



Madrone LEAVES

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

VOLUME 51 February/March 2018 Number 4

Christmas Bird Counts

Sonoma County's three Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) took place the last two weeks in December, 2017, with tentative results showing reduced numbers of both species and total individual birds in those count territories directly hit by the recent fires. Although the fires undoubtedly had an impact, it is not entirely clear how this affected the numbers when taking into account normal annual fluctuations and the continuing effects of global climate change.



Burrowing Owl off Coleman Valley Road Courtesy of Brock Dolman

The 51st annual Western Sonoma County Christmas Bird Count was held on Saturday, December 30, with 116 counters and a preliminary species total of 173. (Numbers of individual birds and other details are not available at the time of publication but will be included in a future edition of the Leaves.) The 173 figure is a bit on the low side but is not unusual for this count circle, according to CBC co-chair, Peter Leveque. (December 2016 species total was 169 with very chilly weather.) Initial indications are that individual bird numbers were lower than normal but appear not to be related to the fire, he added. Since the fires did not directly affect the West Sonoma County CBC circle, it is not clear why the numbers were down. If anything, we might expect some higher numbers due to birds being displaced by the fires.

Some highlights from the West County count, aside from the temperate weather throughout the count circle, include an abundance of both woodpeckers and raptors, with 60 Red-tailed Hawks reported by Highway One team Leader Ken Wilson and nine White-tailed Kites seen in

another territory. Ian Morrison's Bodega Bay team identified a Violet-green Swallow, an unusual sighting for this time of year. The Joy Road team, led by John Coddling, watched the morning sun

break over a pasture graced with 60 Western Meadowlarks and 40 Western Bluebirds. Another highlight was a Burrowing Owl near the Sonoma

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GENERAL MEETINGS

First United Methodist Church • 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa

Monday, February 19, 2018, 7:00 PM

"Wildscaping for Songbirds"

Your garden is your outdoor sanctuary. With some careful plant choices, it can be a haven for native birds as well. Landscaped with native species, your yard, patio, or balcony becomes a vital recharge station for migratory birds passing through and a sanctuary for nesting and overwintering birds. Recent wildfires have also resulted in yards as destinations for nutrition and stability.



Native plant garden at NSCC Courtesy of Veronica Bowers

Each patch of restored native habitat is just that – a patch in the frayed fabric of the ecosystem in which it lies. By landscaping, or wildscaping, with native

plants, we can turn a patchwork of green spaces into a quilt of restored habitat. More native plants mean more choices of food and shelter for native birds,

native pollinators and other wildlife. *Wildscaping for Songbirds* is a program to help demonstrate the importance of restoring our communities, one garden patch at a time. From a birds-eye view, we'll learn how to create wildlife-friendly gardens that help combat the loss of open spaces and create green corridors that link your wildscape to larger natural areas by providing habitat for wildlife. Our natural activity in our own yards can also contribute to the restabilization of Sonoma County's landscapes.

Veronica Bowers is the director and founder of Native Songbird Care and Conservation (NSCC) in Sebastopol, NSCC is a state and federally permitted wildlife rehabilitation facility whose dedicated volunteers care for approximately 1,000 native songbirds each year. Veronica has a passion for songbirds and since 1999 has worked exclusively with this diverse and challenging group of wildlife. Learning about the vital connection between native plants and native songbirds, Veronica created the Songbird Sanctuary Habitat Gardens on NSCC's grounds - 1.5 acres of songbird habitat, mostly native plants, annually supporting over 70 species.

Monday, March 19, 2018, 7:00 PM

"Bats: A Short Natural History"

Bats form the second largest mammalian order, and yet much about them is unknown. Come find out about bats, the only mammals capable of true flight.



Pallid bat Courtesy of NPS

In this talk, Meredith Rodriguez will discuss the natural history of bats, with a focus on local species, and share stories and insights from her research as a bat biologist. Learn about local bat species, like the pallid bat, which hunts scorpions and Jerusalem crickets without the use of echolocation, and much more!

Meredith Rodriguez is a wildlife biologist who specializes in bat ecology. She has experience working on a variety of bat projects throughout California, Canada, and the Caribbean. Meredith received her Masters of Science degree from the University of Western Ontario where she studied edge effects under the direction of Dr. Brock Fenton. Meredith has taught workshops on acoustic analysis and has experience conducting bat assessments at natural gas, solar, wind, and mining facilities across the western United States. She is currently working as an environmental consultant with Transcon Environmental in Berkeley, California.



