



William Legge

Rodeo Lagoon

William will share an overview of his adopted birding “patch,” Rodeo Lagoon in the Marin Headlands, where he has logged 270 different species of birds over the last 15 years. His talk will provide a birding overview of this southern Marin “hotspot,” from the expected to the unexpected, including several Lower 48 rarities. Specifically, William will cover the impact of weather at this windswept site, visible migration and the changes that he has witnessed over 15 years of birding his patch, Rodeo Lagoon! He will also reference the mammals he has encountered over the years and touch on the highlights of his “Rodeo Lagoon Big Year” in 2018.

William hails from the UK, sits on the Board of Marin Audubon, has been an avid birder since his teens and has been living in Marin since 2001.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER:

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10 7:30 PM

Tales from the Shoreline of the People's Coast

By Kim Steinhardt

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The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

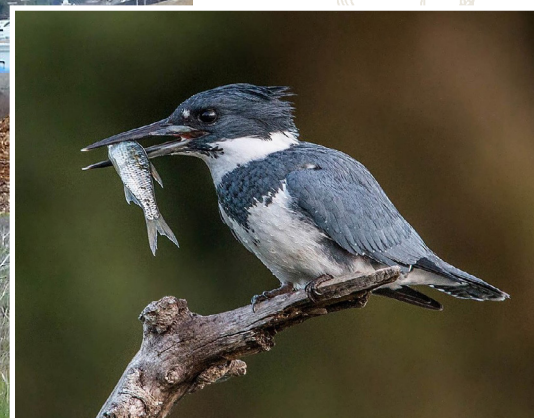
2018 Christmas Bird Counts – Three in Marin



Susan Kelly

LEFT: This Cheep Thrills CBC team is looking for the distant birds.

BELOW: Belted Kingfisher



Andy Morffus, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/us/>

Marin County is well covered with three Christmas Bird Counts, sponsored by the Marin Audubon Society, that cover North Marin, West Marin and South Marin. All CBCs are held between mid-December and the first week in January. The National Audubon Society administers the CBCs, and this will be the 119th CBC season. The CBCs are the longest-running citizen science program in the world with over 2,300 individual count circles. These bird counts provide valuable information about the long-term status of bird populations across North America and elsewhere. Each count area covers a 15-mile diameter circle in which teams of volunteers, from novice to expert, count every bird they encounter during the entire day. Everyone is encouraged to participate. For more information about Christmas Bird Counts go to www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count.

POINT REYES – SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15

The 49th Point Reyes Christmas Bird Count, sponsored by MAS and Point Blue, will be held on Saturday, December 15, 2018. The Point Reyes count was started by Rich Stallcup, Jon

Winter and others in 1970. Since then, the count is consistently among the top ten in the U.S. for the number of species sighted.

The total number of bird species typically surpasses 200. There are always some unexpected finds. In recent years we have had **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Mountain Bluebird, Least Flycatcher, Northern Waterthrush, and LeConte's Sparrow.**

The 27 territories within the Point Reyes Count circle are centered around Tomales Bay, stretching from Drake's Bay and Abbotts Lagoon to Walker Creek and the Chileno Valley. The Point Reyes count welcomes participants of all ages and skill levels. Bird counters are also invited to attend the compilation dinner held at the Dance Palace in Point Reyes Station starting at 5 PM. For complete information about the count and dinner and to register go to <https://www.pointreyescbc.com>.

CHEEP THRILLS – THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20

All are welcome to join us for the Cheep Thrills Christmas Bird Count on Thursday, December 20th. Areas we count include Hicks Valley in West Marin, Lucas Valley, Lakeville (in Sonoma

continued on page 2

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

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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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Website: www.marinaudubon.org

Members can receive *The Rail* electronically instead of a hard copy by emailing membershipsecretary@marinaudubon.org

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 \$500 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 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

With the election behind us, we can breathe a bit easier. With the House of Representatives in the control of the Democrats, it will not be easy for the administration to continue to weaken our environmental laws and regulations. With the new Congress, chairmanships of the House of Representative committees will now be Democrats who can be more dependably in support of protecting our natural resources and addressing climate change. It is important for our Congressman and Senators to continue to hear from constituents. A case in point is H.R. 6687 sponsored by Congressman Huffman and Congressman Robert Bishop from Utah. Let Congressman Huffman know you are not happy with this bill, that it should ensure ranchers are protecting natural resources.

A bit good news, this year's Northern Spotted Owl surveys show a slight increase in nesting success for the owls reversing the downward trend of the last few years.

We are very sorry for the lateness of the November Rail. Our printer failed us by getting it printed and mailed so late that it did not reach anyone until after the program and several field trips had occurred. Hopefully most of you were able to check the online version on our web site. We will try to ensure this does not happen again.

Christmas Bird Counts

continued from page 1

County), Mount Burdell, Olompali State Park, and the Indian Valley, Rush Creek and Bahia areas of Novato.

Last year the count was held on a lovely sunny day, with temperatures ranging from 34 in the early morning hours to 64 in the afternoon. The birds cooperated and rewarded us with over 43,000 sightings and an impressive number of species: 160. Volunteers counted birds by car, on foot, by canoe, and even by golf cart! Whatever your level of expertise or physical ability, there's a place for you on this count.

