



MADRONE LEAVES

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

VOLUME 44

March 2011

Number 6

Jeopardizing Taxpayer Investment in Open Space

by Ted Eliot, Co-chair of the 2006 Measure F Campaign

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors' vote on 14 December 2010 to "interpret" an existing conservation easement could jeopardize the public's investment in protecting open space and agricultural land in Sonoma County.

Since its founding in 1990, the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District has protected nearly 10% of Sonoma County "in perpetuity" by conservation easements, giving the county a national reputation for land preservation.

Conservation easements are contracts between a land-preservation organization and a willing landowner. The landowner gives up certain development rights and agrees not to engage in specified activities and (in the case of District easements) receives a payment based on the appraised value of the easement. These easements are purchased with funds from a 1/4-percent sales tax and are binding on all future owners of the property.

So, what happened on 14 December? The 3-2 vote by the board raised troubling questions about the commitment of this or future supervisory boards to protect the taxpayers' investment in easements. It permitted a Roblar Road quarry developer to mitigate the danger that the quarry would pose to the endangered California tiger salamander on a neighboring property which is protected by a District easement. The board "interpreted" the existing District easement on the neighbor's property to allow the mitigation to take place there, even though use of the property as mitigation for off-site development is a non-agricultural commercial use which is not permitted.

The board essentially agreed to cover some of the developer's costs of doing business (that is, buying property for habitat protection). By doing so, it has made a gift of our sales-tax dollars to benefit a private individual. It is not hard to imagine other developers lining up to receive a similar subsidy.

Two members of the majority were "lame duck" Supervisors Kelley and Kerns. The third was Supervisor Valerie Brown. Replying to my disappointment with her deciding vote, she wrote: "although there was rhetoric - (at the board meeting) - to formulate a policy about mitigation, it will be a difficult policy discussion because the

Continued on page 3

MARCH GENERAL MEETING

"Ireland – Seasonal Birding, Pubs, and Traditional Music"

Monday, March 21, 7:30 PM

First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa

To celebrate St Patrick's Day, Diane and Bryant Hichwa will introduce us to the gorgeous "Forty Shades of Green" landscape of Ireland and some favorite birding hotspots.

Birds which nest above the Arctic Circle in northern Europe spend the fall and winter months in the protected shores and islands of eastern and southern Ireland. Birds that migrate to southern Spain and North Africa during the winter return to nest on the west coast of Ireland. The Hichwas visited Ireland in November where they found fields of wintering curlews, a great diversity of shorebirds and waterfowl along with many of the common European birds such as Rook, White Wagtail, Chaffinch, the colorful European Robin, and tits. In May they returned to view the great bird colonies of the Skellig Islands and the Cliffs of Mohr. Tens of thousands of nesting seabirds call this home, including Razorbill, Black Guillemot, and the elegant Northern Gannet while Red-billed Choughs play along the cliffs. Along the way, the Hichwas stopped

in a few pubs and enjoyed the traditional music of Ireland, which they will also share.

Diane and Bryant Hichwa have given their time and talents to Madrone Audubon in many capacities over the 25+ years that they have lived in Sonoma County. Both have served as president of the chapter, chaired committees, and given valuable expertise to the Madrone Board.

The Hichwas are also world travelers in search of the exceptional experience to witness bird and animal behavior in their natural habitat. They take pride in the experience of sharing with others the remarkable beauty and benefits of the natural world. From their home in The Sea Ranch, located in northern Sonoma County, they have developed their own special style of well-researched PowerPoint presentations based on their trips abroad.

Please bring your own MUG or CUP to the meeting!!! Madrone will continue to supply the instant coffee and tea.

Coming 18 April: Lorraine Parsons, Vegetation/Wetlands Ecologist, will tell us about the "Giacomini Wetland Restoration Project: Improving the Health of Tomales Bay Through Large-Scale Wetland Restoration."



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 e-mail as soon as possible when an issue surfaces. Please contact Diane Hichwa at 785-1922 or dhichwa@earthlink.net.

Wednesday March 2, 7:00 PM

BOARD MEETING. Sonoma County Environmental Center, 55A Ridgeway Avenue, Santa Rosa. For agenda information, contact Bob Speckels at robertspeckels@yahoo.com.

Thursday March 3, 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM

SHOLLENBERGER PARK/ELLIS CREEK. Bird Walk. Search for wintering birds at the Shollenberger Park ponds and wetlands in Petaluma. Bring a lunch and afterwards, we will bird the wetlands of the adjacent Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility. Meet in the Shollenberger Park parking lot. From Santa Rosa, take the Highway 116 exit (Lakeville Highway), go left under Highway 101, turn right at the South McDowell traffic light, proceed to the City Park sign, and then turn right into the parking lot. For information contact Tom McCuller at sisyphus@sonic.net or 546-1812.