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Continued from page 1

coast, photographed by Brock Dolman. Janeann Erickson's team drove up to one observation area and were surprised to see a Ferruginous Hawk perched on a fence post a few feet away, a perfect comparison to their Sibley's Field Guide photograph – in living color.

Worth Our Weight (<http://www.worthourweight.org>) catered our post CBC dinner, providing tasty lasagna, salad and assorted breads. This year, we also received a donation of compostable and biodegradable plates and flatware from World Centric (www.worldcentric.org). Thanks to the Sebastopol Community Cultural Center staff for their assistance, and to our volunteers who helped our evening go smoothly, with great service – Nancy Hair, Linda Hammer, Sandy Martensen, Susan Kirks, Marguerite Li, Asenath LaRue, Janet Bosshard, and Marilyn Scott.



Madrone Audubon post CBC dinner

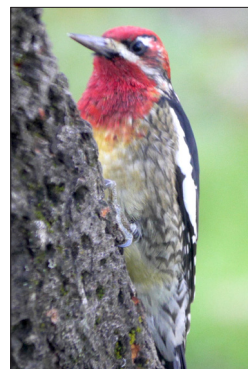
ornithologist, responded to Bill's comment: "Of course, those catastrophic fires that we saw up there have taken away a lot of the scrub habitat... obviously, that is actually meant to burn, but then a lot of forested habitat, too...the issue is we are in such weird cycles of climate now, with warmer temperatures that exacerbate those fires, so what happens with birds, and they mentioned that there were lower numbers of many species, is that often, you're going to see these dramatic changes with lower numbers of some birds as scrub habitats...are erased or forested habitats are changed dramatically... I would predict though that, as the habitats begin to regenerate, you will begin to see different bird communities... Forests and scrublands all across this continent are really maintained by fire...again, the issues are the catastrophic nature of fire and of course the damage and destruction to humans..."

Gene Hunn who led the Sonoma Valley CBC summarized their experience with an excellent post on North Bay Birds. This was the 13th CBC for Sonoma Valley (originally established by Tom Rusert and Darren Peterie in 2005). "... Our circle extends from Glen Ellen at the north edge to Wingo at the south, Napa Ridge on the east to Shollenberger and Ellis Creek on the west. Our 108 volunteers recorded 163 species on count day and an additional 6 during count week, which is

right on our long-term average. This despite the impact of the recent devastating fires that scorched significant acreage on the east and north edges of our circle.

Total numbers of individual birds, however, were under 50,000, 75% of our long-term average. This due largely to low waterbird numbers (e.g., several geese and grebe species missed; just ONE Greater Scaup), likely attributable to the very dry December. Five Lewis's Woodpeckers at three sites were notable, as was the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker returning for the third winter at a vineyard near Glen Ellen. A hybrid sapsucker (Red-breasted and Red-naped) was photographed northwest of Sonoma. Merlins and Prairie Falcons were widely noted. Red-breasted Nuthatches were notably common in the burned areas on Napa Ridge, feeding on knobcone pine cones opened by the heat. This and the apparent dislocation of numbers

of Band-tailed Pigeons were evidence of the fires' impact. A Yellow Warbler was photographed on count day at Lucchesi Park in Petaluma and four Chipping Sparrows were a surprise in a suburban yard near Sonoma. Warblers and finches were otherwise scarce. A male Mountain Bluebird was reported off Ramal Road, a first for the count, though we have no photos. Twelve Great-tailed



Sapsucker hybrid in NW Santa Rosa
Courtesy of Gordon Beebe

Grackles lingered at the Petaluma sewage ponds. Count week birds included an immature Bald Eagle of Shollenberger and several Ridgway's Rails heard at Alman Marsh in the early a.m. of New Year's Day."

Longtime Madrone Audubon member and conservationist Ted Eliot has participated in both the Santa Rosa and Sonoma Valley counts for many years, and reflected on his experience:

"I participated in both the Santa Rosa and Sonoma Valley Christmas Bird Counts this year, as I have done for many years in the southwest part of Santa Rosa and the Diamond A area of the Valley. Both counts this year suffered, I think, from the preceding dry, warm weather. Santa Rosa's has over the years suffered from the destruction of habitat, especially in my area where the ponds at Stony Point and College and Third Street are only a quarter of what they once were. The former Navy airport, where we used to find Burrowing and Short-eared Owls, is closed to visitors.

