



# THE Clapper Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

**SPEAKER SERIES**

Free and Open to the public

Richardson Bay Audubon Center  
376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon  
Information: 415/789-0703

**Speaker Series is a week early**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 5 7:30 PM**

**Birdscaping**

With Michael Marchiano



Photo courtesy of Michael Marchiano

Food, water, shelter, and nesting sites – the ingredients for attracting birds to your backyard. East Bay naturalist, Michael Marchiano, reviews some of our common backyard visitors and what you can do to encourage more of the local avian population to come to your yard. He strongly encourages the use of native plants in landscaping and the non-use of insecticides, herbicides and rodenticides. His presentation will cover information on identifying birds as well as types of feeders and food to attract particular birds. He will also touch on enticing healthy insect and butterfly populations in your yards.

Michael has been leading hikes and giving nature presentations for such organizations as Audubon, Save Mount Diablo, Sierra Club, colleges, and civic organizations for more than 35 years. He is presently on the Board of Directors for Mount Diablo Interpretive Society and the Resident Naturalist at Wild Birds Unlimited in Pleasant Hill. He has been a birder for over 30 years and leads a monthly bird hike in Contra Costa County.

Come at 7:15 PM for refreshments. Meeting begins at 7:30 PM.

## Opportunity to Expand Corte Madera Ecological Reserve

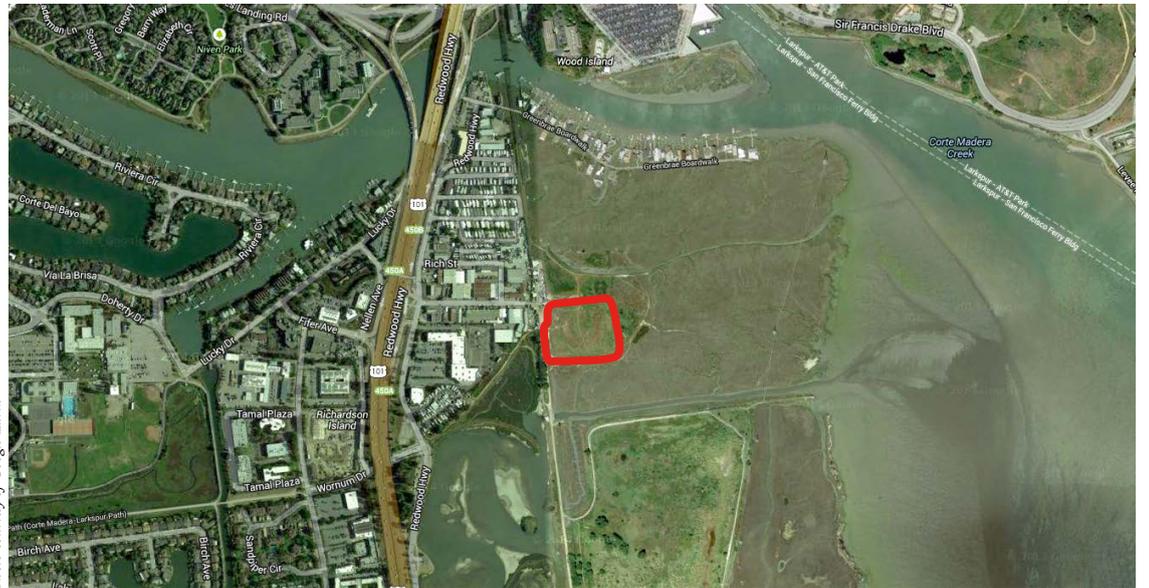


Photo courtesy of Google Earth

**The outlined area behind Cost Plus Plaza is 5.2 acres that MAS will purchase and restore to marsh to become part of the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. It is at the end of Industrial Way, near Highway 101 as it crosses over Corte Madera Creek.**

We're thrilled to announce that we're in contract to purchase the 5.2-acre undeveloped property at the end of Industrial Way in Corte Madera. This acquisition would add valuable endangered species habitat to the Ecological Reserve and prevent ongoing damage to the existing marsh and its clapper rail inhabitants. It's west of the levee trail and Corte Madera's Shorebird Marsh.

We've been trying to protect this property and include it in the Reserve for more than 25 years. Along the way we've opposed a number of proposals to develop houses and offices on it. Now, at long last, the owners are willing to sell to us for the appraised value.

The surrounding tidal marsh of the Reserve is one of just a few remaining in the Bay that has never been diked. It consists of mature marsh with a complex vegetation and channel structure and it supports the second highest population of California Clapper Rails in the North Bay, second only to Gallinas Creek marshes. Point Blue 2013 surveys show a population of 20 rails

in the north section, and 15 in the Muzzi Marsh which is the large marsh to the south that was restored about 25 years ago.

The parcel, the flat, high property south of the parking lot behind the cyclone fence, currently contributes nothing to the tidal marsh habitat. The uncontrolled uses on the site are detrimental to the rails and other wildlife that depend on the Reserve. The open nature of the area leads people to think it is for them to use as they wish. Walkers, people exercising on- and off-leash dogs and model airplane operators all use the property. Many use it to connect between the unauthorized narrow path worn by people on the Reserve and the levee trail.

If the property were to be developed, the adverse impacts would increase.

We've lost enough marsh in Corte *continued on page 4*

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

All phone numbers are in the 415 area code unless otherwise noted. Questions? Please contact the appropriate Board member.