Saturday March 5, 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM

PUTAH CREEK/LAKE SOLANO. Sample the wealth of bird life in Solano County. Meet at Lake Solano Park, 8685 Pleasants Valley Road, Winters CA. Take Calistoga Road (becomes Petrified Forest Road) to Highway 128. Turn right onto Highway 128, left onto Deer Park Road, right onto Silverado Trail North, and then left on Sage Canyon Road/128. Follow Highway 128 until you reach County Road 86/Pleasants Valley Road. Turn right. The park is immediately over the bridge to your left. There is a \$5 day-use fee at Lake Solano Park. 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. Bring lunch. Rain cancels. Leaders: Tom Cashman, 217-5103; Bill Doyle, 483-8773; and Bob Speckels, 569-0563.

Wednesday March 9, 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM

SONOMA COAST: DUNCAN'S LANDING TO GOAT ROCK. Bird Walk. Meet at Duncan's Landing (within the Sonoma Coast State Beach), approximately three miles south of the Russian River on Highway 1. Bring lunch. For information contact Tom McCuller at sisyphus@sonic.net or 546-1812.

Saturday March 12, 9:00 AM

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

Saturday March 12, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

MAYACAMAS MOUNTAIN AUDUBON SANCTUARY FIELD TRIP. Geology with Terry Wright. See page 4.

Thursday March 17, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM

POINT REYES AREA. Bird Walk. Meet in the parking lot across from the Bear Valley Visitor Center, which is just west of Olema. Bring lunch. For information contact Tom McCuller at sisyphus@sonic.net or 546-1812.

Saturday March 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 March 19, 8:00 AM to Noon

DELTA POND AND ADJACENT WETLAND PRESERVE. A very "birdy" walk in a wonderful place, not normally open to the public. We are grateful to Denise Cadman, Natural Resources Specialist for the City of Santa Rosa, who arranges entry to this and other city properties in the Laguna de Santa Rosa. Meet at the bridge over Santa Rosa Creek on Willowside Road, halfway between Hall Road and Guerneville Road. Park off the pavement and combine into as few cars as possible to enter the property. Rain cancels. Leaders: Tom Cashman, 217-5103; Bill Doyle, 483-8773; and Bob Speckels, 569-0563.

Monday 21 March, 7:30 PM

GENERAL MEETING. Bryant and Diane Hichwa will take us to Ireland for seasonal birding, pubs, and traditional music. 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 March 23, 8:30 AM to Noon

SPRING LAKE REGIONAL PARK. Bird Walk. Parking fee (\$6) for non-permit holders. From Summerfield Road in Santa Rosa, go east on Hoen Avenue, turn left on Newanga Avenue, turn right inside the park entrance gate, and meet in the parking lot near the restrooms at the top of the hill. For information contact Tom McCuller at sisyphus@sonic.net or 546-1812.

Saturday March 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, 763-2934.

Thursday March 31, 8:30 AM to 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), then right at the stop sign and continue 0.3 miles to the unpaved parking lot on the right. Bring lunch. For information contact Tom McCuller at sisyphus@sonic.net or 546-1812.

Saturday April 2, 8:00 AM to Noon

CRANE CREEK REGIONAL PARK. A beautiful trail through a thriving sample of Sonoma County oak savannah and riparian woodlands. Meet at Crane Creek Regional Park parking lot. Take Roberts Ranch Road from Petaluma Hill Road, just south of Sonoma State University. Parking fee (\$6), unless you have a permit. Informal carpool meets at 7:15 AM at the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District Office, 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa. The parking lot is behind the office (access from Carillo Street). Rain cancels. Leaders: Tom Cashman, 217-5103; Bill Doyle, 483-8773; and Bob Speckels, 569-0563.

Wednesday April 6, 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM

LAKE SONOMA AND WARM SPRINGS DAM. Bird Walk. Meet at the Lake Sonoma Visitor Center, approximately five miles west of Geyserville. From Highway 101, take Canyon Road to Dry Creek Road, then Rockpile Road to the Center. Bring lunch. For information contact Tom McCuller at sisyphus@sonic.net or 546-1812.



OPEN SPACE

Continued from page 1

board will want to maintain their right to look at each individual parcel.” In other words, she wants to have the power to alter easement language and believes other board members would agree.

It does not take much political savvy to understand that, if she is right, this will not be the last instance when the board will reinterpret an existing conservation easement for the benefit of a constituent, a donor, or a favored public agency. Such an action calls into question the validity of the District’s primary means for protecting land. It opens a loophole for political influence to override solemn contracts between landowners and the District which have been funded by taxpayers. It is a slap in the face to the 75% of the voters of Sonoma County who in 2006 approved taxing themselves until 2031 to fund the District’s work.

Two suits have been filed against the Sonoma County Supervisors, challenging the decisions on the quarry and the easement. In addition, those of us who want to see this loophole closed should urge our supervisors to reverse the 14 December decision and to adopt a policy under which any entity wanting to mitigate on District-protected lands must pay the full costs of such mitigation. These costs include the original acquisition of such land or an easement on it and of the work required to make the property suitable for mitigation. In other words, the taxpayers would be fully reimbursed for their investment.