These counts are important as they give some clues about changes in bird populations over many years. I enjoy doing them, not only because I love the birds, but also because of the good time my teammates and I enjoy with each other, including the snacks each of us brings to our labors. I think it is enormously important that we recruit younger birders to participate as some of us drop off the teams as the years go by."

Congratulations and thanks go to all who participated in or otherwise helped to make this year's Christmas Bird Count - the largest and longest continuing exercise in citizen science - a success. Special thanks go to Peter Leveque and Stacy Li for organizing the West County CBC and compiling results again this year, and to Jeff Holtzman, Asenath LaRue, Gordon Beebe, Ted Eliot and Susan Kirks for contributions to this article.

This year, we also appreciated counters from the Redwood Region Ornithological Society's Santa Rosa and Sonoma Valley CBCs joining us for the West County dinner and report. Bill Doyle, Santa Rosa CBC leader, was interviewed for NPR's Science Friday program on December 22, 2017. A recap of the Santa Rosa experience included Bill's comment,

"Our species count this year was the lowest it's ever been historically. We just missed an awful lot of species that we normally would expect to see. That wasn't really a surprise because it's been going down year by year anyway. There are so many other impacts on birds besides the accidental ones like this fire. So whether or not it's due to the fire is really hard to say. It's certainly due to human impact of one kind or another."

In the Science Friday program, National Audubon Board member Dr. Drew Lanham, professor and



Children and Birds Lose a Friend

by Janeann Erickson

Madrone Audubon is saddened by the passing of Kathie Noguchi on December 19, 2017. Kathie was one of the original organizers of Madrone’s annual Bird Festival at Lincoln Elementary School, where she was the second-grade teacher before her retirement a few years ago. As a devoted nature lover, she instilled in her students an appreciation of their immediate surroundings. Because Lincoln Elementary School is close to the

West 9th Street heron and egret nesting area, it was important to Kathie that her students and their community see the nesting birds as something special and not as a nuisance as others might. Kathie’s energy and creativity will be greatly missed by the rest of Bird Festival committee, as well as by all who were close to her. Donations in Kathie’s name may be made to the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation.



Moon over Sonoma County

Courtesy of Brock Dolman

First Holiday Bird Walk for Young People

Spring Lake Regional Park

On Saturday, December 16th, 18 participants enjoyed sunny weather with a little wind for the *Holiday Bird Walk at Spring Lake*. Modeled after the Christmas Bird Count for Kids (started by



Enjoying treats before the walk Courtesy of Madrone Audubon

Tom Rusert & Darren Peterie of Sonoma Valley, now expanded internationally), the walk had been planned together by Sonoma County Regional Parks and Madrone Audubon prior to the October wildfires. We considered a postponement, but

collectively decided the walk and community experience at the park, spared from the impacts of the fires, might be a positive experience for everyone.

Thus, we gathered at the Shady Oaks Picnic Area near the Environmental Discovery Center, and we were very glad we did. Meagan Horeczko of Regional Parks prepared clipboards with colored photo sheets of the over 40 birds our co-leaders, Monica Schwalbenberg-Peña and Peter Leveque, thought we might see. This list was excerpted from the recently published Bird Checklist created by Madrone for Regional Parks and now available at Spring Lake. With the abbreviated bird checklist for each clipboard, our walkers were ready to go! In their 1-1/2 hour walk, they identified 16 species and 144 birds. Madrone member Richard McMurtry also joined the walk. Charter Madrone member Linda Curry also brought home-baked cookies and treats to share, which were energizers before and after the walk.

We all enjoyed the hour and a half walk, and afterwards our Chapter provided pizza from Mountain Mike’s, beverages and fruit to accompany

Linda’s delicious cookies and baked goods. Meagan introduced everyone to the nearby Environmental Discovery Center, which was thoroughly enjoyed. We plan to co-host this event for young people and families with Sonoma County Regional Parks each year in December. Do you know someone who might like to join us? Please keep next December in mind and look for the outreach and registration from Sonoma County Regional Parks.

