



Madrone LEAVES

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

VOLUME 50 February/March 2017 Number 4

Winter Chill Greet Birds and Birders at the 50th West Sonoma County CBC

by Jeff Holtzman

The New Year was all about birds with 107 volunteer counters braving brisk early morning weather in the mid-30's to complete Madrone Audubon's 50th Western Sonoma County Christmas Bird Count. The tally of species counted numbered 169, which was below average for years past. (Last year's total was 176). This was most likely due to the cold temperatures throughout the 15 mile diameter count circle on count day and in preceding weeks, and foggy conditions offshore on count day, which interfered with finding pelagic species.

Raptors were one of the day's highlights with 4 Bald Eagles, 9 Ferruginous Hawks, a Rough-legged Hawk, 71 Kestrels, 14 Peregrines, and 10 Merlins sighted. The species with the largest numbers of individuals included 2,890 Surf Scoters, 2,100 Marbled Godwits, 1,848 Brewer's Blackbirds, 1,459 European Starlings, and 1,010 American Robins.



White-throated Sparrow Courtesy of Gordon Beebe

Also of note was the appearance of all of our seven woodpecker species, along with single individuals of Palm Warbler, Barrow's Goldeneye, and Tree Swallow. The totals of 17 Varied Thrush and 88 Pine Siskins counted this year were both lower than expected. Once again, the Eurasian Collared-Doves (194) vastly outnumbered the Mourning Doves (55) spotted. For all species totals for this 50th West Sonoma County CBC, see page 8 of this issue.

At the end of the long day, Counters gathered at the Sebastopol Community & Cultural Center and enjoyed a hearty meal prepared by Worth Our Weight catering of Santa Rosa, along with the tradition of donated deserts, served by dinner volunteers Nancy Hair, Kristen Ulmer, Arlene Ulmer, Linda Hammer, Sandra Martensen, JJ Jent and Susan Kirks.

Madrone Audubon Society thanks the Christmas Bird Count co-chairs, Peter Leveque and Dr. Stacy Li, all the team leaders, counters, and dinner volunteers who helped to make Madrone's 50th CBC another successful venture in citizen science. Especially, a post-count thanks to Peter and Stacy for the devoted hours of

Continued on page 2

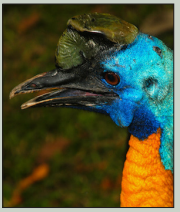
GENERAL MEETING

First United Methodist Church • 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa

Monday, February 20, 2017, 7:00 PM

"A Thousand Tongues, A Thousand Birds: A Naturalist in New Guinea"

David Price was born and raised in New Zealand and spent almost 30 years living and working in Papua, the Indonesian part of New Guinea, as a linguist, translator and community development specialist. He has degrees in zoology, ecology and conservation and studied New Guinea frogs, freshwater fishes, and birds. David now lives in northern California and travels several times each year back to Asia where he works as an environmental consultant for an international development organization. David enjoys natural history photography, especially bird photography, and some of his images can be seen at www.laughingfrogphotography.com.



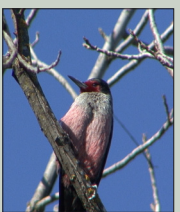
Cassowary Courtesy of David Price

David will introduce New Guinea's geography, history, cultures, and flora and fauna, with special focus on the birds. New Guinea has incredible diversity within some bird families, most notably pigeons and doves, kingfishers, parrots, and the birds of paradise, of course. David will share some stories on life in New Guinea and the birds.

Monday, March 20, 2017, 7:00 PM

"Woodpeckers of the North Bay"

Woodpeckers have captured the human imagination for generations. The distant sounds of pecking, flashes of red plumage, and inevitable disappearance into the shadows of the forest evoke a sense of wonder about these extraordinary yet elusive creatures. Jeffery Martin's presentation will explore the foraging strategies of our eight North Bay woodpecker species. Insect excavation, acorn storage, the use of sap wells and other intriguing behaviors are our focus. Jeff's video segments illustrate unique evolutionary adaptations. We'll examine the anatomy of feet, tail, tongue and head which enable agile vertical climbing, adept grabbing of prey, and protection from concussion and dust inhalation. From the exquisite green and rose-colored Lewis's Woodpecker to the dazzling Northern Flicker, we'll take a close-up look at the worlds of our eight North Bay Woodpeckers.



Lewis's Woodpecker Courtesy of Jeffrey R. Martin

A Marin County videographer and naturalist, Jeff is also a clinical psychologist and associate clinical professor at UCSF School of Medicine.



WINTER CHILL

Continued from page 1

compiling our data to submit to the National Audubon Society, and to Gordon Beebe for formatting results for this issue.



Fox Sparrow
Courtesy of Paul Gibson

An upcoming anniversary issue of *Leaves* will include historical highlights of Madrone-sponsored CBCs. In the meantime, a quick look back at records from the FIRST West Sonoma County CBC, held on December 30, 1967, shows that 20 participants counted 132 species, including 1,934 American Robins and a single Canada Goose.