This will be the 8th year since we restarted Cheep Thrills. You can find past years' data and comparative totals on the Cheep Thrills website: <https://cheepthrillscbc.blogspot.com>.

After the count we will hold a compilation dinner at Ghiringhelli's Pizzeria in Novato. The cost will be \$12 per person, payable in advance. Contact the compiler for details: cheepthrills@icloud.com.

Cheep Thrills is dedicated to the memory of our great friend and teacher, Rich Stallcup.

SOUTHERN MARIN – SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29
The Southern Marin Christmas Bird Count

We invite you to **sign up for MAS's Action Alert list** to receive notices of our activities and conservation alerts. On the top right corner of our website is the spot to sign up to receive our alerts. Early on we only had one list for conservation alerts and program schedule changes. Recently we added an alert for field trips and programs. Now the lists are combined so that everyone receives a monthly message with field trips, program and conservation alerts. Because comment deadlines on conservation matters may be between regular monthly alerts, you may receive an additional alert on occasion. We encourage you to sign up for MAS's email list so that we can serve you by timely updates of activities and important conservation needs. However, if you wish to be removed from the list, simply check the box at the bottom of the email.

Again, we invite you to join one or all of the Marin Christmas Counts, See the article on pages 1 and 2 and sign up.

We expect our winter appeal letters to reach you in early December. We hope you will all consider the importance of our work and give generously. See page 7 for additional information on donating. Thank you in advance.

We hope you all had a happy Thanksgiving and have a wonderful Holiday season.

circle extends from the ocean under the Golden Gate Bridge on the south, Terra Linda on the north, Bolinas Lagoon on the west, and San Francisco bay and marshes on the east. Areas covered include the Audubon Canyon Ranch, Stinson Beach, Muir Beach, Fort Cronkhite, Muir Woods, Tennessee Valley, Sausalito, Tiburon Peninsula, Ring Mountain, MMWD watershed and lakes as well as the towns of Mill Valley, Corte Madera, Larkspur, Fairfax, Ross, San Anselmo and San Rafael. This count area has been designed to include a wide variety of habitats and depending on weather usually produces over 175 different species of birds and over 70,000 individual birds. The count will take place on Saturday, December 29th rain or shine. You can also participate in the count by doing a feeder watch at your home for the day and reporting the results. The Christmas Bird Count Compilation Dinner will be held at the Tamalpais Community Center immediately following the count. Volunteers to help with the dinner setup and cleanup are needed.

Sign up online by December 26 by completing the registration form online at www.marinaudubon.org/cbc_form.php or contact compilers Ed Nute and Bob Hinz at smcbc.marinaudubon@gmail.com.

MAS FIELD TRIPS

Open to the public

No need to sign up for one-day trips, just join us. Bring lunch, snacks, water, field guide, and binoculars. For information, accessibility, and weather check: Jane Medley, 559/760-1551, janermedley@gmail.com.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE MOST RECENT UPDATES.

BAHIA, RUSH CREEK & ROWLAND AVENUE WETLANDS, Novato

No. 12, Birding in Marin Series

Saturday, December 1, 2018

(Note: To avoid conflicting with CBCs, this is the first Saturday in December.)

8:30 AM to 3 PM

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

Please meet at the foot (east end) of Bahia Drive in Novato where Marin Audubon has completed a large restoration project. Shorebirds, ducks, herons, swallows, and rails will reap the benefits here for years to come. After viewing the birds and the restoration area, we will walk the trail along the edge of the mixed oak woodland. Next, we will drive to the end of Topaz Street to view the Horseshoe Pond where diving ducks, including a few Barrow's Goldeneyes, like to winter. During the day we will practice some bird counting to help prepare for the upcoming Christmas Bird Count season. After lunch we will take a look at two nearby areas—Rush Creek and the Rowland Avenue wetlands. Heavy rain cancels.

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101 in North Novato, take the Atherton Avenue exit east about 0.9 miles, then turn left onto Bugeia Lane, which becomes Bahia Drive. Follow it to the end where there is street parking. No restrooms available here.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY BIRD WALK – INVITE YOUR FRIENDS!

LAS GALLINAS VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT (LGVSD), San Rafael

Sunday, December 2, 2018

10 AM to noon

With Eric Scholz and Alex Scholz

Join parents Eric and Alex with their young families including beginning hikers, toddlers in strollers, and babies in backpacks for a relaxing walk around the hard-packed levee trails at Las Gallinas. This is a great location for sharing a variety of wildlife, particularly water birds, with your family in the company of other families. The area allows for easy and close observation of birds.

Introducing young children to the beauty and fascination of birds often leads them to a lifelong interest in the natural world, so come learn from other parents how you can cultivate your own interest in birds and share this interest with your children. Marin Audubon hopes to begin offering regularly scheduled family bird walks and welcomes your suggestions about this possibility.

We'll meet next to the classroom building by the parking lot, where a concrete path leads across a bridge to the main trail. There is a porta potty at the parking lot, or you can use the restrooms at nearby McInnis Park.

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101, exit at Smith Ranch Rd. Drive east on Smith Ranch Rd. toward McInnis Park. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks and drive about 0.5 mile through the Las Gallinas Sanitary District gates and into the parking lot at the end of the road.