Thanks to Monica Schwalbenberg-Peña and Peter Leveque for co-leading the walk, and to volunteers Janet Bosshard, Susan Kirks, Linda Curry, Kathleen Barker, Sue Rutherford and Gay Bishop for helping with the walk and refreshments. And thanks to Madrone member Richard McMurtry who stepped right into the role of recorder.

Dave Robinson, Michael Johnson, Meagan Horeczko, Katrina Stanton and Bethany Facendini of Sonoma County Regional Parks were immensely helpful in coordinating and scheduling the event – so thanks, Regional Parks staff!

Our Dec. 16th Bird Walk and Count:

Species	# seen	Species	# seen
American Coot	6	American Crow	22
American Robin	5	Belted Kingfisher	1
Black Phoebe	1	Bufflehead	8
Canada Goose	40	Dark-eyed Junco	23
Double-crested Cormorant	17	Golden-crowned Sparrow	6
Great Egret	2	Mallard	4
Mute Swan	3	Oak Titmouse	1
Osprey	1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1
Snowy Egret	2	Tree Swallow, baby, deceased	4
Turkey Vulture	2		
TOTAL species	19	TOTAL individuals	149

Save the Date

Spring Family Bird Walk

Saturday, March 24, 10:00 am – 12:30 am

Spring Lake Regional Park

Co-hosts: Sonoma County Regional Parks & Madrone Audubon Society

Check out Sonoma County’s

Regional Parks Calendar,
www.parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov/Play/Calendar/
or for more info, 707-241-5548.
No pre-registration required.
Free refreshments after walk.



Breeding Bird Atlas Results

Nesting performance of Sonoma County birds

by Gordon Beebe

This is the fifth article summarizing results from Madrone's Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA) of Sonoma County, completed in 2016 (see previous articles starting with the Summer 2017 edition of *Leaves*). By looking through the results of our latest BBA survey and comparing them to the first survey completed in 1995, we can see long-term trends that aren't immediately apparent in day-to-day birding. For example, to birders who have been in Sonoma County for a long time, it probably won't come as a surprise that Canada Geese are



Gosling

Courtesy of Gordon Beebe

more common now than they were 25 years ago, but to newcomers, it may seem as if they have always been here in current numbers. As mentioned in *Birds of Sonoma County*, by Bolander and Parmeter, this goose species was "formerly an uncommon winter visitant but has now become a common permanent resident". The atlas results indicate this species had the most successful expansion of breeding of any species in the county.

Before delving into the numbers, some adjustment will have to be made, as mentioned in previous articles. More blocks were surveyed in this second BBA survey, 191 compared to 183 in 1995. Also, atlasers spent over twice as many hours in the field this time around. Even with this in mind, the results are no less than astounding: Canada Geese were found nesting in 62 blocks, compared to only 4 blocks in 1995! Including all records (possible, and probable nesters), there were 105 blocks with records, compared to only 9 blocks in 1995. Though it may seem to some that more golf courses foster more geese, which could play a part, apparently a major reason for their increase is their discovery and use of numerous farm ponds and reservoirs in the county for nesting in the 1980's (Bolander and Parmeter). Now there are so many they can even be found nesting on offshore rocks.

Another species that had a population explosion in the same time frame is the Wild Turkey. Not a native species, wild-trapped turkeys, mostly from Texas, were introduced from 1959 through 1999 by the CA Dept of Fish and Game (*Scientific American*). The results are similar to the Canada Geese: 78 blocks with nesting confirmed, compared to 9 blocks in 1995; and 133 blocks for all results, compared to 29 blocks. Being an opportunist species, the turkey is able to survive and multiply in varied habitats in Sonoma County, taking advantage of many native species of plants and animals in the process. How much of an impact they have on native species remains to be quantified.

The third species in this article shares a commonality with the first two: it has benefited from human influences. Hooded Orioles are a "relatively recent colonizer to Sonoma County, doubtless due to the planting of non-native fan palms" (Bolander and Parmeter). Breeding was confirmed in 39 blocks this time, as opposed to only 7 in 1995; including all records, it was found in 61 blocks, compared to 16 previously. Does climate change also play a part in this colonization? Warmer weather does foster the growth of palms, but we still have some very cold days in the winter, which would limit the northward expansion of these potential nest sites. It could be that merely the popularity of planting palms in the last 50 years has encouraged this species to move north to nest, then head south again each year as the weather cools. Time will tell, as climate will change one way or the other, and birds and plants will have to adapt.