Given the fact that the District’s board consists of politicians who are constantly pressured from many sources, it may be impossible to always protect the District from political manipulation. There may well be other cases in the future where a majority of the board will be tempted to succumb to such pressures. But we can and should work with our board members to prevent this from happening by instituting policies that will protect the taxpayers and the reputation of the District.

Madrone Audubon Member Survey 2010

Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2010 Member Survey! A total of 315 responses was received. The survey was intended to offer an opportunity for members to provide feedback to the board, regarding the current status of our organization and what direction members would like to see Madrone take in the future. Feedback was received in five specific categories: member profile, Madrone’s mission, general meetings, bird walks, and the *Madrone Leaves*. Members were also given the opportunity to provide feedback via a number of narrative responses. The perceived need for expanded outreach to youth seemed to be the most prominent finding of the survey. Ideas suggested to accomplish this included “going where the kids are”, offering more programs like the very successful one at Lincoln Elementary School, providing more interactive youth activities, enlisting youth to mentor youth, offering internships and sponsoring “Senior Projects”, and partnering with organizations that have existing youth programs. The results of the survey in its entirety should shortly be posted on the Madrone Web site.

A special thank you to Dennis and Mary Wheeler for their invaluable help with designing the survey and compiling the results. Thanks also to Gordon Beebe, Tiffany Erickson, Monica Schwalbenberg-Pena, and Gayle Pena for their assistance and insight into interpreting the results.

We will now need your active participation as we look at ways to implement the suggestions you, the membership, have made!

Bob Speckels
President
Madrone Audubon Society

Welcome New Friends of Madrone Audubon Society
Santa Rosa
Katherine Harkness, Norm Ortman
Sebastopol
Randi Farkas & Eric Snyder

**Bird-A-Thon 2011 is History...
The Time to Collect Pledges is NOW**

by Marcia Johnson, Bird-A-Thon Coordinator

This year’s biggest fundraiser for Madrone, the Bird-A-Thon, has come and gone. However, it is not too late to pledge money towards your favorite team(s). If you have already pledged, please get your money in soon to your team’s leader.

We had four teams this year: “The FeatherQuesters” with Diane Hichwa; “The Gray-headed Seersuckers” with Betty Burridge and friends; “The Roadrunners” with Betty Groce and Don McCarthy; and “The Wandering Tattlers” with Barbara Arbnich, Lisa Shiffirin, and Carol Zeidman. We also are honoring the memory of Phyllis Schmidt. If you would like to make a donation in her name, please send a check to Marcia Johnson, 1460 Big Cedar Lane, Sebastopol 95472.

When you see our fundraisers, please thank them, and support them if they ask for a donation.



Nestbox Notes, Part 2

by Phil Persons

Having tidied our old nestboxes and built or bought new ones (see *Madrone Leaves*, February 2011), we are ready to put them up. But before reaching for the hammer and nails, we want to consider aspects of placement that will affect the breeding success of our occupants. These are habitat, inclement weather, and predation.

Habitat here refers to grassland or open woodland with sparse suburban to rural development. (I lack experience with nestboxes in dense forest and heavily urbanized areas.) Birds, like humans, have strong habitat and housing preferences, but will settle for less than perfection if the essentials are present.

Continued on page 4



NESTBOX NOTES

Continued from page 3

Tree and Violet-green Swallows prefer woodland edges and grasslands with open flight lines in front of the nestbox. Nearby ponds, streams, and other wetlands are important to Tree Swallows, less so to Violet-greens.

Oak Titmice and Ash-throated Flycatchers prefer oak and mixed oak-conifer woodlands with cavities located within or at edges of denser stands, those of the titmouse at 6 feet or higher.

The Western Bluebird seems more of a habitat generalist and may be the most common nestbox user in suburban areas. A critical habitat feature is a small tree or large shrub within 50 feet in front of the box hole. The first flight of a fledgling bluebird resembles a crash landing; without a nearby perch, it will flutter to the ground and, unable to fly up, become prey. But safely above ground, its flight skills develop quickly.

While our weather is usually benign during the breeding season, occasional heavy rains driven by high winds can drench nestbox interiors, soaking nests and threatening nestlings and parents with hypothermia. Wide roof overhangs can reduce the problem, as can installing the box with the hole facing away from storm winds. Northeast is the usual recommended direction, but local geography may dictate local adjustment.

Predation is a complex topic, so the following remarks are general. Nests in well-built, perch-free boxes are rarely troubled by avian predators. Climbing predators easily reach boxes mounted on wood and wire fences, free-standing posts, and small-diameter tree trunks. Cats and raccoons will reach into the hole and leave behind a disrupted nest, empty of eggs or nestlings. Rats will enter the box and eat eggs, young, and even the brooding adult, leaving droppings and a torn-up nest. Snakes will consume eggs and young without disturbing the nest. A box placed near an anthill will soon be swarmed, with slow death of nestlings the result.