Come Explore ACR's Wildlands in the North County

Introduction

by Diane Hichwa, Conservation Chair

As Madrone begins its 50th year, we want to provide some history to our members to reflect on, and for building into a strong future. Madrone learned in a Press Democrat article that National Audubon Society was exploring accepting a property in northeast Sonoma County, and in 1994, a portion of the McCord Ranch was given to National as a sanctuary. Our members stepped up to help. Phyllis Schmitt organized a field trip series sponsored by Madrone. Members and the public went on history hikes with Peter Leveque on the Clark Foss stagecoach trail; found 21 species of dragonflies, including a rare Black Petaltail on the territory, with Kathy Biggs; birded with Doug Ellis; or photographed the carpets of wildflowers and the rugged landscapes. I wandered beside Jack and Betty Guggolz to explore serpentine outcroppings for rare plants like jewelflowers and to enjoy the breathtaking landscape. Tom Cashman and a core group volunteered weekly to create a presence along the road to deter off-road vehicle damage to delicate lands. Others worked higher up Pine Flat Road to get old mine areas and shooting areas gated off. Robert Evans published a History of Pine Flat. Environmental challenges occurred as renewable energy at the Geysers was bolstered by wastewater recharge, and in 2004, a large wildlands fire swept across the landscape. Betty Burrige, as she left a legacy

Page 2

gift for the preserve, reinforced its value as a core property amid 14,000 acres of contiguous open space; these lands allow transit for wildlife, for all of the "little people," the deer and other animals that Shirley and Jim Modini held dear. What a treasure it was to sit and listen to Shirley and Jim tell stories of the history of place.



Pileated Woodpeckers
Courtesy of Tom Reynolds

below, to reacquaint ourselves with Modini-Mayacamas, or to discover it for the first time.

Come to North Sonoma County

by Sherry Adams

When asked to list great spots for birding in Sonoma County, many Madrone members will say the preserve bisected by Pine Flat Road about 10 miles northeast of Healdsburg. The Chapter has a long and inspiring history with this rugged piece of land, as shared by Diane above. Since 2012, this area has been part of Audubon Canyon Ranch (ACR)'s Modini Mayacamas Preserves (MMP), and we invite you to come up for a visit.

The 3,000 acres now known as ACR's Modini Mayacamas Preserves is a merger of two adjacent properties: the Modini Ingalls Ecological Preserve and the Mayacamas Mountains Sanctuary.

Geography and ecological history make MMP unique. The preserve spans from about 400' in elevation to over 2,700'. A paved public road running the length of the preserve provides a cross-section of different habitats—including shrub land, oak savannah, grassland, conifer and madrone stands. A fast-moving fire in September of 2004 created a mosaic of impacts, such as an area with large snags where Purple Martins nest.

Madrone Audubon members can feel a sense of pride and history from the legacy of a relationship with this land that spans decades. We were happy to receive Sherry's invitation,

Because MMP is contiguous with over 10,000 acres of protected lands, it is home to wide-ranging animals like mountain lions, black bears, and Pileated Woodpeckers. Listen and look for their signs when visiting, or check out the videos at egret.org.



Sherry Adams leads hike Courtesy of Dennis Fujita

Our regular public outings include the monthly Birds and Botany walk, and half day field classes such as February's introduction to the ferns of the preserve. Every month we offer a preserve orientation—join one of these if you want to hike the preserve on your own.

We have a small staff and rely on volunteers to play key roles in the work of this preserve. Some of your Madrone colleagues have stepped up already (thank you, Bill Payne!) to lead hikes this spring. We also love having folks with other areas of knowledge lead hikes. ***Might you be the one to lead a butterfly walk on the preserve?*** Some of our hike leaders come to us already knowledgeable about their subject matter (thank you, Kathy Biggs!), while others develop their knowledge with the support of staff. Please consider getting involved as a volunteer at MMP.

At our website egret.org, you can find a bird checklist from the preserve (put together by Madrone members), photos from the wildlife cameras on the preserve, and a calendar of upcoming events. Get in touch with us at modini@egret.org or (707) 431-8184 x503 to be added to our monthly e-mail list or for more information. We hope to see you up here!

Sherry Adams is the Preserve Biologist and Manager for Modini Mayacamas Preserves of Audubon Canyon Ranch. She's been on the ACR science staff since 2007, and previously worked at ACR's Bouverie Preserve. She has an MS in Applied Ecology.

About ACR

Audubon Canyon Ranch (ACR) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit environmental conservation and education organization. It was founded in 1962 to safeguard Bolinas Lagoon from irresponsible development, leading the way for the protection of Tomales Bay.

Today, ACR owns and manages a system of nature preserves encompassing over 5,000 acres in three counties. ACR works to improve global environmental health by conserving and stewarding valuable natural resources, managing for ecological resiliency, providing scientific solutions to ecosystem management, and teaching generations of conservationists in ways that strengthen natural and human communities.