Some other species have fared well, too: the following list indicates the number of blocks confirmed for 2016, followed (after a backlash) by the number of blocks confirmed in 1995: Red-breasted Nuthatch (13/1); Pacific Wren (33/3); Common Raven (104/10); Hairy Woodpecker (10/1); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (35/5); Black-throated Gray Warbler (21/3); Double-crested Cormorant (7/1); Northern Pygmy-Owl (7/1), and Purple Martin (14/3). Some of the increase, as mentioned above, is related to the fact that atlasers spent a lot more time in the field, though other factors certainly are at play as well. What is it about these species that they were all more successful in nesting? Human influences, climate, food resources, and perhaps the adaptability of these species all worked in their favor.

However, not all species did as well. One anomaly: Hermit Thrush. It was confirmed nesting in more blocks this time, by 10 to 1,

**Thank you,
end-of-year
Donors!**

Madrone Audubon donated
30% of our end-of-2017
donations to the
Audubon Canyon Ranch
Mountain Lion Project

Total: \$1,185

but overall, including possible and probable birds, the total number of blocks went down, to 46/50. With twice as many hours in the field, why were there fewer blocks with evidence of the thrush this time? Has their habitat been disrupted noticeably over the last 25 years? They do need coniferous forest, and water. Perhaps the drought played a part as well during the last couple of years of the recent survey. Still, the Pacific Wren and Red-breasted Nuthatch occupy similar habitat, and they both did better, so something else is affecting the Hermit Thrush.

A few species had reduced showings in the recent atlas. Spotted Owls were confirmed only in 2 blocks, versus 10 in 1995. As mentioned in a previous article, however, there was an in-depth study of them in 1995, which did not occur during the atlas period this time. Also, with the encroaching Barred Owls, Spotted Owls may have become quieter and more secretive, making it more challenging to locate them. They were only located in 14 blocks, versus 30 before.

Finally, Cinnamon Teal breeding dropped off this round, to only five blocks, instead of 10 previously. The drought may have had a large influence on this species, as a lot of the suitable nesting and feeding areas had dried up. Continued observation of all of these species and others will help to give us a clearer picture of what influences nesting performance, and that will provide a tool for figuring out what is best for each species as decisions are made by varied interests in the years to come in our bird-and-habitat-rich, beautiful Sonoma County.



MEMBERS' COLUMN

Birding with a Trail Camera in my Yard

by Susan Dean

Birding with a trail camera in my yard

Our trail camera is designed for hunters to record deer, but it is a real addition to monitoring the birds in our yard. It goes on taking pictures when we are out of town. We just got back from a trip and found that we have a Varied Thrush now. It can be set up two feet from where they are likely to be so we can learn birds, like the Oak Titmouse, that are small and gray and we just didn't know. And if we can't figure it out, the pictures can be sent to better birders for identification. I thought the Cooper's hawk was a Sharp-shinned hawk until I sent the pictures to someone who actually knows birds and who told me what details to look for.



Backyard bath

Courtesy of Susan Dean

It took a while to learn to take pictures of small birds. The camera needs to be very close to the birds in order for the motion sensor to detect them. I set the camera on a step ladder a couple of feet from the bird bath. The short videos from my camera are clearer than the still pictures, but then it uses a lot of electricity, so, we've run a cord from a plug to the camera. And, because our water container is placed low, we also get night videos of the skunks and foxes.

Aiming the camera is important. The motion sensor may not be activated by critters below it. I bought a Browning Tree Mount which pivots and makes it easier to aim the camera. Of course, there is no one right place to put the camera. If it is too close, the bigger birds' heads can't be seen, but if it's very close, then the pictures of the warblers are better.

It is all fun anyway.

Bird-A-Thon 2018 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 Audubon youth activities, Audubon Adventures, Lincoln School Bird Festival, the West 9th Street nesting support project, and the Christmas Bird Count.

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 marathon experience of counting bird species in February and March for pledges - a set amount, \$ per species seen, whatever. Any amount is welcomed. These months are great for observing migrants and resident breeders so we're hoping for quality and quantity. Teams will be responsible for collecting and submitting pledges after their "Big Day" or, for full-time working team leaders, days spaced out over the 2 months!