For discouraging climbing predators, the best mounting is the "elevator", which uses two five-foot lengths of smooth aluminum tubing (EMT) to raise the nestbox to a height of ten feet. It is inexpensive and easy to assemble, but difficult to describe. Contact me (ppersons@sonic.net) for a plan copy. Effective for hanging a box from a tree limb is a doubled length of stiff wire bent into a coathanger shape and stapled to the box. If you install your box on a t-post, first slip on a length of PVC tubing. "Tree Tanglefoot" carefully applied to all of these mounts will ward off ants; repeat applications as needed.

Although not a predator in the strict sense, the House Sparrow is a formidable nestbox competitor, often killing native adults and young, and destroying eggs. Numerous methods have been devised for reducing local populations of House Sparrows, but none are effective in the long run. If your neighborhood has House Sparrows, it is best to not put up nestboxes.



Mayacamas Mountain Audubon Sanctuary Field Trip

Sponsored by the Madrone Audubon Society

GENERAL INFORMATION: *The field trip is free, open to the public, and suitable for all levels of interest. Bring your lunch and refreshments for the day; wear layered clothing, hats, and sun protection. Sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots are recommended. Be prepared for rain showers, but heavy rain cancels unless otherwise indicated. No dogs, no smoking, and the preserve is not wheelchair accessible. Also be aware that spring is the season for the emergence of poison oak, ticks, and rattlesnakes. Meet on Pine Flat Road between Red Winery Road and the Sausal Creek Bridge, ¼ mile past the Jimtown Store on Highway 128 East at the first sharp right hand turn. Some may wish to form informal carpools, about a half-hour before the field trip, at the parking area along Russian River Road just west of Highway 101.*

Saturday March 12, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Terry Wright, professor emeritus of geology at Sonoma State University and president of Terry Wright Geology, an educational consulting company, will help us become more familiar with the dynamic geological history of the sanctuary and the Mayacamas Mountains. We will travel by car and make stops along the road, with short moderate hikes to geologic features. Bring pocket magnifiers and binoculars. Please, no small children and no dogs.



BOARD OPENINGS

by Nominating Committee Chair Bob Speckels

We have two board positions open for our Madrone Audubon chapter. We NEED a Recording Secretary and a Corresponding Secretary to support our program. These positions are essential to keep the chapter running smoothly, so help us to keep Madrone a first-rate chapter by applying for one of these positions. The **Recording Secretary** takes the minutes at the monthly board meetings. The **Corresponding Secretary** picks up, sorts, and routes the mail; logs all checks and then deposits them in the bank account; sends the log to the treasurer and membership; listens to messages on the telephone answering machine and routes the message(s) to the appropriate person(s); and takes care of correspondence (minimal).

Junior Audubon: This is an ideal position for someone who has young children or grandchildren, or who would just like to help children enjoy the outdoors. Outings are local and low-key. Veronica Bowers, former chair, and board members will be happy to help with contacts and ideas.

For more information/volunteer, call Bob Speckels at 569-0563.

Memorial Gift
In memory of Phyllis Schmitt
Barbara Rice



California Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program

March 25-26, Sonoma CA

The Junior Duck Stamp is a nationwide program to teach the importance of conserving our wetlands and migratory birds. It pairs science, the arts, and other core subjects to creatively teach greater awareness of our natural resources.

As part of the program, students from kindergarten to grade 12 are invited to participate in an annual art competition. Creating an entry is a valuable experience. It helps students tie together lessons on animal form and function, plant science, observation, wetland habitats, and more. In the visual arts, students practice sketching, drawing, painting, and composition.

A Quick History

Florida piloted its first local contest in 1989. California got involved as the second state in 1990. The program grew rapidly, and now all states and the District of Columbia participate.

In California, the program began with the efforts of a Beverly Hills artist and the staff at Gray Lodge Wildlife Area. Today, the U.S. Department of Interior and the Federal Duck Stamp Office head up this program, and in California it is coordinated by the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. The state receiving site for entries is the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. Judging has taken place in various locations, including San Francisco Bay and Sacramento National Wildlife Refuges, Yolo Wildlife Area, and facilities in Chico and Willows.

In 1992 the first sheet of junior duck stamps was printed, and it included nine state Best of Show winners from 1991 and 1992. After that, a national competition was instituted, with the top winning art printed as a stamp and sold to raise funds for conservation education. Winning art also travels to locations across the state for festivals and other public events. Contact the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, 530-934-2801, for dates.

For the past eight years, posters featuring student art have been created to help promote the California program. In 2001, California also began printing annual calendars that feature student art. Visit http://www.calwaterfowl.org/duck_stamp/art_gallery.htm to see the Online Gallery of Junior Art.