ACR's Main Preserves

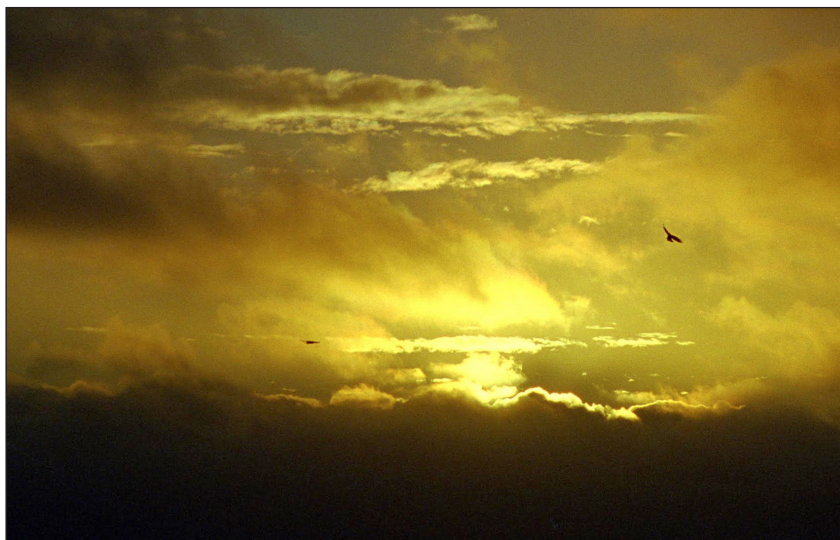
- Bouverie Preserve, Glen Ellen, CA
- Cypress Grove Research Center, Marshall, CA
- Martin Griffin Preserve, Stinson Beach, CA
- Modini Mayacamas Preserves, Healdsburg, CA



Former Madrone Audubon Board Member – Gerald Moore

In December 2016, Gerald Moore passed away in Petaluma, CA. Gerald served as a Madrone Audubon Board member, representing Petaluma Wetlands Alliance, for 12 years. During that time, Gerald contributed significantly to Board decisions and was a member of our newly formed Renewable Energy Subcommittee of Conservation since 2008. Gerald led Petaluma Wetlands Alliance’s efforts in association with Madrone Audubon. He was a humble individual, always focused on habitat restoration of the Petaluma Wetlands for the wildlife, environmental education, and the goal of appreciation for the exceptional natural resources in South Sonoma County represented by Alman Marsh, Shollenberger Park and Ellis Creek.

Together with his partner, Mary Edith Moore, who served as the Co-Editor of *Leaves* for 10 years, Gerald dedicated all of his energy and conservation action to preservation of the Petaluma wetlands. Gerald was a recipient of our Chapter’s Bowen award in 2005 for his outstanding contributions to the Chapter. With Mary Edith, they were recognized in 2008 with the Bentley-Smith award for their tireless efforts in conservation and education. He will be missed. Our condolences extend to Gerald’s family and friends.



Sunset with hawks

Courtesy of Gordon Beebe

Pat Eliot - Friend of Madrone Audubon

In December 2016, we lost a true friend – a Friend of Madrone Audubon Society for 23 years and a friend of Nature for her entire life.

When we look toward Sonoma Mountain in South Sonoma County, this magnificent feature of our natural environment will always remind us of Pat Eliot. Pat maintained a special relationship with Sonoma Mountain for most of her life and advocated to preserve its magnificence while also guiding decisions for appropriate public access, including her lifelong love and avocation of horseback riding. Pat’s more recent involvement in the possible conservation future of Sonoma Developmental Center’s 900+ acre property was deeply appreciated.

Madrone Audubon Society is fortunate to have enjoyed an active relationship with Pat, Ted and their family for many years. Pat’s support of our wildlife appreciation and conservation activities was also part of her environmental advocacy. We will always recall and feel a sense of deep appreciation for her expression of conservation values through diplomatic and sustained action. Our condolences and gratitude are extended to the Eliot family.

Madrone Needs Your Memories

We’re planning a special issue of *Leaves* celebrating Madrone’s 50th anniversary as an Audubon Chapter. Do you have photos or stories from years past to share? We’d love to hear from you! Contact Leaves editor Asenath LaRue at asenathlarue@gmail.com or (707) 528-3648.

Reporting Problems on Public Lands

by Gordon Beebe

Madrone’s website will soon have a new page, found under the Conservation menu. On it will be contact information for all of the parks and open space areas in Sonoma County. Madrone Audubon encourages visitors to these lands to report behavior they witness that is damaging the natural resources, habitat, wildlife, or to people. Problem behavior would include illegal hunting, cyclists riding off trails, traveling at unsafe speed, or on trails not designated for their use; dogs off leash, harassing wildlife and/or on trails not designated for their use; or the use of a drone anywhere within a park.

A Revision

The Madrone Audubon Society 2016 fiscal year financial statement has been revised. To view the revised statement, please visit our web site, www.madroneaudubon.org

Are you a National Audubon member?

Please consider joining our local chapter, Madrone Audubon.

(see membership form, back page)



Welcome New Members

Petaluma

Norma Liner

Karen Olson (Gift membership
from Oriana Lieu)

Jamieson Prevoznak

Santa Rosa

Gloria Smith

Appreciated Donations

In Memory of...

Betty Burrige

by Catherine Heater

by Harold Mickens

by Nancy Mickens

Kent Mitchell

by Carla Howell

Emma Jean Pointer

by James Pointer

Dennis Puleston

by Carolyn Metz

Our Website is Optimized for Mobile Devices

by Gordon Beebe

Recently, webmaster Charles Fox upgraded Madrone's website to adapt to mobile devices. What that means, if you are a smart phone or tablet user, is that you can now visit our site from your device, with photos and text sized appropriately. No more zooming in to read tiny print! It contains the same content as the full-sized page. Try it out, and bookmark us on your phone!