RAPTORS & MOBILE eBIRD INSTRUCTION AND ENTRY, Nicasio

Monday, December 3, 2018

9 to 11 AM

With Bob Battagin

In recent years the September through December migration window at Nicasio Reservoir has yielded numerous raptor and shorebird species, many of which we hope to observe on this field trip. We will meet at mile marker 0.95 along Nicasio Valley Road where we will start our raptor search. At our next stop we will walk a short distance along the reservoir shoreline keeping an eye out for shorebirds as well as raptors. While mobile eBird entry is not required, for all those who would like to understand how to use mobile eBird, we will record our sightings together by learning the simple entry techniques. Rain the day before or the day of the field trip cancels.

DIRECTIONS: Meet at mile marker 0.95 along Nicasio Valley Rd. Nicasio Reservoir can be reached by taking the Lucas Valley Rd. exit from Hwy 101 to the end and then taking a right on Nicasio Valley Rd. Pass through the town of Nicasio and mile marker 0.95 will be just as you arrive at the reservoir.

THE PONDS AT THE LAS GALLINAS VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT (LGVSD), San Rafael

Thursday, December 6, 2018

8:30 AM to noon

With Bob and Sande Chilvers

Beginning birders are especially welcome on the first Thursday of each month for a leisurely walk around the Las Gallinas ponds. Join our friendly leaders as we search for waterfowl, waders, songbirds, raptors, and shorebirds. Wintering waterfowl have been arriving and provide interesting weekly sightings. Other uncommon species arrive unexpectedly such as the **Rough-legged Hawk** and **Palm Warbler** seen in November.

We welcome bird enthusiasts of all levels. We all help each other to find and identify the birds, so come assist in our search. You don't even have to arrive on time because we spend the first 30-60 minutes studying the birds around the first pond and the group is easy to find. Heavy rain cancels.

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101, exit at Smith Ranch Rd. Drive east on Smith Ranch Rd. toward McInnis Park. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks and drive about 0.5 mile through the LGVSD gates and into the parking lot at the end of the road. Meet the group by the bridge just past the parking lot. There is an outhouse in the parking area for public use or you can use the bathrooms at nearby McInnis Park.

HABITAT POTENTIAL BIRDING TACTICS Christmas Bird Counters Read This!

Fort Baker, Sausalito

Saturday, December 8, 2018

9 AM to 1 PM

With Josiah Clark

Join this Christmas Bird Count (CBC) training trip and be sure that some of Josiah Clark's boundless enthusiasm for birds and Christmas Bird Counts in particular rubs off on you! This trip is well suited for CBC Area

Leaders interested in improving their methods of coverage and ultimately finding more species on upcoming counts. However, anyone interested in becoming a better birder, making every moment count in birding, and becoming a more informed conservation advocate will find this trip worthwhile and enjoyable.

We will meet on the pier at Fort Baker and begin our exploration of nearby habitats including rocky shoreline, sheltered coves, open water, coastal scrub, coast live oak woodlands, exotic woodlands, hilltop areas, and more. Josiah will share a variety of strategies developed for birding Big Days to help leaders explore the anatomy of a route, improve methods of coverage, allocate their time in various locations, and compare and contrast different birding methods and styles. He will demonstrate that how one looks is at least as important as where one looks.

We may visit additional, nearby areas such as Kirby Cove and Hawk Hill, so please be willing to carpool to locations with limited parking. There are portable restrooms at Fort Baker. Bring warm clothing, scopes, binoculars, water, and lunch.

DIRECTIONS: Exit Highway 101 at Alexander Avenue. Continue on Alexander Avenue for 0.3 mile. Turn left onto Bunker Road and then turn right following the signs to Fort Baker. Park in the large lot along Center Drive at the Bay Area Discovery Museum or at the waterfront along Sommerville Rd. Meet at the pier where the road dead ends at the marsh.