President	Barbara Salzman 924-6057
Vice President	Lowell Sykes 388-2821
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Nominating	Phil Peterson 828-4780
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Volunteer Coordinator	
Property Management	Ed Nute 669-7710
Publicity	Martha Jarocki 461-3592
BAAC Repts	Lowell Sykes 388-2821 Barbara Salzman 924-6057

## DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Meetings open to members. If you wish to attend please call 924-6057.

6:30 PM, First Tuesday of the month  
Richardson Bay Audubon Center  
376 Greenwood Beach Road  
Tiburon, California 94920

**MAS telephone:** 721-4271 (for messages only)

Marin Audubon Society is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. All memberships and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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**Web site:** www.marinaudubon.org  
Northern Calif. Bird Box: 681-7422  
(Provided by Golden Gate AS)

Members can receive *The Clapper Rail* electronically instead of a hard copy by e-mailing joandbijou@sbcglobal.net

## DONATIONS APPRECIATED!

Marin Audubon Society welcomes gifts of funds, stock, or property, and bequests in general, or in honor or memory of someone. Gifts may be directed to any MAS project. Unspecified gifts of more than \$100 will be placed in the Endowment Fund for conservation, the protection of wildlife species and the preservation and enhancement of wildlife habitats. Since MAS is an all-volunteer organization, 100% of your donation goes to its projects. All gifts are tax-deductible and will be acknowledged in *The Clapper Rail*, as well as personally on behalf of the Society. Checks should be made out and mailed to: Marin Audubon Society, P.O. Box 599, Mill Valley, CA 94942.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife and their habitats, for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Barbara Salzman

We take a hiatus during the summer, when there are fewer birds around anyway. Our last speaker program is in June and they will begin again in September. This is the last issue of *The Clapper Rail* until September. We will be having a few field trips led by Jim White and Bob Battagin—do join them. And we will still be working to raise funds for our new acquisition and dealing with conservation matters.

Our big news this month is our contract to purchase the property at the end of Industrial Way. It's exciting but also stressful as we have to raise more than a million dollars. I am sure many of you know this site – the flat land surrounded by the Ecological Reserve. Anyone who would like to help us raise funds to purchase and restore this property to habitat, do give a call. The more help the better.

We had a wonderful Mother's Day Picnic. The weather was perfect, sunny and not too hot, the food was delicious and the field trips were a great success. A huge thank you to Martha Jarocki who again chaired the event with expertise and calmness, which is not easy when you have to organize volunteers and food for hundreds of people. We also couldn't do it without the many volunteers; please see the list on page 6. MAS has been sponsoring this event about 50 years. The proceeds benefit Audubon

Canyon Ranch and Marin Audubon.

Thank you to each of you who donated to our spring appeal. These donations all go directly to support habitats on our properties: growing plants, hiring crews for heavy maintenance that we cannot accomplish with our volunteers alone, supporting our volunteers during work days and for other necessities for our properties.

Don't forget we have lots of volunteer opportunities, especially with maintaining habitats on various of our properties. Call Board member Jude Stalker.

A special congratulations to Meryl Sundove who will be receiving the Elizabeth Terwilliger Environmental Award from WildCare. Meryl and her husband, Roger Harris, conduct our birding by ear class, which was just successfully completed, and have led many field trips for MAS. Meryl was the Environmental Education Director at the Richardson Bay Audubon Center and Sanctuary for many years before her retirement.

A special thank you also to the second-graders from Marin Country Day School who volunteered on a few days at Triangle Marsh. They were a great help pulling radish.

Have a wonderful summer, and remember there may be baby birds in your trees. Don't do your tree work during nesting season.

## MAY 4 FIELD TRIP

# Mount Burdell With Lisa Hug

By Vicky Van Meter



Glen Tipton, gtept@baac.com

## Lazuli Bunting

listen and focus to understand the myriad of bird songs around us. From the bubbly song of the **House Wren** to the chatter of **Goldfinches** and **Bushtits** to the pecking of **Acorn** and **Nuttall's Woodpeckers**, the woodlands seemed full of birds. In the open meadows with

Birds, birds, birds! It is always a pleasure to join Lisa for a bird walk, especially on a beautiful spring day on Mt. Burdell. The oak and bay woodlands and green, open meadows were full of birds and Lisa helped us

scattered oaks we watched **Western Bluebirds**, **Grasshopper Sparrows**, **Bullock's Orioles** and **Lazuli Buntings**. We sat quietly as an **Anna's Hummingbird** built her nest in a branch at the edge of the path, carrying nesting material and carefully arranging each piece. Lisa said this would probably be the second or even third brood since Anna's begin nesting early in the year. Other highlights included **Western Wood-Pewee**, **Pacific-slope** and **Ash-throated Flycatchers**, **Warbling Vireo**, several **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers**, **Lark Sparrows**, and **Purple Finch**. The species count for the morning was 49, plus we saw a gopher snake and a king snake. Lisa teaches birding classes at College of Marin and in Petaluma. Her website is [www.lisahugsnorthbaybirds.com](http://www.lisahugsnorthbaybirds.com). All in all it was a day to remind us how fortunate we are to live in this beautiful area with protected open space.