BAT 2017 is Coming! Let the Games Begin!

by Carolyn Greene

Madrone's Bird-A-Thon, better known as BAT, is our biggest fun-fund-raiser of the year, with all money going to educational and conservation projects, such as Junior Audubon, Audubon Adventures, Lincoln School Bird Festival, and the Christmas Bird Count. Last year, almost \$10,000 was collected from you and your sponsors. So let's reach and exceed \$10k this year.

BAT is a team event where each member contacts friends, family, co-workers - anyone who knows how much YOU love birding and supporting bird conservation! Ask them to support your one day, or 24 hours over several days, of counting bird species in February and March for pledges - a set amount, per species seen, whatever. Any amount is welcome. These months are great for observing migrants and resident breeders, so we're hoping for both quality and quantity. Teams will be responsible for collecting pledges after their "Big Day."

We welcome famed teams of the past - Feather Questers, Roadrunners, Zonotropias, Grey-headed Seersuckers, Burrowing Owls, and March Madness.

BUT here's the thing.....we need more members and new teams to reach our lofty goal! If you'd like to join an existing team OR form your own, please contact Carolyn Greene at cgnpark@icloud.com or call/text 805 443-7289. She's looking for members for her new team or can match you up with others, and even help you think of a catchy team name.

Sign-up information and sponsor sheets will be available at the February Madrone General Meeting. Please support BAT and Madrone Audubon and our great educational and conservation programs - and have fun with other birders!

MEMBERS' COLUMN

Feathers Between the Pages

by J.J. Jent

A wonderful book recently came to my attention. Terry Masear, the author and a professor at UCLA, dedicated herself 24/7 to the rescue and rehabilitation of injured hummingbirds. The delightful book, *Fastest Things on Wings* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, New York, 2015), addresses the stresses and dangers to our jeweled flyers. They crash into high rises and limousines in Beverly Hills, or are injured by extreme mating rituals.

The author and a group of dedicated rehabbers set up a hotline network and drive to different sites in the Los Angeles region to pick up injured birds. The rehab centers mend, bathe, and feed, eventually getting these birds prepared to be airborne again. Some are so severely injured that they are unable to be returned to the wild. Wonderful aviaries become their permanent home.

There was so much learned from this book. Maintenance of the feeder is of critical importance. Fungus and mold can invade the feeder if not changed regularly and sanitized. The hummers can die a terrible death from these exposures. Long ago I stopped using the red dyed sugar water, opting for a homemade boiled solution of ultrafine baking sugar changed every few days. Field guides don't address these

types of issues.

The hummingbirds covered in this book were Anna's, Allen's, Rufous, Black-chinned, Costa's, and Calliope. The hummingbirds identified at my

feeder are Anna's, Broad-tailed, Black-chinned, and Rufous. I have not seen the Costa's or Calliope to date, but they could be in another area of the county.

This book is so informative, useful, and fun to learn from. Just imagine the thrill of having 100 hummingbirds in rehab at a time. My star rating: ***1/2.

Editor's note: *Calliope Hummingbird sightings, March-April/early May 2015, in Observations compiled by Dan Nelson. Male 4/4-5, Rincon Valley residence (photo); male 4/11, Paula Lane, Petaluma; male 4/19, Briarwood Park, Santa Rosa.*



Allen's Hummingbird
Courtesy of National
Audubon Society



At Tule Lake on 12/4/16, Madrone member Mary Abbott observed a Common Raven harassing a Bald Eagle and kindly sent a photo.

A note to all Madrone members...

Do you have bird observations or experiences to share? Something that caught your eye in your backyard, on a hike in one of Sonoma County's parks or open spaces, or on a recent vacation? Please send a brief description (and a photo if you have one), and *Leaves* will include as many of these contributions as we can. It doesn't have to be exotic...just a chance to share whatever you find interesting.



All walks and membership 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.

February 2017 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.

Thursday, February 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.

Saturday, February 4, 8:30 AM to Noon

BODEGA BAY. (Note MEETING PLACE CHANGE: Porto Bodega; directions below.) We will explore one of Sonoma County's richest bird areas, looking for wintering shorebirds, waterfowl, and landbirds. From the center of the town of Bodega Bay, drive north on Highway 1. Turn left at East Shore Road (the Bodega Head turnoff), then go straight at stop sign to Porto Bodega. We will carpool from the large dirt parking lot. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115.

Wednesday, February 15, 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM

BODEGA BAY. Bird Walk at Bodega Bay Harbor and environs. Note MEETING PLACE CHANGE. To meet the group, take Doran Park Road from Highway 1 at the southern end of Bodega Bay harbor, then enter Doran

County Park (a Sonoma County park permit or \$7 entrance fee is required). Continue 0.5 miles past the park entrance to the parking lot of the Cypress Day Use Area on the left side of the road. After birding Doran Park, the group will search the harbor and adjacent seas and woodlands for birds. Weather permitting, the group will eat a picnic lunch on the west side of the harbor. Leader: Tom McCuller, t.sisyphus@comcast.net, 707-546-1812.

Saturday, February 18, 8:30 AM to Noon

HUDEMAN SLOUGH. We will walk out on the levees surrounding the ponds to view waterbirds, hawks, and more. 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 on 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. Cross the train tracks and park in the lot in front of the barn. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115.