COSUMNES RIVER PRESERVE, Galt

Sunday, December 9, 2018

– RESCHEDULED

1 to 5:30 PM

With Kurt Rademacher

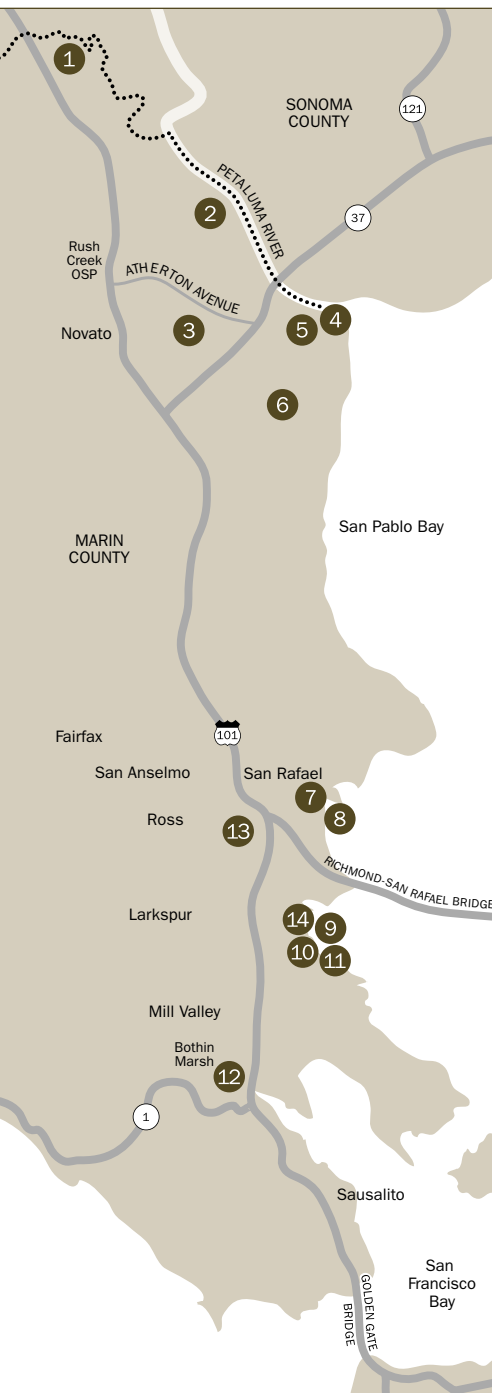
At the junction of the Great Central Valley and Delta, the Cosumnes River Preserve is a 46,000-acre conservation project acquired and jointly managed through the collaboration of a number of conservation organizations and agencies. Here, the last undammed river on the west slope of the Sierra still routinely floods up in winter, fostering bountiful habitats of wetlands, savannah and riparian forest for wintering waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds and raptors. Tundra Swans, Shovelers, American Wigeon, Green-winged & Cinnamon Teal, Pintails, White-faced Ibis, and White Pelicans are among the winter throngs. Greater and Lesser Sandhill Cranes are a highlight of our tour, and we'll end up at Staten Island for sundown to witness the spectacle of some 15% of the Pacific Flyway's cranes noisily settling down for their nightly roost.

DIRECTIONS: We'll meet at the Cosumnes River Preserve Visitor Center parking lot at 13501 Franklin Blvd, Galt. Allow about two hours from Central Marin via Hwys 37, 80 and 12 through Rio Vista to I-5, then north to Twin Cities Rd. exit. (Or you can take I-80 to Sacramento, then south on I-5 to Twin Cities Rd. exit.) On Twin Cities Rd. proceed east briefly to turn right (S) on Franklin Rd. about 1.7 miles to the parking area. You are welcome to come earlier and enjoy your lunch

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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.



HUNT CAMP LAW SUIT SETTLED

MAS, the Native Plant Society and Marin Conservation League have reached a settlement with Marin County in our suit against Marin County Open Space District (OSD) to protect natural resources at risk with proposed “improvements” on the Hunt Camp Trail in the Gary Giacomini Preserve. The Open Space District had proposed a project to straighten, widen, flatten and realign sections of the entire trail and to adopt it as part of the OSD trail system. The project had been proposed by a biking group. Improvements to the upper elevation segment of the trail had already been made when we filed our suit.

Natural resources associated with this trail that are at risk with these trail improvements include Northern Spotted Owl with nests near the trail, salmonids whose habitat could be impacted by increased sediment flows from the trail improvements and ongoing use, and special status plants along a section of the trail. The goal of this joint suit is to ensure that these resources are protected from impacts of construction and post-construction use.

Terms of the settlement provide that the Open Space District:

- Amend the current approval of the Hunt Camp Trail improvements by removing components on the Lower Hunt Camp section, including construction of the connector trail to the Manzanita Fire Road, and not reconsider these components for two years following the execution of the settlement agreement.
 - If and when, after two years, the OSD considers proposals for the Lower Hunt Camp Trail, the OSD will allow public comment on proposals to alter the trail and will consider new proposals, including proposals to remove the designation, at the same time it considers improvements to the Lower Trail.
 - Meet with the petitioners to discuss future proposed Lower Hunt Camp Trail improvements prior to publicly announcing any such proposals and provide public notice with at least a 30-day public review of the environmental effects and possible need for Initial Study, Neg Declaration, or EIR.
 - Provide petitioners with report on visitation gathered by trail counters for the 10 trails already agreed upon by MAS’s previous suit.
- Our task now is to use the two-year hiatus to the benefit of the resources.

RICHARDSON BAY ANCHOR-OUT UPDATE

This month Richardson Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) approved a resolution to address vessels that are unattended and unoccupied, some of which are used by anchor-outs to store their stuff. Some folks have multiple storage boats out on the bay, posing health and safety risks. During winter especially, vessels break loose, sink or run aground, risking injury to people, property and the environment.

The resolution provides for abating unoccupied vessels when voluntary removal fails to occur and is based on the State Harbors and Navigation code. That code provides that after 30 days unattended vessels be considered abandoned and a public agency may remove them, subject to noticing for 30 days and removal after 15 days. Anchor-outs are requesting more time.

At the hearing, MAS supported the timing provided in state law, expressed concern about the vagueness of the resolution and recommended that, if the Board wanted to allow more time, that the time be specified and there be a plan for enforcement.

Several Board members also expressed concern about the vagueness of the resolution but addressed their concern by requesting reports on how the abatement is progressing. Wording was added to the resolution requiring that the Harbor Master provide the RBRA with regular reports on the abatement process.

While we are pleased the Board is showing concern, we continue to be of the opinion that that is not enough. Oversight and enforcement are needed, and it is not clear either will occur. Based on the long pattern of lack of enforcement, our concern is that the pattern of more anchor-outs coming into the Bay will continue.