## MAS FIELD TRIPS

Open to the public

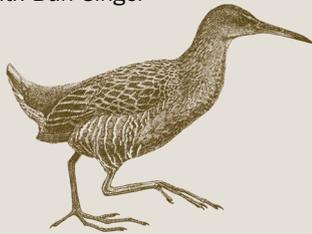
No need to sign up for one day trips, just join us. Bring lunch, field guide, and binoculars. For information, accessibility and weather check: Vicky Van Meter, 415/299-2514, vicky.vanmeter@gmail.com

### BIG ROCK/LOMA ALTA LUCAS VALLEY

Thursday, June 12, 2014

8 AM to 12 PM

With Dan Singer



Dan Singer serves on the Board of Directors of the Western Field Ornithologists, is Vice-Chair of the California Bird Records Committee, and is an eBird editor and reviewer for California. The north slope of Loma Alta above Lucas Valley Road is high and dry, with great vistas. This is not the place for a lot of species, but we should see some birds you may have not seen before, such as Grasshopper, Rufous-crowned and Lark Sparrows; Horned Larks; and Lazuli Buntings. Western Meadowlarks should provide the melody. This is also a great place for raptors. All are welcome to join us for a leisurely walk of about two miles roundtrip on a wide, graded road. Some of this is uphill. We will start early in the cool of the day but please bring plenty of water.

**DIRECTIONS:** Take Hwy 101 to Smith Ranch/Lucas Valley Road exit, head west on Lucas Valley Road. Big Rock Trailhead is about 5 miles west of Hwy 101 on Lucas Valley Road. The trailhead is on top of the rise and a large solitary rock, "Big Rock", is on the right. Park on the south side of the road (turn back by making a safe turn on a driveway a bit further along on the right). Trail heads south from the starting point.

### FIVE BROOKS AND BEAR VALLEY

Saturday, June 21, 2014

8:30 AM to mid-afternoon

With Jim White and

Bob Battagin

Join Jim and Bob on this trip as part of their year-long series of Marin walks. We will meet at Five Brooks to walk the trail. We have a chance of finding Wood Ducks and other pond-nesting birds at the retired logging pond. We will also look for birds in the Douglas Fir forest. We will then travel to Bear Valley where there is a fine place to picnic under an Acorn Woodpecker granary. Walks on the Earthquake Trail and to the Miwok village Kule Loklo will add to our knowledge of nesting birds.

**DIRECTIONS:** Meet at the Five Brooks parking area which is 1/4 mile west of Highway 1, 5 miles N of Stinson or 4 miles S of Olema. From US 101 take Sir Francis Drake for about 20 miles. Turn left onto CA 1 and drive about 3 miles to the signed entrance on the right side of the road.

### CARSON RIDGE/PINE MOUNTAIN, CASCADE DAM/ KENT LAKE

Saturday, July 19, 2014

8:30 AM to mid-afternoon

With Jim White and

Bob Battagin

Join Jim and Bob on the July walk to explore the watershed north of Mt. Tam. The walk will begin at the Carson Ridge trailhead on the Fairfax-Bolinas Road. We will hike up Pine Mtn. and back (3 mi.). We might then drive to nearby Bon Tempe Lake or Cascade Dam on Alpine Lake for an additional walk. Bring plenty of water, hat and sunscreen as the Carson Ridge hike can be warm in summer

**DIRECTIONS:** Take Hwy 101 to the Central San Rafael exit. Head west on 4th street to San Anselmo and then turn right on Sir Francis Drake to Fairfax. Turn left on Pacheco Rd. Take an immediate right onto Broadway, then the first left on Bolinas Rd. Drive 3.8 miles on Bolinas Rd to the top of the ridge, passing the golf course halfway. On the right side is the gated Pine Mountain Rd; there is a large parking area on the left side of the road.

### ABBOTTS LAGOON

Saturday, August 16, 2014

8:30 AM to mid-afternoon

With Jim White and

Bob Battagin

August will find Jim and Bob exploring Abbotts Lagoon. Arctic-nesting shorebirds begin arriving here in late July after the adults have left the juveniles to find their own way south. We will search the shores of the outer lagoon and scope the ocean for shearwaters and such. We may be a bit early for juvenile Baird's or Pectoral Sandpipers but a Semipalmated Sandpiper likely lurks with the Western and Least Sandpipers and something may surprise us.

**DIRECTIONS:** Allowing about an hour and a half travel time from San Rafael, follow Sir Francis Drake Blvd (SFDB) to Olema. From Stinson Beach go north on Hwy 1 to Olema. From Olema continue north on Hwy 1 (SFDB), take the second left turn (SFDB west), continue through Inverness, turn right (north) onto Pierce Point Road and keep driving until you come to the Abbotts Lagoon parking lot on the left (west) where our group will gather.

### LAS GALLINAS STORAGE PONDS SAN RAFAEL

Thursday, September 4, 2014

9 AM to 12 PM

With Susan Kelly, Len Blumin

and friends

Beginner birders are especially welcome on the first Thursday of each month for a leisurely walk around the Las Gallinas Storage Ponds near McInnis Park. There is always something interesting to see and over 100 species have been reported over the course of a year. Fall is a busy time at the ponds and provides an opportunity to study ducks and geese. Hawks are frequent and we see the graceful Northern Harrier on virtually every trip. This is great way to start learning the raptors, waterfowl, and other groups, as well as getting tips on optics, birding books, and birding etiquette.

**DIRECTIONS:** From Highway 101 take the Smith Ranch Road exit; go east toward the McInnis Park entrance. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks and go to the end of the road to the Las Gallinas Storage Ponds parking lot. Meet the group by the bridge just past the parking lot.