Monday, February 20, 7:00 PM

GENERAL MEETING. First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa. "A Thousand Tongues, A Thousand Birds: A Naturalist in New Guinea." This is a free event and all are welcome.

Out & About

Volunteering for a local conservation education program is a great way to learn about wildlife and wild spaces in our area. Here are a few opportunities to get involved.

Native Songbird Care & Conservation New Volunteer Orientation

Wednesday, March 15, 6:00 PM; Thursday, March 23, 6:00 PM; Saturday, March 25, 10:00 AM

Volunteers are needed to help care for baby birds May through August. Opportunities include assisting with care of the birds, transport and administrative tasks. Call 707-484-6502 or visit www.nativesongbirdcare.org for information and to sign up.

Laguna de Santa Rosa Docent Training

Orientations are scheduled for February 16 & 17; training runs from March 13 to May 15

Volunteer to teach Learning Laguna to 2nd-4th grade students in the classroom and during field trips to the Laguna. For information, visit www.lagunafoundation.org/volunteer_docent.html or call (707) 527-9277 x102.

Become a Docent at ACR's Bouverie Preserve

Bouverie Preserve docents teach 3rd and 4th graders about the natural history of the Sonoma Valley and inspire the next generation of nature enthusiasts while spending time in nature at the Preserve in Glen Ellen. The next docent training will begin in *September of 2017*, but volunteer recruitment is happening *now!* See www.egret.org/volunteer_educate (scroll down to the Bouverie section) for more information or call 707-938-4554.

Dear Members – if you prefer to receive *Leaves* in PDF format, just email your request to:
info@madroneaudubon.org



All walks and membership 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.

March 2017 calendar

Thursday, March 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

Saturday, March 4, 8:30 AM to noon

ELLIS CREEK WATER RECYCLING FACILITY. Ellis Creek always has an assortment of waterbirds and marshland species, with frequent flyovers of hawks and falcons. From Highway 101 in Petaluma, go East on 116 (Lakeville Highway), and right on Pine View Way, then left on Cypress Drive. Go to the end of the road and through the gate. We will meet in the parking lot, near the bathroom. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115.

Wednesday, March 15, 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM

BODEGA BAY. Bird Walk at Bodega Bay Harbor and environs. Note MEETING PLACE CHANGE. To meet the group, take Doran Park Road from Highway 1 at the southern end of Bodega Bay harbor, then enter Doran County Park (a Sonoma County park permit or \$7 entrance fee is required). Continue 0.5 miles past the park entrance to the parking lot of the Cypress Day Use Area on the left side of the road. After birding Doran Park, the group will search the harbor and adjacent seas and woodlands for birds. Weather permitting, the group will eat a picnic lunch on the west side of the harbor. Leader: Tom McCuller, t.sisyphus@comcast.net, 707-546-1812.

Saturday, March 18, 8:30 AM to noon

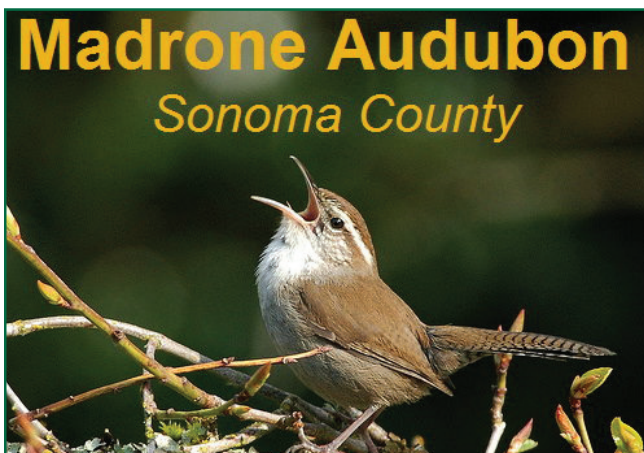
LAS GALLINAS PONDS. Marin County. The ponds and surrounding wetlands contain a great variety of birds, from ducks to hawks to rails, and even grackles. Meet at the Las Gallinas Storage Ponds parking lot. From Hwy 101 in northern San Rafael, take the Smith Ranch Road exit, go east to the McInnis Park entrance, turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks, and go to the lot at the end of the road. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115.

Monday, March 20, 7:00 PM

GENERAL MEETING. First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa. “Woodpeckers of the North Bay.” This is a free event and all are welcome.

Saturday, April 1, 8:00 AM to Noon

CRANE CREEK REGIONAL PARK. Take Rohnert Park Expressway east from 101, then turn south onto Petaluma Hill Road. Turn left (east) onto Roberts Rd. At Lichau Road, Roberts Road turns into Pressley Road. Continue on Pressley Road to the park entrance. We will meet in the parking lot. There is a \$7 entry fee if you do not have a park pass. More information about the park can be found via the parks link on our website. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115.



**Madrone Audubon
Sonoma County**

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

Madrone Board of Directors Opening

We currently have an opening for Treasurer, an important volunteer position on our Board. This is a role that will interface with Kochenderfer Business Services, currently managing our bookkeeping and report production tasks. The Treasurer is requested to attend monthly Board meetings, 7-9 pm, the first Thursday of each month (except for July and August), at the Environmental Center in Santa Rosa. Our Treasurer provides input for monthly financial reports and reviews reports, provided by our bookkeeping service, with the Board. The monthly time commitment at this time is about 4 hours/month. Nonprofit organizational experience is a big plus. If this opening appeals to you, and you'd like to serve our Chapter for a year or two years, we'd love to hear from you! Please contact members of the Nominating Committee: Susan Kirks, susankirks@sbcglobal.net, 707-241-5548, or Cheryl Harris, cherylharris@sbcglobal.net, 707-294-6423.



