreation Department and includes a half-day of bird-watching and related activities, designed for kids ages 9-15.

After the 9:00 AM check-in at the Kenilworth Recreation Center, 150 Fairgrounds Drive, Petaluma, the activities begin: binocular boot camp; team assignment with each team consisting of six kids and experienced adult birders, to cover a designated trail such as Shollenberger Park, Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility, and Alman Marsh (parents are responsible to transport kids to-and-from sites and are welcome on the walk to observe the young birders from a distance); brown-bag lunch (drinks provided); tabulation celebration; and a guest presentation.

Bring binoculars (if you have them). Wear a hat and layered clothing, comfortable shoes or boots, brown-bag lunch, and a \$5 registration fee per child collected at check-in.

To sign-up contact Al Hesla: 765-9411 or [a.hesla@comcast.net](mailto:a.hesla@comcast.net).

---

### **Sonoma Valley CBC 4Kids**

*Sunday January 13, 8:30 AM - 1:00 PM*

Sonomabirding will host their sixth annual Christmas Bird Count for Kids in beautiful Sonoma Valley. There are now 12 groups of CBC4Kids in Northern California. Small birding teams will venture out on safe, established routes for 90 minutes with an experienced birder to record as many bird species as possible. This will be followed by a tabulation celebration, brown-bag lunch,

and a surprise guest presenter. Ages 8-16. One adult per child is required.

A "Budding Birder Camp" for kids ages 4-7 will also be offered for the younger family members at the Sonoma Community Center Montessori School while their older brothers and sisters are out birding. Madrone birders interested in promoting family birding and leading a small team should contact Tom Rusert at [sonomanature@gmail.com](mailto:sonomanature@gmail.com) or phone 939-8007. Visit [sonombirding.com](http://sonombirding.com) for updates.

.....

## Recommended books by our members to give as a holiday gift

### **Blumin, Len.**

#### *The Duck Family*

This is an absolutely gorgeous, new publication of Len Blumin's work! While the book is intended as a guide for beginning and intermediate birders, the wildlife photography is so beautiful as to appeal to anyone who loves the natural world. And each page is sprinkled with Len's wit and easy-reading erudition -- which you know so well. A great holiday gift. Visit <http://www.magcloud.com/browse/issue/345917> to order bound-copies (\$18) or to download to your iPad (a sumptuous display -- and free!).

---

### **Parmeter, Benjamin D. and Alan N. Wight.**

#### *Birds of Sonoma County California Updated 2000-2010*

Twenty-four first Sonoma County Records and updates on most of the 438 species on the county list. Cost \$12. Pick up your copy at the next meeting of the Redwood Regional Ornithological Society (RROS).

### **Lukas, David.**

#### *Bay Area Birds*

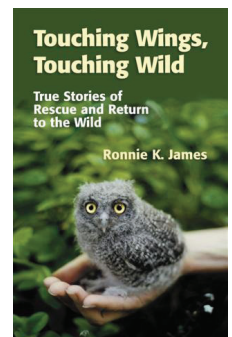
Ruth Rudesill says this is an exciting new book, the first comprehensive guide to the life history, status, and distribution of all the birds that occur in the Bay Area. It covers 320 species that occur in the Bay Area, including migrants and seabirds and provides full-length accounts for 221 definitive species. The book offers geographic coverage from Sonoma County to Monterey Bay and is the ultimate reference for anyone who loves learning about local birds. Additional information on this compact and easy-to-carry book in the field can be found at [www.lukasguides.com](http://www.lukasguides.com) or by contacting David at [david@lukasguides.com](mailto:david@lukasguides.com).

---

### **James, Ronnie.**

#### *Touching Wings, Touching Wild*

James entertains and educates readers to the journey each wild species takes as it comes into a small, Mendocino wildlife rescue and rehabilitation facility, injured or orphaned and frightened



and is then returned to the wild healed and healthy. The book covers the rehabilitation adventure, tips on how to keep your garden and home free of unwanted wildlife guests, what to do if you find an injured bird or small mammal, and most importantly how to recognize and understand behavior as you observe the wildlife in our own backyard and wild environments. Appropriate for ages 10-100. Half of all revenue goes to your local Audubon and half to rescue and release wildlife. Books can be purchased for \$18 + tax through [www.TouchingWings.org](http://www.TouchingWings.org) or directly from the rescue organization: Woodlands Wildlife, PO Box 1336, Mendocino, CA 95460.