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

BUT here's the thing...we would love to see more members of our teams or even a new team or two formed to help us reach our fundraising goals! 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 January and February Madrone General Meetings. Please support BAT and Madrone Audubon and our great educational and conservation programs - and have fun with our teams!

A note to all Madrone members...

Do you have bird observations or experiences to share? A recent memory of observation or resonance? Something seen in your backyard, on a walk or 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.

APPRECIATED DONATIONS

In Honor of...

Kip Cutting

by Barbara Brooks

Marjorie Davis & Fawn Rescue

by June England

Nine & Gabe Yelland

by Carole & Don Watanabe

Mila Martin

by Linda Fraley & John Nichols

In Memory of...

Thomas Charkins

by Nancy Rivas

Kent Mitchell

by Carla Howell

Kathie Noguchi

by Janet Bosshard & Claudia Norby

Rich Stallcup

by Kathlene Mugele

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome, New Members

Petaluma

Marianne Jacobs

San Francisco

Christopher Reiger

Santa Rosa

Kim Caffrey

Sebastopol

Jared Dawson

Windsor

Carolyn & Richard Weston



NEWS UPDATE

Federal Government:

Open Offshore Oil and Drilling

Environmentalists:

NO – Protect Our Coasts and Waters

On January 4th, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke released a plan for the largest expansion of offshore oil and gas drilling in U.S. history. This followed the Trump Executive Order of April 2017.

The plan would allow new drilling off the Northern, Central and Southern California coasts and most of the East Coast. The week prior, the Trump administration announced loosening oil-drilling rules put in place by the Obama administration following the 2010 Deepwater Horizon spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Those rules, opposed by industry groups when implemented, “required more frequent safety inspections of oil rig equipment, particularly blow-out preventers, a type of large valve which failed in that spill.” (San Jose Mercury News, 01/04/2018).

The thread of communication by the Secretary of the Interior is for energy dominance by the U.S.

Madrone Audubon is active in a national coalition to protect our national marine sanctuaries and

monuments. Richard Charter, a leader in the coalition and senior fellow with the Ocean Foundation in Washington, D.C., shared this response to the January 4th energy-dominance proposal: “You could not see a more radical, anti-environmental extreme in an offshore leasing program... This is a nothing-is-sacred approach to offshore drilling. They are going after everything at once,” Charter said. “We are going to fight this at every step. In the courts, in the Legislature, in the streets if we have to.” (San Jose Mercury News, Jan. 4, 2018)

Elected West coast officials, including the California and Oregon Governors, have also vowed to fight the plan.

On January 8th, the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), released the Notice of Availability, 2019-2024 Draft Proposed Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program and Notice of Intent To Prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. Comments are due by March 9, 2018.

Noteworthy are some of the hurdles to proposed drilling off the California coast, including:

- No drilling in national marine sanctuaries (Monterey Bay, the Channel Islands, Greater Farallones off Marin and Sonoma coasts).

- Banned in state waters: New oil and gas drilling is banned in state waters “from the beach out to three miles offshore” (San Jose Mercury News, Jan. 4, 2018) – under a law signed by former California Gov. Pete Wilson. The proposal under review would allow new drilling from 3 to 200 miles offshore.
- 18 coastal cities and 9 coastal counties in California, including Monterey, San Francisco, and Sonoma, enacted local laws banning construction of onshore oil terminals, pipelines and other oil equipment without a public vote.

We recommend our members watch and listen to media for dates of public meetings to review and comment on the proposal.

(Resources: San Jose Mercury News, Reuters U.S., Federal Register.)

Sign up for Madrone Audubon's Conservation Alerts

Send your email address to
Diane Hichwa, Conservation Chair,
at dhichwa@earthlink.net

OUT & ABOUT

Healing from the October Fires: Ecological and Firewise Perspectives

Thursday, February 1, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Biologist, poet, and filmmaker Maya Khosla
Heron Hall, Laguna Environmental Center,
900 Sanford Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95401
Pre-registration required.