Let's Add Native Plants to our Gardens to Support Habitat for Birds & Other Wildlife

by Cheryl Harris

Having recently moved to a new home in West Sonoma County, I was surprised at the lack of birds in our yard. Surprised because we are adjacent to a thickly forested ravine with some native shrubs and a bit of grassland at the edge. But there is very limited avian activity— a few junco, chickadees and nuthatches. The reason, I believe, is a lack of diversity and 'food' plants. An empty palette so to speak. I have lots of plans to change this, yet sorely miss my previous garden of 30+ years. There, I had created a habitat garden among mature oaks with multiple water features, 'layering' of fruiting native shrubs and trees, open grassland with patches of dirt or sand, a brush pile (for cover) and allowance at the outer edges for a few weedy annuals and perennials (to provide seeds & nest building materials). I had tallied some 50+ species of birds in my garden. A delight to observe, record & share stories with friends. I will create a similarly diverse habitat garden at my new home. And you can too!!

Why? Because Madrone Audubon has joined National Audubon in its goal to create "Bird Friendly Communities" across the country. The following excerpt is from National Audubon's Strategic Plan:

"The Threat --Over the past century, urbanization has taken contiguous, ecologically productive land and fragmented and transformed it with sterile lawns and exotic ornamental plants. We've introduced walls of glass, toxic pesticides, and domestic predators. The human-dominated landscape no longer supports functioning ecosystems or provides healthy places for birds."

"The Solution--Each community has a unique ecological and cultural story to tell. Creating Bird-Friendly Communities is Audubon's commitment to the sustainability of our urban, suburban, and rural places. We can restore and reconnect these places. We can reestablish the ecological functions of our cities and towns. We can provide essential, safe habitat for birds. With simple acts of hope, everyone can help make their community bird-friendly."

So, your Madrone Audubon Board wants to encourage our members to take steps to help birds adapt to our changing climate and loss of

Congratulations to Louise Hallberg on her 100th birthday!

Louise is one of Madrone's Charter members, having been part of our chapter for the past 50 years. She was awarded the Bentley-Smith Award in May 2016, recognizing her efforts to preserve butterflies and their habitats and to education and involve children.

The Hallberg Butterfly Gardens is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that will continue her legacy beyond her 100 years and into the future. The gardens are located at 8687 Oak Grove Ave., Sebastopol 95472. www.hallbergbutterflygardens.org/butterflies.shtml



habitat by helping build better Bird Friendly Communities. Each of us can easily participate, if only in a small way. Using local native plants that provide food sources or protective cover for safety or nesting is the key. From growing a few blooming native annuals or perennials in pots on our decks to revamping a portion of our gardens to redesigning our entire landscape – these actions can make a *huge* difference for birds. Then, we will share our success stories with our friends and neighbors, inspiring them to do the same – thus creating contiguous native plant corridors and blocks of habitat for our birds and other creatures. For our Chapter, we plan to develop habitat gardening projects and integrate our ideas and experiences with current projects like the Phenology Project at the Paula Lane Nature Preserve.

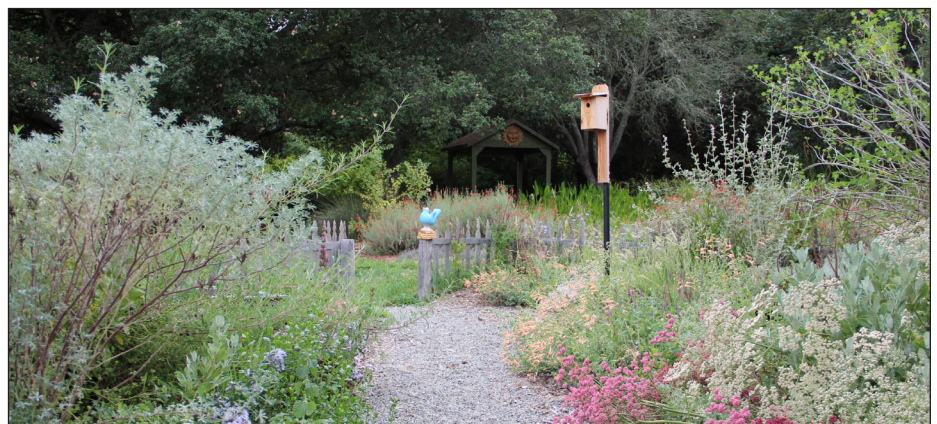
Some of our members have been planting in gardens, yards and pots for many years in the hope each year of observing return migratory and resident visitors. Others of us are just beginning this journey, with a desire to make a difference in the vast, sometimes overwhelming information we are receiving about climate change impacts.

In the coming months, we will be providing suggestions and resources to help members get started on what we believe is an important and hopefully gratifying journey to help our birds and wildlife survive and sustain.