## Observations

Fall 2012 • Dan Nelson • 479-2918 • birdsurf64@sbcglobal.net

Northern Gannet	June-Sept.	Southeast Farallon Island, 1st State Record	M.Ob
Least Bittern	8/26	Ellis Creek treatment pond	R. Storey
American Bittern	9/16	Spring Lake	DN, et al.
Bald Eagle (immature)	10/4	Bay Hill Road	R O'D, LH, DN
Broad-winged Hawk	9/19	Jenner Headlands Overlook	KM, DB, GH, RL, TH
Broad-winged Hawk (2)	9/24	Two Rock/Tomas Coast Guard Training Center	RJ
Broad-winged Hawk (200+)	9/27	Record-breaking day at Marin Headlands	G.G.R.O.
Broad-winged Hawk	10/1	Ferguson Road, flyover, West Sebastopol	SC
Broad-winged Hawk	10/3	Jenner Headlands	KW, BO, et al.
Ferruginous Hawk (adult)	9/19	Bay Hill Road	DN, DH
Common Black Hawk	8/25	Laguna de Santa Rosa at Georgetown	KJ, GJ
White-tailed Kite (23)	9/13	Leaving roost at La Tercera School, Petaluma	DB
Merlin	9/26	Owl Canyon, perched in Eucalyptus	DN, et al.
Merlin	10/1	Bodega Marine Lab, flyover	DN, JS, et al.
Curlew Sandpiper	9/19	South of Spud Point, in alternate plumage (!)	GB (1st County Record)
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	9/21-23	Bodega Harbor	JE, DF, RR, DN, et al.
Pectoral Sandpiper (9)	10/4	Spring Lake, seasonal high count	R O'D
Spotted Sandpiper (2)	9/18	Spring Lake	DN, et al.
Sabine's Gull (1)	Sept.	Lake Hennessey, Napa County	M.Ob
White-winged Dove	9/17	Drakes' Beach, Marin County	ES, et al.
Common Cuckoo	9/28-10/2	1st State Record. Watsonville, Santa Cruz County	M.Ob
Vaux's Swift (45-50)	10/4	Bay Hill Road	DN, BD, LH, RO'D
Black-chinned Hummingbird	10/4	Nunes Ranch, Point Reyes	RSt
Eastern Kingbird	9/23	North of Nunes Ranch, Point Reyes	JE, DS, JK, SC
Tropical Kingbird	9/30-10/5	Whaleship/Sandpiper Roads, north of Rail Ponds	JK, M.Ob
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	9/7	Nunes Ranch, Point Reyes	RS, et al.
Yellow-throated Vireo	9/16-21	Spring Lake, north of spillway, 1st County Record	Jim Lomax, M.Ob
Purple Martin (5)	9/18	Spring Lake	DN
Purple Martin (1)	9/22	Campbell Cove, Bodega Bay	DN
Gray Catbird	10/1-10/4	Rail Ponds, Bodega Dunes Campground	RR, DF
Red-throated Pipit (1-2)	10/4	Road to Fish Docks, Point Reyes	RSt
Black-and-White Warbler	Sept.	Spring Lake, north of spillway	M.Ob
Chestnut-sided Warbler	9/12	Spud Point, pines in parking lot	SC, GH
Chestnut-sided Warbler	9/28-10/5	Owl Canyon	JS, DN, BG, et al.
Cape May Warbler	9/26	Owl Canyon; flew off to the north alone	ST, DN, GH, DE, et al.
Cape May Warbler	9/30-10/1	Bodega Marine Lab, flowering Myoporum (same individual)	JS, et al.
Black-throated Blue Warbler	9/24	Campbell Cove (male)	HH
Blackburnian Warbler (2)	9/26	Owl Canyon, perched side-by-side!	DN, DE, GH, ST, et al.
Blackburnian Warbler (1)	9/29	From Owl Canyon, moved to Marine Lab residence	M.Ob
Prairie Warbler	9/5-6	Scubby hillside north of Owl Canyon	SC, DH, DN, et al.
Blackpoll Warbler	9/15-20	Spring Lake	RR, et al.
Blackpoll Warbler	9/27	Bodega Dunes Campground	DF
Connecticut Warbler	9/28-10/1	Mendoza Ranch, Point Reyes	CW, NP, MB, M.Ob
Ovenbird	9/28-10/1	Mendoza Ranch, Point Reyes	CW, NP, MB, M.Ob
Magnolia Warbler	10/4	Upper New Willows, Point Reyes	TE Jr., TE Sr.
American Redstart	9/3	Campbell Cove	S & LT
American Redstart	9/6-7	Campbell Cove	DN
American Redstart	9/26	Owl Canyon	DN, M.Ob
Clay-colored Sparrow	9/7-15	Campbell Cove	DN, M.Ob
Clay-colored Sparrow	9/29	Owl Canyon, possibly same bird as Campbell Cove	DN, et al.
Lincoln's Sparrow	9/6	Campbell Cove	DN
Bobolink	9/26	Owl Canyon, calling flyover heading south	DN
Orchard Oriole	9/6-8	Campbell Cove	DN, M.Ob
Baltimore Oriole	9/29-10/4	Diekmann's Store, below parking area	DF, SC, et al.
Summer Tanager	8/25	Laguna de Santa Rosa @ Georgetown, south of Timber Hill	GJ, KJ
Red Crossbill	9/22	Bay Hill Road, flyover calling bird	DN

CONTRIBUTORS: Dave Barry, Matt Bauman, Gordon Beebe, Scott Carey, Tanner Easterla, Todd Easterla, Jules Evens, Dea Freid, Golden Gate Raptor Observatory, Bill Grummer, Hugh Harvey, David Hofmann, Lisa Hug, Gene Hunn, Trymon Hunter, Robert Jackson, Greg Jacobs, Kathi Jacobs, John Kelly, Rick Lebadour, Jim Lomax, Ruth Lombard, Kathy Mugele, Dan Nelson, Rob O'Donnell, Becky Olsen, Nick Pederson, Ruth Rudesill, Dave Shuford, Jackie Sones, Rich Stallcup, Ron Storey, Emilie Strauss, Linda Terrill, Scott Terrill, Steve Tracey, Ken Wilson, and Cole Wolf.