Another matter raised during the November meeting was a plea from a resident whose boat was damaged by an anchor-out boat that broke loose. He tried to sue the RBRA for damages but found that he could not. It seems a government agency cannot be sued for not enforcing ordinances. He was seeking help from the RBRA and reported that he had been advised Supervisor Sears had directed the sheriff to go lightly on enforcement. He pleaded for some help but got no response from the RBRA.

At the meeting, MAS mentioned a recent

MARIN AUDUBON PROPERTIES

1. Petaluma Marsh Expansion Site	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. Tiscornia Marsh	20 acres
8. Tidelands and Murphy’s Rock	34 acres
9. San Clemente Creek Tidelands	4.34 acres
10. End of Channel Drive	?? acres
11. Triangle Marsh	31 acres
12. Arroyo Corte Madera del Presidio	2 acres
13. Cal Park	<1 acre
14. Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Expansion Site	5.2 acres

Chronicle article and TV and radio reports about strides Sausalito is making enforcing ordinances governing anchor-out use of the Bay. We praised Sausalito for beginning to actively remove abandoned and derelict vessels and urged the RBRA to follow that lead

CORTE MADERA CREEK FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PROJECT EIS/EIR

The Army Corps of Engineers has released an EIR/EIS for a project to reduce flooding in the section of Corte Madera Creek extending from the downstream end of the concrete channel to the Town of San Anselmo. Five alternatives are presented: A (the required No Project Alternative), B, F, G and J. All except A would remove the existing fish ladder that is just downstream of the Ross post office; that removal would greatly benefit fish. It was intended to be a temporary structure and is actually an impediment to fish passage.

The favored alternative (J) has an underground bypass beneath Sir Francis Drake Blvd. Other alternatives are more expensive and some have a more environmentally-desirable wider above ground creek widening.

All alternatives also provide for increased flows either through channel widening or an underground bypass. All have floodwall components, some more than others. The project is constrained by all of the development so close to the creek.

Most of the alternatives would be so expensive that they have been rejected by the Corps as not having an acceptable cost-benefit ratio. The high cost of above ground widening, which would allow for more riparian habitat, is because of the costs of purchasing land for expanding the creek above ground.

Only fourteen of the resting pools and a portion of the concrete channel will be removed. All of the pools are inadequate because they are too far apart and shallow to provide resting habitat for steelhead to move up or down the creek. Replacement pools would be designed in consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service. The concrete channel with no protective cover where fish can hide or that can cool the water leaves fish easy pickings for predators.

Our comments addressed these biological concerns. The due date for comments was too early to allow for noticing in the newsletter.

POINT REYES GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

In November the National Park Service released the notice requesting input for their Environmental Impact Statement for the General Plan Amendment for the more than 28,000 acres of Pt. Reyes National Seashore and north Unit of GGNRA that are leased for ranching. Unfortunately, the comment

deadline and the public meetings occurred before our December newsletter deadline, therefore, we emailed an "action alert."

Five alternatives will be addressed: A – continuing current management (No Action); B – Continued Ranching and Management of the Drake's Beach Tule Elk herd (the NPS's proposed action); C – Continued Ranching and Removal of the Tule Elk at Drake's Bay; D – Reduced Ranching and Management of the Drake's Beach Tule Elk; E - No Ranching and Limited Management of Drake's Beach Elk Herd. Actions common to all alternatives focus on enhancing public use, hiking, biking, public trails and day use facilities. There are no common actions to protect wildlife.

We published an article on the proposed Management Plan in our December 2017 *Rail* and as stated there, we asked to have a broader focus in the EIS/EIR to address other wildlife, habitats, and habitat connectivity. There is no evidence that our recommendations were accepted. Now there is a new factor: H.R. 6687 (Huffman) that provides for extended long-term ranching leases and management of the elk to include removal by hunting and/or relocation to Indian lands. The bill has passed the House but not the Senate. Unfortunately, the bill includes nothing about management to protect the natural resources by ranchers, and provides for leasing to anyone.

Some environmental groups support the Huffman bill, while others strongly oppose it (those that recently sued and won in federal court). They want ranching removed. MAS is not opposed to ranching, but we are opposed to carte blanche approval of ranching leases even if the ranchers are not responsibly caring for the land, and to allowing ranch leases even if they are to non-family. How an objective EIS can be produced with the directives in H.R. 6687 is unclear as well.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Although it will be too late to submit scoping comments for the EIS, guided by our comments above, send comments to Pt. Reyes National Seashore, and to Senators Diane Feinstein and Kamala Harris. Tell them the focus should be on resource protection.

If you missed this comment period, you will still have an opportunity to comment when the EIS is released. Then there will be more information on which to base your comments.

Give a MAS Gift Membership this Holiday Season!

Struggling to find gift ideas for this upcoming holiday season? How about a Marin Audubon Society Gift Membership. What better way to share your love of Marin's natural environment, birds and other wildlife with a loved one, family member or friend, by supporting Marin Audubon's conservation work and other activities. You can purchase a Gift Membership at www.marinaudubon.org/membership-form.php. Make sure to "tick" the "Gift Membership" box, fill in the name and address of the recipient, and provide the "Giver's" name in the "Comments" box. We will dispatch a MAS Gift Card to the recipient's address by USPS on your behalf. Season's Greetings!