We are considering various projects for our Chapter's involvement in Bird-Friendly Communities and habitat gardening, and we'll look forward to sharing more about that soon. For now, here are some resources for ideas and inspiration:

- Madrone Audubon www.madroneaudubon.org/birds-attracting-birds.php – an excellent in-depth article on the basics of habitat gardening
- Audubon.org/native-plants – plants recommended for our specific area, sorted by zip code & includes notation on which birds are attracted
- Hummingbirdsathome.org – an Audubon citizen science project; great for families, to learn to monitor hummingbirds & note which plants they feed on
- Yardmap.org – interactive program supported by Cornell; map your yard & gain tips on appropriate plants; includes pollinator guide
- www.cnps.org/cnps/grownative/habitat/ – excellent resource on local native plants; includes discussion of plant communities, pollinators & more. Provides sample habitat garden plans with specific plant choices.
- www.milobaker.cnps.org/images/garden_with_natives – provides photos of recommended local native plants including cultural details
- www.nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/National-Wildlife-Federation-Backyard-Habitat-program – long established program offering backyard habitat certification.

If creating and enhancing habitat gardens are interests of yours and you'd like to share your ideas or volunteer in this area with us, please contact me at cherylharris@sbcglobal.net or 707-294-6423.



Native Songbird Care & Conservation Habitat Gardens

Courtesy of Veronica Bowers, NSCC



Christmas Bird Count

Species	Number	Species	Number	Species	Number
Greater White-fronted Goose	2	buteo sp.	3	Nuttall's Woodpecker	15
Brant	962	hawk sp.	2	Downy Woodpecker	20
Canada Goose	104	American Kestrel	71	Northern Flicker	102
Aleutian Cackling Goose	1	Merlin	10	Pileated Woodpecker	4
Wood Duck	24	Peregrine Falcon	14	Black Phoebe	155
Gadwall	2	falcon sp.	1	Say's Phoebe	20
American Wigeon	75	Virginia Rail	14	Hutton's Vireo	22
Mallard	180	Sora	3	Steller's Jay	162
Northern Shoveler	2	Common Gallinule	1	Western Scrub-Jay	268
Northern Pintail	2	American Coot	670	American Crow	488
Green-winged Teal	12	Black-bellied Plover	5	Common Raven	259
duck sp.	12	Snowy Plover	26	Tree Swallow	2
Canvasback	27	Semipalmated Plover	68	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	390
Ring-necked Duck	1	Killdeer	18	Oak Titmouse	21
Greater Scaup	45	Black Oystercatcher	55	Bushtit	270
Lesser Scaup	80	Spotted Sandpiper	3	Red-breasted Nuthatch	5
scaup sp.	37	Wandering Tattler	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	5
Surf Scoter	2890	Willet	291	Pygmy Nuthatch	89
Bufflehead	595	Whimbrel	3	Brown Creeper	42
Common Goldeneye	185	Marbled Godwit	2100	Bewick's Wren	25
Barrow's Goldeneye	1	Ruddy Turnstone	10	Pacific Wren (Winter)	18
Hooded Merganser	25	Black Turnstone	51	Marsh Wren	13
Common Merganser	55	Surfbird	3	Golden-crowned Kinglet	42
Red-breasted Merganser	6	Sanderling	285	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	256
Ruddy Duck	308	Western Sandpiper	106	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	4
Wild Turkey	125	Least Sandpiper	314	Wrentit	18
California Quail	479	Dunlin	704	Western Bluebird	272
Red-throated Loon	51	peep sp.	150	Hermit Thrush	76
Pacific Loon	37	Wilson's Snipe	9	American Robin	1010
Common Loon	63	Heermann's Gull	3	Varied Thrush	17
Pied-billed Grebe	26	Mew Gull	267	Northern Mockingbird	8
Horned Grebe	52	Ring-billed Gull	181	European Starling	1459
Red-necked Grebe	7	California Gull	555	American Pipit	74
Eared Grebe	147	Herring Gull	121	Cedar Waxwing	5
Western Grebe	176	Thayer's Gull	9	Orange-crowned Warbler	5
Clark's Grebe	6	Western Gull	922	Yellow-rumped Warbler	386
Northern Fulmar	2	Glaucous-winged Gull	238	Townsend's Warbler	51
Brandt's Cormorant	242	Glaucous Gull	2	Palm Warbler	1
Double-crested Cormorant	51	gull sp.	203	Common Yellowthroat	3
Pelagic Cormorant	90	Forster's Tern	1	Spotted Towhee	112
American White Pelican	1	Caspian Tern	1	California Towhee	349
Brown Pelican	3	Common Murre	62	Savannah Sparrow	31
Great Blue Heron	31	Pigeon Guillemot	1	Fox Sparrow	62
Great Egret	35	murrelet sp.	1	Song Sparrow	120
Snowy Egret	30	Rock Pigeon	77	Lincoln's Sparrow	7
Green Heron	1	Band-tailed Pigeon	127	White-throated Sparrow	8
Black-crowned Night-Heron	14	Eurasian Collared-Dove	194	White-crowned Sparrow	732
Turkey Vulture	248	Mourning Dove	55	Golden-crowned Sparrow	586
Osprey	10	Western Screech-Owl	4	Dark-eyed Junco	595
White-tailed Kite	14	Great Horned Owl	27	Red-winged Blackbird	475
Bald Eagle	4	Northern Pygmy Owl	2	Tricolored Blackbird	28
Northern Harrier	48	Burrowing Owl	4	Western Meadowlark	281
Sharp-shinned Hawk	10	Spotted Owl	1	Brewer's Blackbird	1848
Cooper's Hawk	14	Short-eared Owl	3	Brown-headed Cowbird	31
accipiter sp.	3	Northern Saw-whet Owl	3	Purple Finch	26
Red-shouldered Hawk	37	Anna's Hummingbird	179	House Finch	153
Red-tailed Hawk	186	Belted Kingfisher	24	Pine Siskin	88
Ferruginous Hawk	9	Acorn Woodpecker	132	House Sparrow	67
Rough-legged Hawk	1	Red-breasted Sapsucker	9		
				Total of Individuals	27971