This year Sonoma Birding, Tom Rusert & Darren Peterie, is hosting the program. The event participants and details will be posted on sonomabirding.com, <http://audubon.sonoma.net/>, and other media outlets.



A Warm Welcome to a New Volunteer

Another Petaluma Wetlands Alliance docent/Madrone member has stepped forward to assume the task of membership.

Lisa Shiffirin has been working with Dennis Wheeler (temporarily stranded in New Mexico) on the what, how, when, and where of Madrone's membership. This is no small task and we are very appreciative of her willingness to help. Lisa is also the person to contact if you change your address or have any question about your membership. How fortunate we are that when the plea for help goes out to our members, someone answers the call!

Many, many thanks from Madrone to Dennis, who has done so much in the last six years in membership, outreach, and advisor to the board. Thank you, Dennis, from all your friends on the board.



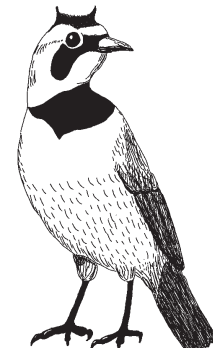
WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

Madrone Audubon Society thanks all of you who made donations in 2010. Your contributions will make it possible for us to continue with our valuable local programs and conservation work.

Madrone Audubon is a respected voice of the environmental community. We are able to influence environmental decisions both locally and regionally. We sponsor many regular events, outings, and special events,

such as our Migratory Bird Day celebration in May. Junior Audubon connects young people with nature and helps expand their horizons. We strive to provide educational and entertaining general meetings, which are enriched by the sharing of our members' experiences. The Petaluma Wetlands Alliance Committee relies on your support to strengthen their innovative educational and stewardship program.

Bob Speckels
Madrone Audubon Society President



DONORS:

\$500 and Above

Burning Hawk Wines, Econscious, Diane & Bryant Hichwa, Ellie Insley, Gerald & Mary Edith Moore, Petaluma Educational Foundation, J. Fred & Susan Taylor

\$200 to \$499

Mary B. Abbott, AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, Autodesk Inc., Nancy Conzett, Kathleen Garvey, Mike Heffernon, Frances Joos, Ryan Phelan, Raini Sugg, Ms. Jan Vannatta, Judy Withee & Steve Sweaney, Unitarian Universalists of Petaluma, Wild Birds Unlimited

\$100 to \$199

Jeff & Susan Baptista, Barry D. Burquist, Kerry Burke, Matti Christensen, Fredrick Crichton, Ron & Kris Dick, Ms. Louise Hallberg, Al & Amy Hesla, Donald K. Howard, Jr., Ellen F. Krebs, McElvov of Marin LLC, Sandra McKeon, Thomas Novoryta, David A. Oliver, Petaluma Garden Club, Anna Ransome & Cary Fargo, John D. Schuyler, Dr. & Mrs. Roger R. Stewart, Laurence & Barbara Taylor, Jean Tonascia, Barbara & Gene Toschi, Alice A. Webb, Jo An Wilson, Paula Zerzan

Continued on page 6

**DONATIONS**

Continued from page 5

\$50 to \$99

Rick & Sharon Abbott, Deborah S. Ab-
lin, Naomi Adams, Ann E. Amyes, Patri-
cia Anderson, Kathy Angell, George H.
Batchelder, Lorraine R. Bazan, Robin
Beeman, Michael Beeson, William & Rita
Bevans, Richard Bloom and Bridget
McCoy, Chester Bowles Jr., Gay Deady,
MaryPat Degagne, Dawn & K. C. Dewell,
John & Sara Donnelly, Fairfax Donovan,
Jeri Echeverria, PhD, Theodore L. Eliot,
Wendy Eliot, Clara L. Else, Clara L. Else
& Kevin O'Connor, Ms. Christine Engel,
Agnes Erickson, Janeann Erickson, Clif-
ford Farrell, Gene & Mary Gaffney, Ste-
ven Gelber, William D. Grasse, Dorothy
D. Gregor, Mac & Helle Griffiss, Linda
Hammer, Linda Hanes, Beth Harp-
er, Jack F. & Deyea V. Harper, Ju-
dith Harris, Joe Hasler, Cath-
erine M. Heater, Jo Anna Hedley,
Jeremy Joan Hewes, Ms. Gisela Hewitt,
Dawn Hollerith, Larry Houghton,
Emile H. and Linda Catlin Houle, Luba
V. Hunt, Kathi and Greg Jacobs, Don
& Louise Johnston, Linda & Robert
Judd, Christine Kline, Paul D. Lauri-
cella, Louisa Leavitt, Deborah A. Lo-
catell, Mary Macleod, Joy Mander, San-
dra Martensen, Denise Matlak, Cheryl
Maynard & Anthony Mountain, Thom-
as McCuller, Carol Meisker, Ruth Mise-
vic, Robert & Anne O'Donnell, Daniel
D. & Lu Carol O'Neill, Rebecca Olsen
and Ken Wilson, Martha G. Pogue,
Polly & John Post, Linda Price, John &
Cynthia Rathkey, Suzanne Reta, Eliza-
beth H. Rice, John & JoAnn Richards,
Brantly & Nancy Richardson, Stanley
Salomon, Richard M. Sands, Virgil E.
& Virginia L. Schrock, Jean Schulz,
Monica Schwalbenberg-Pena, Steve &
Wendy Smit, Daphne W. Smith, Mad-
eleine Sone, Richard Stradford, Diane
and Morry Strauss, Elinor & Jim Tay-
lor, Kathleen Tornow, Don & Marilyn
Toms, James A. Vaughn, Warren & Janis
Watkins, Glo & Al Wellman, Dennis
& Mary Wheeler, Wild Bird Center of
Santa Rosa, A. J. & Yolanda Wood, Da-
vid Yearsley