**Madrone Audubon Society**

Post Office Box 1911  
Santa Rosa, California 95402

**December 2012/January 2013**

**TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL  
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY  
CALENDAR ENCLOSED**



**MADRONE LEAVES**



Madrone Audubon Society meets on the third Monday of each month, except in June, July, August, and December. Meetings start at 7:30 PM at First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa. All meetings and walks are open to the public. Information: telephone answering service - 546-7492, e-mail - madroneaudubon@um.att.com.

**President:** Susan Kirks - susankirks@sbcglobal.net.....773-3215  
**Vice President:** Gordon Beebe - gdbeebe@earthlink.net.....829-9017  
**Recording Secretary:** Emily Heaton - emilyheaton@gmail.com.....431-8706  
**Corresponding Secretary:** Monica Schwalbenberg-Peña - milvan@sbcglobal.net.....542-8107  
**Treasurer:** Linda Lebovics - linda@quick-skills.com.....827-3765  
**Membership:** Lisa Shiffirin - lshiffri@yahoo.com.....775-3752  
**Conservation:** Diane Hichwa - dhichwa@earthlink.net.....785-1922  
**Education Kits:** Barbara Novak - enovak3697@aol.com.....795-3996  
**Audubon Adventures:** Janeann Erickson - Erickson@ap.net.....795-2498  
**Program & Circulation:** Joanne Dranginis - joanhd@comcast.net.....523-4373  
**Outreach & Junior Audubon:** Scott Campbell - campbesk@gmail.com.....530-828-6115  
**Publicity:**  
**Webmaster:** Jeff Holtzman - Madrone707@hotmail.com.....823-8290  
**Bird Walks and Field Trips:** Tom McCuller - sisypus@sonic.net.....546-1812  
**Saturday Bird Walks:** Bill Doyle - shortbill@comcast.net.....483-8773  
**Bird-A-Thon Coordinator:** Marcia Johnson - owlsnesttwo@att.net.....829-3808

**Leaves Co-Editor:** Mary Edith Moore - maryedithmoore@comcast.net.....763-3577  
**Leaves Co-Editor:** Denise Kelly - denise@variegatastudio.com.....290-4120  
**Leaves Production:** Kris Hutchins - kris@hutchins1.net.....477-8156  
**Hospitality:** Linda Hammer - linda@divinedelights.com.....823-4389  
**Observations:** Dan Nelson - birdsurf64@sbcglobal.net.....479-2918  
**Past President:** Bob Speckles - robertspeckles@yahoo.com.....569-0563  
**ACR Rep & MMAS Steering Committee:** Bryant Hichwa.....579-1182  
**ACR Rep:**  
**Petaluma Wetlands Alliance:** Gerald Moore - glmemoore@comcast.net.....763-3577  
**Sonoma County Water Coalition Rep:** Paula Zerzan - pzerzan@comcast.net.....935-1523  
**BBA:** Bob Speckles, robertspeckles@yahoo.com; Veronica Bowers, vlbowers@gmail.com  
**Christmas Count and IMBD:** Veronica Bowers - vlbowers@gmail.com.....829-2955  
**Honorary Board Member:** Ernestine Smith.....545-4255  
**Bird Rescue Center**.....523-BIRD  
**The Songbird Hospital**.....484-6502  
**Northern California Rare Bird Alert**.....415-681-7422  
**Audubon-California:** Dan Taylor - dtaylor@audubon.org.....916-649-7600  
**National Audubon Society:** 225 Varick Street, NY, NY 10014.....212-979-3000

**Join Madrone Audubon – Support Your Local Chapter**

Please complete this form if you wish to join Madrone Audubon, renew your Madrone membership or make a contribution to Madrone.

Please note: We are a chapter of National Audubon, but membership in and donations to Madrone Audubon are separate and support our local chapter. Membership and donations are tax deductible.

- I am a new member     I am renewing my Madrone membership
  - Senior \$15     Basic Member \$20     Family \$30
  - Sustaining \$50     Supporting \$100     Donor \$500    Other \$\_\_\_\_\_
  - I am a National Audubon member who wishes to make a **tax deductible contribution** to Madrone in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_
- Madrone's nonprofit 501(c)3 tax number is 94-6172986

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please send my *Leaves* via email

**Please make your check payable to "Madrone Audubon Society."**

Detach this panel and mail to: **Madrone Audubon Society,**

**P.O. Box 1911, Santa Rosa, CA 95402**

**Visit us on the Web at: <http://audubon.sonoma.net>**