Observations

Late Fall - Winter 2016 • Dan Nelson • 479-2918 • birdsurf64@sbcglobal.net

Long-tailed Duck (ad. fem.)	12/5	Bolinas Lagoon, near downtown docks	PP
Eurasian Wigeon (male)	12/4	Shollenberger Park	SC, et al
Hooded Merganser (2)	11/6	Shiloh Regional Park	DB
Barrow's Goldeneye (5)	11/9	Porto Sonoma/ Black Point launch ramp	DN
Common Pochard (male)	Nov.-Dec.	Big Lagoon, Humboldt Co. (3rd Calif. record)	M.Ob
Mandarin Duck (male)	12/10	Safari West, Mark West Springs Rd.	MB
Snow Goose (imm.)	11/30	Sonoma Mountain Road pond	GH
Snow Goose	12/4	N. Petaluma ponds, just E. of 101	SC
Tundra Swan (ad.)	12/7	Lakeville treatment ponds	GH, et al
Cassin's Auklet	12/4	N. end of Bodega Harbor	AW, et al
Black-legged Kittiwake	12/28	Goat Rock Beach	MS
Glaucous Gull	12/28	Goat Rock Beach	MS
Caspian Tern (2)	12/28	Shollenberger Park, very late	PC
Rough-legged Hawk	11/21-Dec	Bodega Head	M.Ob
Bald Eagle (2) ad., imm.	12/30	Ellis Creek	TE
Prairie Falcon	12/5	Carmody Road, S. end of North pond	SC
Prairie Falcon	12/18	Laguna de Santa Rosa	DN
Prairie Falcon	1/5	Ellis Creek	RB
Short-eared Owl	Dec.	Bodega Head	M.Ob
Sandhill Crane	11/25-26	Laguna Lake, Sonoma/Marin Co. border	MD, TB
Cattle Egret (140+)	Dec.	Ludwig Road, Santa Rosa	DN, SM
Northern Gannet	12/11	Richardson Bay, Marin Co.	DA
Red Phalarope - Below are just a few local representative reports:			
Red Phalarope (4)	11/1	Nicasio Reservoir, Marin Co.	BB
Red Phalarope (2)	11/16	Spring Lake	RO'D
Red Phalarope (30-40)	11/21	Bodega Bay/Harbor accumulative total	DN, et al
Red Phalarope (14)	12/4	Bodega Bay/Harbor	AW
Red Phalarope (2)	12/16	Lakeville treatment pond	D Shuford
Costa's Hummingbird (male)	12/30	Boyes Hot Springs area	GC
Vermilion Flycatcher (male)	Dec.	Maxwell Cemetery, Colusa Co.	M.Ob
Tropical Kingbird	12/3	Shorttail Gulch trail	DF, et al
Blackburnian Warbler (fem.)	11/17	Palomarin, Marin Co.	RC
Blackburnian Warbler	12/18	W. side of Brown Farm, along levee	LS, JB, et al
Hermit Warbler	12/5	Stinson Gulch, Marin Co.	PP
Nashville Warbler	12/5	Stinson Gulch, Marin Co.	PP
Palm Warbler	11/17	Doran Park	DF
Palm Warbler	11/29	Santa Rosa Keysight Technology property	AW
Palm Warbler	11/30	Sonoma Mountain Road, lower portion	GH
Palm Warbler	12/13	Santa Rosa Creek trail, off Willowside Rd.	DF
Horned Lark (1)	12/5	Salmon Creek Beach	JS
Mountain Bluebird (2)	12/2-5	Drakes Corner, Pt. Reyes	D Singer, TB
White-throated Sparrow (5)	12/18	Rodota trail, E. of Sebastopol	DN, SM
Harris' Sparrow (1)	12/28-29	Las Gallinas treatment ponds, Marin Co.	M.Ob

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Red Phalaropes a Plenty

In notes to his Observations, Dan Nelson reported: "This species was recorded in high numbers along the immediate coast, with some inland wanderers recorded. This trend was occurring all along the west coast of California and Oregon." Many thanks to Dan for compiling our area's most interesting bird sightings each month.

From the online *Audubon Guide to North American Birds*: "Phalaropes reverse the usual sex roles in birds: Females are larger and more colorful than males; females take the lead in courtship, and males are left to incubate the eggs and care for the young. The Red Phalarope nests in the high Arctic, and winters in flocks on southern oceans. It is rarely seen inland in most parts of North America." www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/red-phalarope



Red Phalarope

Courtesy of Gordon Beebe



Madrone Audubon Society

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MADRONE LEAVES



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