Here & There**The 2011 Audubon California
Assembly and the 15th Annual
San Diego Bird Festival***March 3-6, Marina Village Conference Cen-
ter in Mission Bay, San Diego*

The 2011 Assembly and the San Diego
Bird Festival will be held concurrently. It's
the first Assembly in southern California
and includes trips, events, and workshops
for the entire family. With an Assembly
Pass (\$125), you get free admission to all
Assembly events, workshops, banquet, and
a Saturday night private party to meet new
Audubon President David Yarhold.

The Keynote Speaker at the banquet will
be Peter Harrison, the world's leading au-
thority on seabirds and special guest Debi
Shearwater, a pelagic birding expert. Activi-
ties include conservation workshops, pelagic
birding, and birding trips to Baja, mountains,
desert, shore and coastal wetlands. For an
online schedule and brochure, visit [http://
ca.audubon.org/assembly.php](http://ca.audubon.org/assembly.php) or call 858-
273-7800 for information and registration.

The Festival will begin with an overnight
trip to Baja California and end with a trip
to Belize, March 7-14, sponsored by San
Diego Audubon's Avian Adventures and
operated by Wildside Nature Tours.

**Identification and Natural History of
Coastal Birds***March 12, 10.00 AM, Sea Ranch CA*

Jim Weigand, ecologist at the United States
Department of Interior Bureau of Land
Management, will conduct a workshop at
The Sea Ranch for those interested in help-
ing with monitoring activities on the North
Coast. For details, contact Diane Hichwa
at dhichwa@earthlink.net.

Audubon Canyon Ranch

It's time to host again at the Martin Grif-
fin Preserve, Audubon Canyon Ranch, near
the Bolinas Lagoon. Saturday and Sunday
hosts are needed to staff the reception table.
Experience is not required, and you won't
be alone at the table. Madrone's assigned

dates are: April 2, 3, 23, 24(Easter), May
14, 15, June 4, 5, 25, and 26. (Other dates
may be available from other chapters.)
You'll meet new and interesting people,
and you will have time to hike and view
the egret nests. For more information or to
volunteer, call Janet at 526-5883.

The Songbird Hospital

Volunteers are needed at The Songbird
Hospital. Help injured, ill, and orphaned
native passerines receive a second chance
at life in the wild. This spring and sum-
mer, volunteers are needed to help care for
baby birds as well as transport birds to the
hospital and assist with releasing birds back
into the wild. Located in Sebastopol, The
Songbird Hospital is an official program of
Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue. We pro-
vide care for over 500 songbirds annually,
and over 70% of them are successfully re-
leased back into the wild. To sign up for an
orientation, please contact Veronica at 484-
6502, or visit www.songbirdhospital.org.

**Godwit Days Spring Migration
Bird Festival***April 14-20, Arcata CA*

This festival celebrates Spring Migration
amid our ancient redwood forests, marshes,
and the Pacific Ocean with 450 bird species
recorded. One can watch Marbled Mur-
relets, have face-to-face encounters with
Spotted Owls, and take small boat tours of
Humboldt Bay to view migrant shorebirds
at their peak. Birding field trips and work-
shops are offered in the heart of California's
Redwood Coast.

Contact: info@godwitdays.com or call toll-
free at 800-908-WING or 707-826-7050.

**Reminder: Point Reyes Birding and
Nature Festival***April 29-May 2*

To register for the exciting trips, presenta-
tions, and talks, visit [www.pointreyesbird-
ingfestival.org](http://www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org). If you have any questions,
please send them to prbnfestival@gmail.com.