THANKS FOR YOUR DONATIONS

Amazon Smile, William A. Clarke, Robert J. Fallat, Martha Frankel, Peter & Linda Hoch, Jeffrey Lopic, Sarah Martin, Kurt Rademacher, Jordan Rinker, Garrett Scales, Hugh & Georgia Schall, Peter & Lila Steinle, Kandice K. Strake

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Peggy Bannan, Maggie Fillmore, Kat Foster, Pamela M. Nurse, Andrew Ray, Sharon Reackhof, Garrett Scales, Mark Stephenson

TIME TO TRIM TREES NOW!

Many folks trim trees in Spring which is the worst time for nesting birds. Instead, do your tree trimming or cutting during early winter months to avoid harming nests and young birds in their nests.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Early rains or not, this is planting time. If like many people, you would rather plant than weed, this is your time to volunteer on Marin Audubon's properties. Planting early is important so that the transplants have more time to establish themselves before the dry summer. We will be planting at Bahia, the new Corte Madera Marsh area and Triangle Marsh.

Is one of our project areas in your neighborhood? Act locally and join us on a workday. Witness restoration first-hand and be a part of it. We all 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. Bring a friend.

VOLUNTEER WORK DAYS

Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: December 1, January 5

Meet at 10 AM on Paradise Dr. directly across from the main Ring Mountain trailhead near the Montessori School.

Bahia, Novato:

Monthly workdays are continuing but on a more irregular schedule. If you would like to help, please contact Jude at judestalker@gmail.com.

Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Expansion:

HELP NEEDED! We need lots of volunteers to help spread mulch around the new plants after Hanford ARC finishes planting the native species for habitat. If there is time, we will help install string and stakes to discourage geese from landing and eating our newly-installed plants. Join us to complete restoration of this important habitat we created last year behind Cost Plus. You will also be able to see how well the new marsh is doing. December 8, meet at 10 AM at the end of Industrial Way. Snacks will be provided. We will have another session beginning at 1 PM.

Contact Martha Jarocki, marthajarocki@gmail.com or phone 415/461-3592

THANK YOU TO OUR STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Dave Chenoweth, Emily Dong, Bob Hinz, Martha Jarocki, Vivian Liu, Hannah Ma, Lowell Sykes, Nhi Vuong

BENEFIT MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Make your next Amazon order through AmazonSmile. For information, visit <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/94-6076664>.

CORTE MADERA PROPERTIES

Planting of the rest of the native plants grown by The Watershed Nursery on the upland adjacent to the new marsh is scheduled to begin November 26. We've ordered more than 15,000 to be planted on the adjacent uplands, and we have contracted with Hanford ARC to do the planting. The plants will be planted the last week in November and first in December, after which we will need help finishing spreading mulch over the new plant roots. See column on left for directions on how to volunteer. Our volunteer, Lowell Sykes,

has offered to construct the goose exclusion structures (stakes with string connecting them). We do not have sufficient funds to pay a contractor. After December, we are on our own to fund needed maintenance.

We are most grateful to the large donation from member, John Perone, who directed his donation for maintenance, particularly irrigation, at this site.

TISCORNIA MARSH

We submitted the grant application for measure AA funds by the November 26 deadline.

MAS FIELD TRIP (continued from page 3)

on the Visitor Center veranda. After a briefing at 1 PM, we'll enjoy a 1-mile loop hike on a trail and boardwalk, then drive to other key observation points on the preserve ending up at Staten Island. Come prepared with warm clothing for changeable weather including rain and mud for "Crane-down."

FEMALE DUCK IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP

Signups required starting December 3, 2018
Blue Classroom, Richardson Bay Audubon Ctr
376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon
Sunday, January 6, 2019
9 AM to 3 PM
With Lisa Hug

In this duck identification workshop, we will pay special attention to the challenges in separating the female ducks from each other. Instead of ignoring those drab brown ducks that all look the same, we're going to acknowledge their existence for a day and actually look at them. First, we will have a PowerPoint presentation on the different ducks in the North Bay. After lunch we will drive to several locations to study ducks in the field.

Bring notebook and pencil for the classroom session (or laptop), lunch, water, snacks, binoculars, scope if you have one, field guide, layered clothing, and comfortable walking shoes.

The cost is \$20 for Marin Audubon Chapter-Supporting Members and \$55 for other adults. Young birders under 18 years of age may attend for \$10. Please be prepared to pay with cash or a check at the workshop. We will not be able to process payments by credit card. If you are not yet a Marin Audubon Chapter-Supporting Member, you may join now at www.marinaudubon.org or at the workshop to enjoy the reduced price.

Signups for this workshop will start on December 3, 2018 and will be limited to 25 participants. To sign up, contact Jane Medley at janemedley@gmail.com. Please include your name and phone number. We will confirm your registration, and if the workshop fills, we will accept names for a waiting list.

BIG DAY AT POINT REYES

For MAS Chapter-Supporting Members Only
Signups required starting December 3, 2018
Trip Date: Wednesday, January 9, 2019
8 AM to 4 or 5 PM
With Keith Hansen

Start your new year of birding with a Big Day at Point Reyes in the company of renowned birder and bird artist Keith Hansen. This will be a full day of winter birding with our group attempting to see at least 100 species west of the San Andreas Fault! We will meet in Point Reyes Station and carpool to a variety of birding

hotspots in Point Reyes throughout the day.