This program will combine poetry, film, and scientific perspectives on fire ecology and becoming firewise. There will be two short films, a slide show about early stages of natural recovery from fire at the Pepperwood Preserve, and local community members will share their writings about the October 2017 Sonoma County fires. Maya Khosla has worked in habitat restoration in the North Bay, has documented nature's recovery from fires in the Sierras and Cascades, and has been interviewing and filming local firefighters as they discuss the dangers and offer solutions for building at the urban/wildlife interface. Information at <http://www.lagunadesantarosa.org> or (707) 527-9277 x110.

Modini Mayacamas Preserves (MMP) Stewards Workdays

February 8th (and ongoing)

Healdsburg, CA

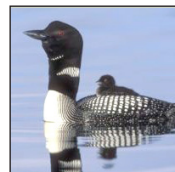
The MMP Stewards provide essential hands-on assistance to our land management team, including invasive plant removal, native plant propagation, trail maintenance, and other special projects. Come learn more about our preserve by getting your hands

dirty! We meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of most months from 9:00am – 1:00pm. To learn more about these ongoing events, contact ACR Resource Ecologist Julianne Bradbury by email at julianne.bradbury@egret.org or by phone at 707.433.1217. Driving directions at www.egret.org/directions_modini

Conservation of Common Loons in Washington Berkeley: Thursday, February 15

Daniel Poleschook, Jr. and Ginger Poleschook
Golden Gate Audubon Society
6:30 p.m. refreshments, 7 p.m. program

Common Loons are a charismatic species that faces many reproductive challenges. While 50 years ago they bred in northern California, today northern Washington is the southwestern edge of their North American breeding range. Cooperation between government agencies,



Common Loon and chick
Courtesy of Daniel &
Ginger Poleschook

Audubon groups, and individuals such as the Poleschooks has led to successful outcomes for this species. Daniel Poleschook, Jr. and Ginger Poleschook have been studying Common Loons in Washington for more than two decades. They also photograph other waterbird species and provide their images to scientific journals and other publications. For location and directions, visit www.goldengateaudubon.org/education/speaker-series/

Sonoma County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan with Caerleon Safford Thursday, February 22, 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Sonoma Land Trust Office,
822 5th Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95404
Free, but preregistration required. Register Now

In September of 2016, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors approved the Sonoma County Wildfire Protection Plan. This plan was written by Fire Safe Sonoma and involved input from a wide range of stakeholders. Join Caerleon Safford of Fire Safe Sonoma to learn about this plan and what proactive steps you can take to protect your home. Information at outings@sonomalandtrust.org or (707) 526-6930 x 110.

American Badger in Marin County Thursday, March 9, 2018, 7:30 PM

Marin Audubon Society Speaker Series
Richardson Bay Audubon Center and Sanctuary
376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon
(Blue Classroom)

Yes, there are badgers in Marin County! Join California's badger Naturalist Susan Kirks (Madrone Audubon Chapter President) to learn about Marin County habitat and the small badger population, studied for 16 years. Learn about the wonders of this special status mammal and its important contribution as a keystone species to California's grassland ecosystems. A recent, newly discovered habitat location will be shared (with privacy of the exact location protected for the sake of the badgers!).



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 2018 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 1, 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 3, 8:30 AM to Noon

BODEGA BAY. 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 the stop sign at the bottom of the hill to Porto Bodega. We will carpool from the large dirt parking lot. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115.

Saturday, February 17, 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. Lunch optional after walk. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115.

Monday, February 19, 7:00 PM

GENERAL MEETING. First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa. "Wildscaping for Songbirds." This is a free event and all are welcome.

Are you a National Audubon member?

Please consider joining our local chapter, Madrone Audubon.
(see membership form, back page)

Attention eBirders!

Madrone is working on a checklist of the birds at Taylor Mountain Regional Park, in conjunction with Sonoma County Regional Parks. Post your sightings to eBird and help us build our database.

March 2018 Calendar

Thursday, March 1, 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 3, 8:30 AM to Noon

ELLIS CREEK WATER RECYCLING FACILITY. Ellis Creek always has an assortment of waterbirds and marshland species, with frequent flyovers over 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: TBD.

Saturday, March 17, 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 19, 7:00 PM

GENERAL MEETING. First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa. "Bats: A Short Natural History." This is a free event and all are welcome.

Saturday, March 24, 10:00 AM – 12:30 AM

FAMILY BIRD WALK. Spring Lake Regional Park. Co-hosted by Sonoma County Regional Parks and Madrone Audubon. Visit <http://parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov/Play/Calendar/> or call 707-241-5548 for info. Advance registration not required. Free refreshments after walk.