**44rd Western Sonoma Christmas Bird Count 2010**

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|--------------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|
| Greater White-fronted Goose | 1 | Black-crowned Night-Heron | 9 | Western Gull | 1683 | Rock Wren | 2 |
| Snow Goose | 4 | Turkey Vulture | 430 | Glaucous-winged Gull | 1538 | Bewick's Wren | 32 |
| Ross's Goose | 1 | Osprey | 5 | Glaucous-wng X W. Gull | | Pacific Wren (Winter) | 18 |
| Brant | 2067 | White-tailed Kite | 77 | (hybrid) | 77 | Marsh Wren | 27 |
| Canada Goose | 77 | Bald Eagle | 4 | Glaucous Gull | 1 | Golden-crowned Kinglet | 74 |
| Wood Duck | 5 | Northern Harrier | 72 | Black-legged Kittiwake | 1 | Ruby-crowned Kinglet | 300 |
| Gadwall | 5 | Sharp-shinned Hawk | 14 | gull sp. | 2552 | Western Bluebird | 342 |
| Eurasian Wigeon | 1 | Cooper's Hawk | 21 | Common Murre | 153 | Hermit Thrush | 91 |
| American Wigeon | 121 | accipiter sp. | 3 | Marbled Murrelet | 9 | American Robin | 3033 |
| Mallard | 159 | Red-shouldered Hawk | 68 | Ancient Murrelet | 27 | Varied Thrush | 78 |
| Northern Shoveler | 12 | Red-tailed Hawk | 273 | murrelet sp. | 5 | Wrentit | 60 |
| Green-winged Teal | 5 | Ferruginous Hawk | 11 | Cassin's Auklet | 1 | Northern Mockingbird | 11 |
| duck sp. | 4 | Rough-legged Hawk | 3 | Rhinoceros Auklet | 8 | California Thrasher | 12 |
| Canvasback | 48 | buteo sp. | 1 | Rock Pigeon | 77 | European Starling | 2187 |
| Ring-necked Duck | 2 | Golden Eagle | 5 | Band-tailed Pigeon | 122 | American Pipit | 15 |
| Greater Scaup | 118 | American Kestrel | 123 | Eurasian Collared-Dove | 138 | Cedar Waxwing | 106 |
| Lesser Scaup | 10 | Merlin | 2 | Mourning Dove | 72 | Orange-crowned Warbler | 5 |
| scaup sp. | 61 | Peregrine Falcon | 9 | Barn Owl | 9 | Yellow Warbler | 1 |
| Surf Scoter | 838 | Prairie Falcon | 1 | Western Screech-Owl | 2 | Yellow-rumped Warbler | 688 |
| White-winged Scoter | 11 | falcon sp. | 1 | Great Horned Owl | 16 | Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) | |
| scoter sp. | 2 | Virginia Rail | 20 | Burrowing Owl | 1 | Warbler | 18 |
| Long-tailed Duck | 1 | Sora | 3 | Spotted Owl | 1 | Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) | |
| Bufflehead | 998 | Common Moorhen | 2 | Short-eared Owl | 2 | Warbler | 59 |
| Common Goldeneye | 106 | American Coot | 264 | Northern Saw-whet Owl | 2 | Townsend's Warbler | 90 |
| Hooded Merganser | 14 | Black-bellied Plover | 4 | Anna's Hummingbird | 109 | Black-and-white Warbler | 1 |
| Common Merganser | 69 | Snowy Plover | 10 | Belted Kingfisher | 13 | Common Yellowthroat | 3 |
| Red-breasted Merganser | 19 | Semipalmated Plover | 79 | Acorn Woodpecker | 71 | Spotted Towhee | 120 |
| Ruddy Duck | 366 | Killdeer | 96 | Red-breasted Sapsucker | 16 | California Towhee | 272 |
| Wild Turkey | 149 | Black Oystercatcher | 96 | Nuttall's Woodpecker | 41 | Savannah Sparrow | 39 |
| California Quail | 657 | Spotted Sandpiper | 1 | Downy Woodpecker | 7 | Fox Sparrow | 107 |
| Red-throated Loon | 27 | Greater Yellowlegs | 9 | Hairy Woodpecker | 6 | Song Sparrow | 243 |
| Pacific Loon | 29 | Willet | 823 | Northern Flicker | 113 | Lincoln's Sparrow | 2 |
| Common Loon | 89 | Whimbrel | 7 | Northern (Red-shafted) Flicker | 35 | White-throated Sparrow | 6 |
| loon sp. | 17 | Marbled Godwit | 1680 | Northern (Red-shafted x | | White-crowned Sparrow | 716 |
| Pied-billed Grebe | 26 | Ruddy Turnstone | 26 | Yellow-shafted) Flicker | 1 | Golden-crowned Sparrow | 814 |
| Horned Grebe | 55 | Black Turnstone | 144 | Pileated Woodpecker | 1 | sparrow sp. | 4 |
| Red-necked Grebe | 17 | Surfbird | 54 | Black Phoebe | 151 | Dark-eyed Junco | 1406 |
| Eared Grebe | 1104 | Sanderling | 566 | Say's Phoebe | 21 | Red-winged Blackbird | 270 |
| Western Grebe | 69 | Western Sandpiper | 201 | Hutton's Vireo | 13 | Tricolored Blackbird | 5 |
| Clark's Grebe | 4 | Least Sandpiper | 196 | Steller's Jay | 275 | Western Meadowlark | 326 |
| aechmophorus sp. | 4 | Dunlin | 600 | Western Scrub-Jay | 342 | Brewer's Blackbird | 1654 |
| American White Pelican | 30 | sandpiper sp. | 1 | American Crow | 615 | Brown-headed Cowbird | 4 |
| Brown Pelican | 92 | Wilson's Snipe | 9 | Common Raven | 341 | blackbird sp. | 320 |
| Brandt's Cormorant | 154 | phalaropus sp. | 3 | swallow sp. | 2 | Purple Finch | 15 |
| Double-crested Cormorant | 57 | Bonaparte's Gull | 1 | Chestnut-backed Chickadee | 461 | House Finch | 200 |
| Pelagic Cormorant | 144 | Heermann's Gull | 1 | Oak Titmouse | 15 | Pine Siskin | 886 |
| American Bittern | 1 | Mew Gull | 121 | Bushtit | 242 | Lesser Goldfinch | 24 |
| Great Blue Heron | 41 | Ring-billed Gull | 85 | Red-breasted Nuthatch | 26 | American Goldfinch | 53 |
| Great Egret | 38 | California Gull | 1959 | White-breasted Nuthatch | 9 | Evening Grosbeak | 24 |
| Snowy Egret | 44 | Herring Gull | 389 | Pygmy Nuthatch | 137 | House Sparrow | 84 |
| Green Heron | 2 | Thayer's Gull | 16 | Brown Creeper | 48 | | |