### CORTE MADERA CREEK

Saturday September 13, 2014

9 AM to 12 PM

With Rich Cimino and Janet Bodle

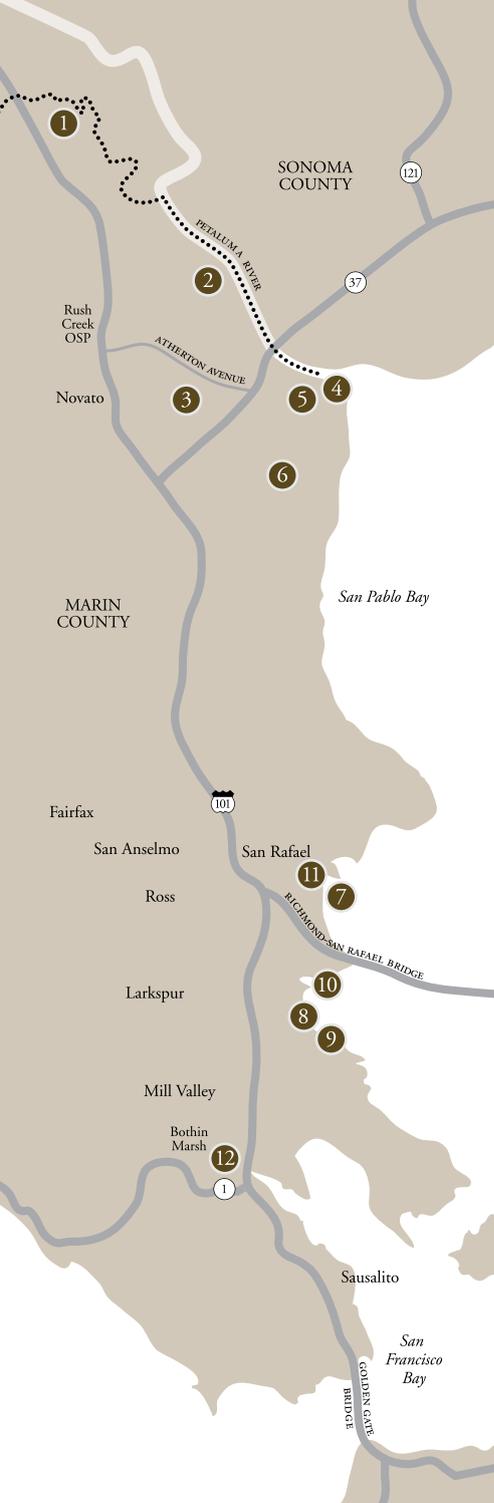
Join Rich and Janet for a walk along Corte Madera Creek. Rich has been birding in California for over 40 years and leads tours throughout the west and Alaska. Rich and Janet live on Corte Madera Creek and bird the area daily. The trip is planned to take advantage of the tides in the creek, and we will look for ducks, waders, peeps, sparrows and fall visitors.

**DIRECTIONS:** We will meet at 300 Drakes Landing Rd. in Greenbrae. From Hwy 101 take Sir Francis Drake Blvd. going west and take the first left onto Barry Way (just before the Bon Air Shopping Center). Then go left again onto Drakes Landing Rd. From the parking lot walk under the arch of the 300 building onto the deck by the water. We will walk west from here.

**Field Trips continued on page 5**

# CONSERVATION

Marin Audubon Conservation Committee reviews critical issues related to wildlife habitats and comments to cities, agencies, and other jurisdictions. To attend, phone Barbara Salzman at 415/924-6057.



## HAMILTON LEVEES BREACHED TO RESTORE MARSH

The Hamilton Breach was indeed an exciting event! This is another restoration that has been a long time coming—more than 30 years. MAS volunteers’ first involvement goes back further to when Jean Starkweather, Gil Thomson and I did bird surveys for the USFWS as the Army base was closing. Most of the site was idle and there were still a few plans coming and going. We recall being on the lowlands when there appeared several people in full body suits—we learned they were doing testing for toxics on the old landfill (landfill 26)—an area we frequented during our monthly surveys.

Then there were the years of fighting off development, referendums, lawsuits, base closure committees and many meetings. Finally the site became part of the Base Closure process. The Coastal Conservancy and Army Corps of Engineers partnered in planning and implementing the tidal marsh restoration, which took years and culminated in the breaching of the levees on April 25.

Our hats off to the Conservancy and the Army Corps of Engineers!

## MIRA MONTE

A few weeks ago, some of us from the MAS Board had the opportunity to visit the Mira Monte site with SMART staff and consultants, ESA and IWC. The plans to restore marsh on the site are progressing quite well. They are anticipating removing the marina, all houses and other buildings, and all of the fill that had been placed on the site for the marina, the restaurant and the other facilities. That should amount to several acres of restored marsh. A tide gate will be removed to open a slough between the access road and the landfill to tidal action. The only feature they are not sure will be removed is the access road.

The plan will be going to the SMART Board for approval on June 18.

## PLAN TO FILL THE CORTE MADERA INN POND RETURNS

This just under one-acre pond adjacent to the Corte Madera Inn (formerly Edgewater Inn) was last on the chopping block 10 years ago. The property is owned by Reneson Hotels and they are back again wanting to fill the pond and, this time, to expand the hotel as well. We stopped the effort last time in 2005, and we need to do it again this time.

The application calls for increasing the number of rooms by 77 to 187 rooms, adding 69 more parking spaces by filling the pond and the swimming pool, and eliminating the restaurant.

Even though small, a surprising variety of birds have been observed using the pond including Hooded Merganser, Mallard, American Wigeon, Great Egret and Snowy Egret and, over the past five or so years, a small flock of Black-crowned Night-Herons have been roosting in the adjacent trees.