This is an all-day trip that is not for the faint of heart or those just looking for a leisurely bird walk. It may be tiring, but it will definitely be fun in Keith's excellent company! Bring a lunch and plenty of liquids. Be dressed for good, to less than good, weather. Feel free to bring a scope. Only a big storm will cause us to cancel.

While there is no charge for this trip, participation is limited to Marin Audubon Chapter-Supporting Members. Signups will start on December 3, 2018 and will be limited to 15 people. Contact Jeanine Starritt at jeanineis@comcast.net for information and sign-ups. Trip participants will be given further details at a later date.

SACRAMENTO DELTA BOAT TRIP

Signups required starting December 10, 2018
Trip Date: Sunday, February 3, 2019
(Super Bowl Sunday)
8:15 AM to 4:30 PM
Boat leaves from and returns to the Antioch Marina
With David Wimpfheimer

Join us aboard Dolphin Charters' *River Dolphin* for a wonderful day of exploring the richness of the California Delta with naturalist David Wimpfheimer as our guide. Ronn Patterson, a Bay Area historian and naturalist, is captain of the *River Dolphin* and owner of Dolphin Charters. The boat is very comfortable, and the outer decks provide views over the levees of the amazing array of birds found in the Delta during the winter. This rich area hosts a wide variety of raptors including Swainson's Hawks, Peregrine Falcons, and Great Horned Owls. Large numbers of shorebirds, Sandhill Cranes, Tundra Swans, Snow, Canada and White-fronted Geese, ducks, as well as gulls, terns, bitterns and passerines make this cruise a highlight for birders. Uncommon mammals such as beaver, river otter, and mink often add interest to the cruise. We also will learn about the history, ecology and politics of the levees and the Delta as we travel through its meandering channels.

The cost will be \$105 per person for MAS Chapter-Supporting Members and \$140 for all others. If you are not yet an MAS Chapter-Supporting Member, please sign up now at www.marinaudubon.org to enjoy the reduced cost of this trip. Online registration will start on December 10, 2018 at www.marinaudubon.org. Include the name, email address and phone number of each participant. **To assure a spot for yourself, we recommend booking your space asap as this is always a popular trip.** Those confirmed on the trip will receive directions to the Antioch Marina and other instructions the week before the trip.

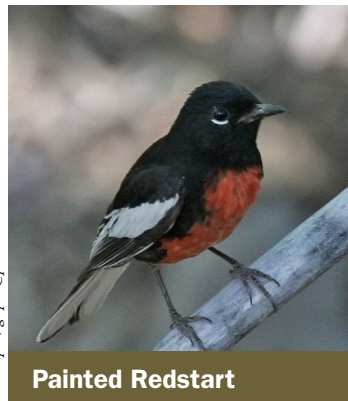
MARIN BIRDLOG: OCTOBER 2018

By Noah Arthur

This year's biggest week of rare warbler action on Outer Point Reyes, which began at the end of September, continued into the first days of October, with **Chestnut-sided, Blackpoll, Blackburnian** (2), and **Magnolia Warblers**, a **Northern Waterthrush** (all continuing from Sept.) and an **Ovenbird** being seen on the 1st! This was one of the best days on the Outer Point in recent years, with other rarities being a **Red-throated Pipit** and a **Pacific Golden-Plover** (DM) on the hill above Nunes Ranch, and a **Golden Eagle** (EB, NW) and **American Bittern** at Drakes Beach (BS, m.ob.). One or more **Broad-winged Hawks** were also kicking about the Outer Point that day and were seen by various groups of birders.

The willow/alder hummock by the Inverness Tennis Club continued its good run on the 1st as well with a **Red-eyed Vireo** (MM).

The continuing **Blue-footed Booby** was on Chimney Rock on the 3rd, and an additional **Red-eyed Vireo** was at the Fish Docks on the 2nd.



Glen Tepke, gtepk@phae.com

Painted Redstart

The rarest and most exotic warbler of the month came on the 4th, in the form of a **Painted Redstart** found early in the morning in Drakes Beach cypresses (JT, ST). Many birders including myself were able to see this spectacular visitor from the Arizona "tropics," which was gone the next day.

A **Blackpoll Warbler** was at Fish Docks on the 5th (TR, CLG). Rare for Marin although common throughout much of the West was a **Yellow-headed Blackbird** that flew over Las Gallinas on the 8th (RS). Quite rare for the Outer Point was a **Long-eared Owl** roosting near a couple of Barn Owls at the Fish Docks on the 8th (KO).

By far the rarest Marin bird of the year, and perhaps one of the county's most outstanding records of all time, appeared

at Abbotts Lagoon on the 10th: an adult male **Common Ringed-Plover** (MSw), which was subsequently seen close-up by many other happy birders. Photos of its toes and recordings of its calls were also obtained to fully confirm the identification.

Another species that's a regular migrant in inland California but quite rare on the outer coast, a **Hammond's Flycatcher** showed up at the Fish Docks on the 10th (SC). Also on the 11th, another **Red-throated Pipit** was found by plover-chasers at Abbotts Lagoon (LK).

Three **Lawrence's Goldfinches** in Lagunitas on the 13th were another nice vagrant from inland California (AD). Also on the 13th, the Chimney Rock Blue-footed Booby was replaced by a **Brown Booby** (PB).