| | | | |
|------------|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|
| 180 | Total species reported | 41,028 | Total individuals counted |
|------------|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|



Madrone Audubon Society

Post Office Box 1911
Santa Rosa, California 95402

March 2011

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



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

madroneaudubon@um.att.com

You will get your copy faster and save paper as a bonus.

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:** Bob Speckels - robertspeckels@yahoo.com 569-0563
- Vice President:** Susan Kirks - susankirks@sbcglobal.net 773-3215
- Recording Secretary:**
- Co-Corresponding Secretary:** Cindy Miller - millercynthia@earthlink.net 575-7548
- Co-Corresponding Secretary:** Sabrina Hearst - sabrinahearst@earthlink.net 575-7548
- Treasurer:** Mary Wheeler - mrywheeler@sbcglobal.net 494-6415
- Membership:** Lisa Shiffri - 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:**
- Publicity:**
- Webmaster:** Jeff Holtzman - Madrone707@hotmail.com 823-8290
- Bird Walks and Field Trips:** Tom McCuller - sisypus@sonic.net 546-1812
- Saturday Bird Walks:** Bob Speckels - robertspeckels@yahoo.com 569-0563

- Bird-A-Thon Coordinator:** Marcia Johnson - owlsnest@hughes.net 829-3808
- Leaves Co-Editor:** Mary Edith Moore - maryedithmoore@comcast.net 763-3577
- Leaves Co-Editor:** Daphne Smith - dwarsm@comcast.net 546-7808
- Leaves Production:** Kris Hutchins - krishutch@comcast.net 477-8156
- Hospitality:** Linda Hammer - linda@divinedelights.com 823-4389
- Observations:** Dan Nelson - birdsurf64@sbcglobal.net 479-2918
- Past President:** Janeann Erickson - erickson@ap.net 795-2498
- ACR Rep & MMAS Steering Committee:** Bryant Hichwa 579-1182
- ACR Rep:** Patrick Woodworth 829-8915
- Petaluma Wetlands Alliance:** Gerald Moore - glmemoore@comcast.net 763-3577
- Sonoma County Water Coalition Rep:** Paula Zerzan - pzerzan@comcast.net 935-1523
- Research and Breeding Bird Atlas:** Betty Burridge 527-0225
- Christmas Count and IMBD:** Veronica Bowers - vlbowers@gmail.com 829-2955
- Honorary Board Member:** Ernestine Smith 545-4255
- Bird Rescue Center** 523-BIRD
- Northern California Rare Bird Alert** 415-681-7422
- Audubon-California:** Graham Chisholm - gchisholm@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.

Joining or renewing with Madrone only. Basic Madrone Audubon membership dues cover the cost of your subscription to the Madrone Leaves newsletter. Please consider joining or renewing at a higher level to support the important work of Madrone Audubon in environmental education and conservation critical to the protection of wildlife and the environment. **Note: By joining Madrone you will not become a member of National Audubon.**

I am a new member _____ I am renewing my Madrone membership
Basic Member \$20 _____ Senior \$15 _____ Student \$15 _____ 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 make your check payable to "Madrone Audubon Society."
Detach this panel and mail to: **Madrone Audubon Society, Membership**
P.O. Box 1911, Santa Rosa, CA 95402