The town is requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), a move which we strongly support. We will be submitting comments asking for full review of the benefits of the pond for wildlife, water quality and flood water ponding and for an alternative that keeps the pond.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Unfortunately there was insufficient time for a notice in our newsletter about the opportunity to submit scoping comments for the EIR. There will be time when the Draft EIR is released to submit comments. Contact the city to get on the mailing list to be notified to comment on the Draft EIR when it is completed.

## Corte Madera Acquisition

*continued from page 1*

Madera and Larkspur—it’s time to restore this piece to valuable habitat.

We’ve lost enough marsh in Corte Madera and Larkspur—it’s time to restore this piece to valuable habitat. Acquisition will permanently protect the property as part of the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. We will also be restoring the property to tidal marsh and creating high tide refugia habitat to benefit the clapper rails and other species that depend on the marsh.

MAS and our partner, Marin Baylands Advocates, have initiated a campaign to raise the

necessary funds to purchase the property. We are submitting applications for a federal grant, and are seeking state funds as well as grants from private foundations and individuals. With your support we will permanently protect this important habitat for wildlife and the public.

To be eligible for consideration by the agencies/foundations we need matching funds. Our goal is to raise \$100,000 from private sources.

Help us reach our goal by sending your generous donation clearly marked “FOR ACQUISITION” to: Marin Audubon Society, P.O. Box 599, Mill Valley CA 94942.

We can’t do it without you!

### MARIN AUDUBON PROPERTIES

- |                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Petaluma Marsh                    | 180 acres  |
| 2. Bahia                             | 60 acres   |
| 3. Simmons Slough                    | 144 acres  |
| 4. Norton Avenue Pond                | 4 parcels  |
| 5. Black Point Parcels               | 2 parcels  |
| 6. Arroyo San Jose                   | 2 parcels  |
| 7. Tidelands at Murphy’s Rock        | 34 acres   |
| 8. Corte Madera Marsh                | 1.8 acres  |
| 9. Triangle Marsh                    | 31 acres   |
| 10. San Clemente Creek               | 4.34 acres |
| 11. Tiscornia Marsh                  | 20 acres   |
| 12. Arroyo Corte Madera del Presidio | 2 acres    |

# Marin Audubon Society's Spring Bird Song Class

By Roger D. Harris

The spring bird song class kicked off on April 9 with a fun classroom session attended by 17 students, over half of whom were repeaters from previous years. Meryl Sundove, assisted by Jean Shultz and Roger Harris, teach this annual fund-raiser for the Marin Audubon Society.

Our field trip to Santa Rosa Creek on April 12 caught the exuberance of the early nesting season with the *maids, maids, put on your tea kettle-kettle* songs of **Song Sparrows** and the “potato-chip” calls of **American Goldfinches**. Among the more familiar songs and sights were surprises: a young male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** and a handful of **White-throated Sparrows** in brilliant spring plumage. We also enjoyed good looks at singing **Black-headed Grosbeak**, **Bullock's Oriole**, and **Spotted Towhee**—similarly colored but with different outfits.

An **Anna's Hummingbird** was making her lichen and spider-web nest. Not more than 50 feet off the trail, a pair of **Cooper's Hawks** perched on their new stick nest, treating us to striking scope views.

Santa Rosa Creek supports a multi-layered gallery forest, a habitat not found in Marin County. A glance at the wrack lines of vegetation debris left on the trees along the trail indicated that a few weeks earlier we would have been wading knee deep in winter flood waters. How glorious it is to have a stream so audacious that it still overflows its banks to nourish its biologically rich floodplain.

Next we stopped at the bustling heronry at the 9th Street median strip in Santa Rosa for the sights, sounds, and smells of nesting **Great, Snowy, and Cattle Egrets** and **Black-crowned Night-**



Glen Tapke, gtpk@pbac.com

**Black-headed Grosbeak**

**Herons.** Full scope views of the dazzling chartreuse facial skin of a breeding **Great Egret** elicited exclamations of OMG!

At o-dark-hundred on April 19 a cultish band silently trekked down the Tennessee Valley Trail and waited in the dark. Then the occasional song bird vocalized like an orchestra tuning up. Soon the full dawn chorus of singing birds joined together, reaching a crescendo near dawn.

At snacks by the lower stables, a Coyote limped up a hill with an injured leg in the pale morning light. Walking down to the ocean, the sun warmed the magnificent valley before us. A **MacGillivray's Warbler** sang from the willows below while another Coyote loped across a field above.

## MAS FIELD TRIPS *Continued from page 3*

### FARALLON ISLANDS BOAT TRIP DEPART FROM CLIPPER YACHT HARBOR, SAUSALITO

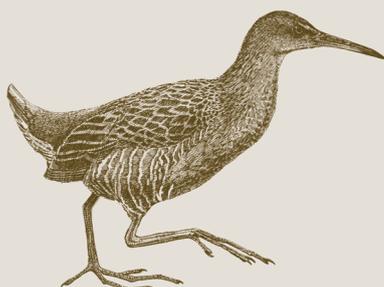
Sunday, September 21, 2014  
7:30 AM to 4 PM  
With David Wimpfheimer

Join us for our annual day of seabird and marine mammal watching as we head to the Farallon Islands and offshore waters. The outing will be led by naturalist David Wimpfheimer aboard Jim Robertson's power catamaran *Outer Limits*. On past trips we have sighted more than fourteen pelagic bird species, including albatrosses, shearwaters and auklets, as well as many sea lions, porpoises, dolphins and whales. We will get an up-close look at the islands and learn about their interesting natural and human history. This is a trip that both experienced and first-time birders and nature lovers will enjoy.