Saturday, March 31, 8:00 AM to Noon

CRANE CREEK REGIONAL PARK. Take Rohnert Park Expressway east from 101, then turn south onto Petaluma Hill Rd. Turn left (east) onto Roberts Rd at Lichau Rd, Roberts Rd turns into Pressley Rd. Continue on Pressley Rd 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. Lunch optional after walk. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115.

Saturday, April 7, 8:00 AM to Noon

SANTA ROSA CREEK AT WILLOWSIDE ROAD. We will walk from Willowside Road to Delta Pond and back. Expect a variety of riparian residents and recently-arrived migrant species. Meet on the southwest side of the bridge over Santa Rosa Creek, on Willowside Rd, mid-way between Hall Rd, and Guerneville Rd. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 583-3115.

Phenology Project Volunteers

Madrone Audubon sponsored citizen science research at the *Paula Lane Nature Preserve*.

Accepting new volunteers for long-term, climate change impact project.

Visit 1 hour monthly, observe for 9 avian, 2 mammal & 4 plant species. Enter observations in Nature's Notebook/National Phenology Project.

To volunteer, contact: Susan Kirks, Madrone Audubon President. 707-241-5548, susankirks@sbcglobal.net

(Beginning birders/naturalists welcomed)



Madrone Audubon Society

Post Office Box 1911
Santa Rosa, California 95402

February/March 2018

Madrone *Leaves* is published bimonthly from October through May, plus one issue each in June and September.



**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 7:00 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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|--|---|
| President: Susan Kirks - susankirks@sbcglobal.net 241-5548 | Audubon Adventures: Carolyn Greene – cgnpark@yahoo.com 805-443-7289 |
| Vice President: Position open | Leaves Editor: Asenath LaRue - asenathlarue@gmail.com 608-293-1719 |
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| Treasurer: Christy Holmes - christyeholmes@gmail.com 805-895-6482 | Observations: Dan Nelson - birdsurf64@sbcglobal.net 479-2918 |
| Membership: Questions to Susan Kirks (Position open) - susankirks@sbcglobal.net | ACR Rep: Bryant Hichwa 785-1922 |
| Conservation: Diane Hichwa - dhichwa@earthlink.net 785-1922 | Ex Officio Board Member: Cheryl Harris - cheryleh70@gmail.com 294-6423 |
| Education Kits: Barbara Novak - b.novak34@gmail.com 795-3996 | Sonoma County Water Coalition Rep: Paula Zerzan - pzerzan@comcast.net 935-1523 |
| Programs: Position open | BBA: Gordon Beebe, gdbeebe@earthlink.net; Tiffany Erickson, tiffymm66@gmail.com |
| Circulation: Joannie Dranginis - joanhd@att.net 523-4373 | IMBD: Veronica Bowers - vlbowers@gmail.com 829-2955 |
| Junior Audubon: Position open | Christmas Bird Count: Peter Leveque and Stacy Li - stacyli@sonic.net 566-7937 |
| Outreach: Position open | Bird Rescue Center: 523-BIRD |
| Publicity: Nancy Hair - doghairnancy@yahoo.com 823-1073 | Native Songbird Care & Conservation: 484-6502 |
| Website Editor: Gordon Beebe - gdbeebe@earthlink.net 583-3115 | Northern California Rare Bird Alert 415-681-7422 |
| Wednesday Bird Walks: Tom McCuller - t.sisyphus@comcast.net 546-1812 | Audubon-California: Gaylon Parsons - gparsons@audubon.org 415-644-4605 |
| Saturday Bird Walks: Gordon Beebe - gdbeebe@earthlink.net 583-3115 | National Audubon Society: 225 Varick Street, NY, NY 10014 212-979-3000 |
| Bird-A-Thon Coordinator: Carolyn Greene – cgnpark@yahoo.com 805-443-7289 | |

Join Madrone Audubon – Support Your Local Chapter

Please complete this form if you wish to join Madrone Audubon or renew your Madrone membership

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.

- New member Renewal
 Senior \$15 Basic Member \$20 Family \$30
 Sustaining \$50 Supporting \$100 Patron \$500

Madrone Audubon is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our tax identification 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://www.madroneaudubon.org>