The cost will be \$110 per person. This year you can register online at [www.marinaudubon.org](http://www.marinaudubon.org). Online registration is preferred, but to register by mail, send a check to Marin Audubon at Box 599, Mill Valley, CA, 94942. **Include the name, e-mail address and contact phone number of each participant.** There is always a chance the trip may need to be rescheduled at the last minute due to sea conditions, so we need to be able to reach participants. We will send an e-mail to participants a few days before the trip. Write “Farallons” on the envelope and check.

Please sign up early, as we will limit the number of participants. Be prepared for any kind of weather with layered clothing. A rain jacket and pants are essential no matter what the weather on shore. Take seasick medication if needed. Bring lunch, snacks, water and plenty of sunscreen

**DIRECTIONS:** Take Hwy. 101 to the Marin City/Sausalito exit, head south on Bridgeway, take a left on Harbor Drive and go into the parking area at the end. We will meet on the south side of the parking lot to check in before boarding.



## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Gayle Atkinson, Ruth Beck, Richard Cimino, Dorothy & Roger Erickson, Carolyn Faul, Barbara L. Foster, Marjorie A. Guggenlime, Cathryn Hilliard, Gerald Neely, Denise L. Parson, Arthur K. Sachs, Judy Slater

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS

Judy Ardzooni, Holly A. Bacuzzi, Mariah Baird, Robert & Jessica Batha, Mark & Beverly Birnbaum, Andrew Bollen, Ben & Frances Borok, Leslie Brown, Sol & Frances Capper, Jon C. Carter, Everett Clark, James Cleaves, Mary Connors, MaryAnne Cowperthwaite, Anne Deleage, Drusie Davis Family Fund, Leslie Ellison, Dorothy & Roger Erickson, Margaret Feldstein, Brenda Foster, Lewis Fredrickson, Richard Gale, Penelope A. Gerbode, L. Martin Griffin, Jr., Erika W. Harris, Joan Haukom, Harry and Elaine Hicks, Robert Hinz, Victoria Jackson, Richard Jennings, Marcine Johnson, Cynthia Kenyon, Elizabeth King, William Lary, Sandra Levitan, Mark Lindberg, Neena K. Lyon, Evan Marks, Peter Mason, Alan & Barbara Miller, Eileen Murray, Patrick Murray, Geraldine & James Nardi, Frank & Lois Noonan, No. Cal. Chapter US Green Bldg Council, Warren & Marcia Nute, PG&E Corporation Foundation (matching donations), Rudolph Picarelli, Shirley Pullan, Flinn Moore Rauck, Redwood Psychological Assn, Susan & John Ristow, Hermina Rosskopf, Richard & Anne Ruben, Barbara & Jay Salzman, Robert & Dorene Schiro/The Endurance Fund, Barbara Searles, David Sexton, W.R. Shoemaker, Jean Shultz, Susan & Robert Spofford, Jane Stevick, Helen L. Stoddard, Susan & Brian Stompe, Idalia Sullivan, Meryl Sundove & Roger Harris, Robert Timineri, Anthony & Claudia Trevor, David Werdegar M.D., Brian P. Whitty, Amy & Bruce Wilcer, Donna Williams

## LARKSPUR STATION AREA PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

Approximately 500 people attended the public hearing on May 22. Except for a few bicycle enthusiasts and sustainability folks, all of the 100+ people who testified spoke against the Plan. Many opponents wore red T-shirts.

## COMMENT REMINDERS

Comment deadlines on the following projects are listed below. We reported on these in recent issues of *The Clapper Rail*. For more information, please look at our Web site to find those back issues.

PROJECT	DEADLINE
Larkspur Station Areas Plan	June 2
Pt. Reyes Management Plan Scoping	June 2
Bay Delta Draft EIR/EIS	June 14



Photo courtesy of Jude Stalker

The Goksal family removing Harding grass at Bahia on the second Saturday of May

#### HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

There may still be time to remove radishes and Italian thistles but the warm and sometimes hot weather has pushed them rapidly toward maturity. Harding grass is now well on its way to seed production so we will remove some of the plants and cut the seed heads from as much of the rest as possible. The temperatures without rain have also brought soil conditions to where watering the newest plantings is necessary for good survival. Act locally and join us on a workday. You would make a difference.

We have the tools, gloves and snacks. We generally work until about 1 PM, but even an hour is valuable help. Everyone is welcome.

#### VOLUNTEER WORK DAYS

##### Triangle Marsh, Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: June 7

Meet at 10 AM on Paradise Drive directly across from the main Ring Mountain trailhead.

##### Bahia, Novato:

Second Saturdays: June 14

Meet at 10 AM at the end of Topaz Dr. near Bolero Ct. and the tennis courts.

If you would like to help, please contact Bob Hinz at rbthznz@comcast.net or 415/383-8688.

#### THANK YOU TO OUR STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Dave Chenoweth, Isabelle Corn, Sharon Donovan, Louis Fenn, Orhan, Behl & Can Goksal, Bob Hinz, Elliott Miller, Kelly Nguyen, Linda Nicoletto, Eliza Peppel, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, Marin Country Day School second grade

# Mother's Day with Marin Audubon, Version No. 51

By Martha Jarocki

This year we changed the name from BBQ to Picnic in recognition of the fact that we no longer hover over hot coals, but order prodigious quantities of grilled lemon rosemary chicken from Inverness caterer Pamela Ferrari. Another change was the closure to the public of the heronry at the Martin Griffin Preserve at Audubon Canyon Ranch. Instead, ACR made sure that ranch guides were on hand to lead walks along two trails in Volunteer Canyon and the surrounding upland. Aside from that, our annual fundraiser which benefits Marin Audubon and Audubon Canyon Ranch, had the traditional amenities; beautiful spring weather, families of California Quail in the bush, and lunch al fresco in a California coastal canyon that looks much as it did a hundred years ago.

Each year, the event is powered our many volunteers and made possible by the local businesses that donate. Please join me in thanking these businesses the next time you visit: Bovine Bakery, Brickmaiden Breads, Burdell Properties, Lagunitas Brewing Co, Judy's Breadsticks, Ravenswood Winery, Redwood Empire Disposal/North Bay Corp., Safeway, Sloat Garden Center, Sunnyside Nursery,



Photo courtesy of Jay Salzman

Jo Kreider and other volunteers serve our guests at the Mother's Day Picnic.

Trader Joe's, United Markets, West Marin Community Services & Whole Foods. This year Three Twins Ice Cream donated the ice cream. We welcome them as new sponsors of our event.

We also thank the following volunteers, we couldn't do it without you: Greg Block, Diana Bloom, Mary Anne Cowperthwaite, John Cherone, Wendy Dreskin, Dave and Garth Herrema, Bob Hinz, Gerry Jarocki, Jo Kreider, Mardi Leland, Helen and Bill Lindqvist, Linda Nicoletto, Ed Nute, Flinn and John Moore Rauck, Barbara and Jay Salzman, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, Mindy and Vicky Van Meter, Rona Weintraub.

We hope to see you there next year.

#### APRIL 12 FIELD TRIP

## Bouverie Preserve

By Rona Weintraub

Twenty-four Marin Audubon folks made the early morning trip to Bouverie Preserve in Sonoma to go birding and to experience this wonderful preserve that can only be visited by reservation. We divided into two groups, the easy hike and the more challenging one to the waterfall. Each group was led by two Bouverie docents knowledgeable about the birds, flowers, habitats, and history of the property. The partly cloudy, cool day changed to bright sunshine as the day progressed.

Bouverie is a 500-acre nature preserve with open oak woodland, mixed hardwood forest, riparian habitats, a cathedral of redwood trees, rolling hills, fields of fresh tall grasses, and views of the Mayacamas range. Due to recent rains, our walk along the creek was accompanied by the peaceful sound of running water. We saw many wildflowers, including white baby blue eyes, woodland star, and delphinium. One meadow was filled with lupine and another with tidy tips.



Glen Tepke, gtepket@placac.com

#### Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

We saw about 40 species of birds. The first bird of the day was a very cooperative **Chipping Sparrow**, then a pair of **White-breasted Nuthatches** with nesting material, and later we got long looks at a gorgeous female **Red-tailed Hawk** perched at the top of a close-by tree. Other good birds were **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**, **Cassin's Vireo**, **Warbling Vireo**, **Peregrine Falcon**, **Orange-crowned Warbler**, and **Wilson's Warbler**. The guides also pointed out spots where rattlesnakes were resting but unseen. Many thanks to Hugh Helm, the docent at Bouverie who arranged our outing.

# MARIN BIRDLOG – APRIL - MAY 2014

By Josiah Clark

By mid-May the green foliage of the European grasses quickly turns yellow before they drop their brittle seed heads. Meanwhile the deeper rooted native grasses are still green and have just begun to set their seed. This year native fruiting plants including blackberry and Red Elderberry are setting their seed two weeks early; perhaps that sheds light on the apparent early arrival dates of the songbirds. These migrants rely on our native fruit to provide during the hard work of the nesting season. The dark, cold days of winter and the wintering birds they harbor have begun to feel like distant memories. Wintering birds depart largely unnoticed, as a different wave of northbound bird species begins to arrive in force. From yards, ridge tops and even outer points, birders

anticipate the new flight, songs and colors that now darn the ephemeral spring landscape.

Back on April 12 a red **Fox Sparrow**, presumably from the *zaboria* subspecies, was observed and photographed on Pine Mountain (TP). It's a very different plant community up there that proves it attracts different sorts of migrants.

Unusual at any time in spring were large incursions of spawning sardines. Though they showed up at several spots along the nearby coastline, in Marin they were present in Tomales Bay and Bolinas. On 4/17 Bolinas residents noted the baitfish bonanza



Photo courtesy of Glenn Tepke, gtepk@pbsac.com

## Sabine's Gulls

had attracted a real crowd in the otherwise largely depleted Bolinas Lagoon waterbird population. Among the hundreds of gulls were at least one **Mew** and **Thayer's Gull**. A week later the masses continued with at least 5 getting-to-be-late **Herring Gulls** remaining among lots of bleached out and beat up latecomers and loiterers. Twenty **Red-breasted Mergansers** on the lagoon also seemed a large number this late in the season. (BH, PP, KH, DS, JC) Among the least expected species to be seen in mass at this time were **Brown Pelicans**. This species has experienced major breeding failures to the south this year, with hundreds present along our coast. This species is generally very sparse, even miss-able by late April in most years. The spring presence of **Heerman's Gull** and **Elegant Tern** this April and May elsewhere in our region is part of the same southern breeding failure phenomenon.

Out at the Outer Point on 4/18 the ocean was alive with the seasonal seabird migrations expected with the northwest winds. Thousands of **Bonaparte's Gulls** and **Pacific Loons** streamed north visible from the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse (GB) at the northwest end of the county. That same gusty period brought a lone **Red Phalarope** to rest at Rodeo Lagoon in the southwest-most part of the county (WL, DE). On 4/27 a 1-year-old **Sabine's Gull** touched down on Tomales Bay mudflats, also after some rough weather at sea, and was observed for about 45 minutes by some lucky observers (DS, DSh, KH, PP).

As usual Bolinas had more than its share of unusual sightings where news of a rare **Pectoral Sandpiper** touchdown at the Bolinas Sewage Ponds hit the chat lines on 5/5 (RC, TG, MD, ME); it was likely the "rarest" sighting during this period.

April 30th was a major migration day. While SF seemed to get much of the best of the show, a few lucky folks made it to the Outer Point, which was "dripping with migrants". Among the fallout was an unusual mix of spring migrants including 3 **Vaux's Swifts**, 5 **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, 3 **Swainson's Thrushes**, 6 **Townsend's Warblers**, 12 **Western Tanagers** and 1 **Chipping Sparrow** (JM). Though observers were on the lookout in Bolinas, no major songbird movement was noted. Two **Swainson's Hawks** were proof of the keen eyes to the skies there, however, that same day (KH, PP). On May 4, at least one **MacGillivray's Warbler** was in a traditional nesting location in the riparian scrub plant community at the base of the cutoff to the Estero Trail just off Sir Francis Drake (DH). On May 5, fledged **Dark-eyed Juncos** in the hills above Fairfax appeared early to one observer who is no stranger to the intimate details of Marin's breeding birds. A Fox Sparrow there on the date was very late indeed (DSh).

**White-throated Sparrows** made a larger than expected late season appearance with 2 showing up at the Wildlife Gallery in Bolinas on 4/28 (KH) and singles in Inverness Park and the Earthquake Trail on 5/ 8-9 (DW). Similarly late was a singing **Townsend's Warbler** at Muir Woods on May 11, a bird that has never bred in the state (DE).

Observers and Acronyms **BH:** Burr Henneman, **DE:** Daniel Edelstein, **DH:** Derek Heinze, **DS:** David Sibley, **DSh:** Dave Shuford, **DW:** David Wimpfeimer, **GB:** Gordon Bennett, **JC:** Josiah Clark, **JM:** Jeff Miller, **KH:** Keith Hansen, **MD:** Mark Dettling, **ME:** Megan Elrod, **RC:** Renee Cormier, **TG:** Tom Gardali, **TP:** Todd Plummer, **WL:** William Legge

## Junior Bird Watchers

By Wendy Dreskin

Junior Bird Watchers is an in-school program designed to teach elementary school children to identify birds in their neighborhoods. The program was developed by National Audubon Society (NAS). When NAS discontinued the program, Marin Audubon assumed sponsorship and Wendy Dreskin continues as the instructor, conducting the program in classrooms at several elementary schools. If you would like more information, please visit "Junior Birdwatchers" under the "Birds" tab on our web site at [marinaudubon.org](http://marinaudubon.org), or contact Wendy at 415/457-3949.



**Isabella Babb** is a second grader at Bacich School. She loves hummingbirds and recently rescued two orphaned baby hummingbirds by bringing them to WildCare.



**Lucas Corneliusen** a 4th grader at the Novato Charter School, has passed the 8th grade Junior Bird Watcher test! His essay about his lifelong love of birding won him a spot as one of fifteen youth chosen to go on a bird walk with David Sibley as part of the Point Reyes Birding and Nature Festival. He was excited to see his first Chipping Sparrow on that walk. Lucas would like to see an Ash-Throated Flycatcher, a Prairie Falcon and a California Condor



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With Jim White and Bob Battagin
- August 16 **Field Trip: Abbotts Lagoon**  
With Jim White and Bob Battagin
- Sept. 21 **Field Trip: Farallons Pelagic Trip**  
With David Wimpfheimer  
Registration at [marinaudubon.org](http://marinaudubon.org)
- Oct. 11-12 **Field Trip: Monterey Bay weekend**  
With Terry Colborn  
Details at [www.marinaudubon.org](http://www.marinaudubon.org)  
or e-mail Terry, [TLCBirding@gmail.com](mailto:TLCBirding@gmail.com)

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## SUPPORT MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

The success of Marin Audubon Society's (MAS) work depends greatly on its chapter supporting members. We work collaboratively with the National Audubon Society (NAS) on issues of mutual concern, but very little of our funding comes from NAS. MAS relies on local support for our habitat protection efforts, conservation advocacy, birding field trips, educational speakers series, and publication of *The Clapper Rail*, which you will receive as a MAS member. To better ensure we can continue our programs on the local level, MAS offers a separate chapter membership. Your membership in MAS will help us protect local habitats, resident and migratory birds and provide you with educational and enjoyable programs as well.

If you are not already a chapter supporting member, we urge you to join MAS and urge your friends, neighbors, relatives to join us, too.

You can also join or make a donation on our Web site using your credit card or PayPal. Please go to [www.marinaudubon.org](http://www.marinaudubon.org).

## JOINT NAS-MAS MEMBERSHIP

A National Audubon Society Membership is a joint membership with National and the chapter. With this joint membership, you will receive our newsletter and other chapter benefits, however, MAS receives no portion of your National Audubon Membership dues. We receive a fixed amount based on our 2001 membership. We will receive, however, a portion of any new memberships that are generated by MAS, the local chapter. So we request that you send all checks for new National memberships to: Marin Audubon Society, P.O. Box 599, Mill Valley, CA 94942.

For NAS membership renewals, send your check directly to NAS.

## Join or Donate to the Marin Audubon Society

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