In a classic example of "Patagonia rest stop effect," two more rare shorebirds were found at Abbotts on the 14th, a very late **Baird's Sandpiper** and an **American Golden-Plover** (JB).

A rare subspecies for Marin, a "**Sordida**" **Orange-crowned Warbler** from the Channel Islands, was in Inverness on the 19th (JBe). A getting-late **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was near the Green Gulch Farm in Muir Beach on the 20th (AM), where it was joined by a **Black-and-white** and several other eastern and western warbler species (AH) on the 24th!

Way back inland, in a part of Marin that is rarely mentioned in these reports, a **Townsend's Solitaire** was found in a Sargent cypress grove on Mt. Tamalpais on the 27th (BM).

Fitting the pattern of rare "Solitary" Vireos showing up late in the season, a **Plumbeous Vireo** was in Muir Beach on the 30th (AH).

As usual for fall, some of the regular vagrant songbirds were reported multiple times. **Tropical Kingbirds** were at Fish Docks on the 11th (HC, EI) and Bolinas on the 26th (MD, ME). **Clay-colored Sparrows** were at the Fish Docks on the 6th (SH, MM) and 23rd (AR). **Tennessee Warblers** were at Fish Docks on the 5th (NA), Muir Beach on the 9th (NA – I seem to have good luck with this species!), and Muir Beach again on the 23rd (AH). **Palm Warblers** were at Rodeo Lagoon on the 10th (WL), 2 at Fish Docks on the 23rd (AR), and Muir Beach on the 24th (AH). The long-staying **Black Vulture** was also seen around Inverness several times during the month.

Observers and Acronyms **AD**: Adam Donkin, **AH**: Adrian Hinkle, **AM**: Alex Merritt, **AR**: Andrew Rush, **BM**: Bruce Mast, **BS**: Bob Smith, **CLG**: Claire Leif Gallagher, **DM**: Dominik Mosur, **EB**: Eddie Bartley, **EI**: Emmett Iverson, **HC**: Holly Coates, **JBe**: Jonah Benningfield, **JB**: Justin Bosler, **JK**: John King, **JT**: Jim Thomas, **KO**: Kurt Ongman, **LK**: Logan Kahle, **M.OB.**: many observers, **MD**: Mark Dettling, **ME**: Megan Elrod, **MM**: Mark Martucci, **MS**: Mark Schulist, **MSw**: Mark Sawyer, **NA**: Noah Arthur, **NW**: Noreen Weeden, **PB**: Phred Bernham, **RS**: Robert Stevenson, **SC**: Scott Carey, **SH**: Scott Hoppe, **ST**: Steve Tracey, **TR**: Tobias Rohmer, **WL**: William Legge



Becky Matubaru, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0>

Sleepy Long-eared Owl



Francesco Veronesi, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>

Townsend's Solitaire

IRA Charitable Rollover Gifts

If you are age 70½ or older, you can turn your required minimum distribution from a traditional or Roth IRA account into a tax-favored charitable gift. You can give up to \$100,000 annually from your IRA directly to a qualified charity such as Marin Audubon without paying income tax on the withdrawal.

Because of recent changes in tax law, these qualified charitable distributions may now offer an additional benefit. Beginning in 2018, the standard deduction is nearly doubled and itemized deductions for state and local taxes are limited to \$10,000. As a result, many taxpayers who previously itemized deductions will now find it advantageous to take the standard deduction instead. These taxpayers will no longer deduct their charitable contributions, but they may still reduce their tax burden by reducing their taxable income with a qualified charitable distribution from an IRA.

To request a qualified charitable distribution from an IRA to Marin Audubon, please contact your IRA administrator or custodian (the bank or broker that holds your IRA) and request that they initiate the transfer and process a check to Marin Audubon Society.



The Rail

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SAVE THE DATE

- January 3 **Field Trip:** Las Gallinas
With Bob & Sande Chilvers
- January 6 **Workshop:** Female Duck Identification
With Lisa Hug
- January 9 **Field Trip:** Big Day at Point Reyes
Signup required
With Keith Hansen
- January 11 **Field Trip:** Skaggs Island
Daniel Edelstein
- January 19 **Field Trip:** Bolinas
With Jim White & Bob Battagin
- January 21 **Field Trip:** Loch Lomond Yacht Harbor
With Jim White
- January 23-27 **Snow Goose Festival, Chico**
www.snowgoosefestival.org

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SUPPORT MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY — BECOME A CHAPTER-SUPPORTING MEMBER

We invite you to become a Chapter-supporting member of Marin Audubon Society (MAS) to support our important habitat protection and restoration work, conservation advocacy, our full calendar of birding field trips and speakers and our newsletter, *The Rail*. Marin Audubon is a chapter of National Audubon (NAS). However, becoming a **Chapter-Supporting Member** of MAS is separate and distinct from a membership in NAS. While MAS works with NAS on issues of mutual concern, we are a separate non-profit Section 501(c)(3) all-volunteer organization. Marin-based NAS members do receive this MAS newsletter, *The Rail*, however we encourage all NAS members to also become Chapter-supporting members of MAS to support our local work. Very little of our funding comes from NAS, and we rely on our MAS Chapter-supporting members and donors to help us fund our land acquisitions, restorations, habitat protection, conservation advocacy, this newsletter and our local programs.

If you're not already a Chapter-supporting member, we urge you to join MAS and urge your friends, neighbors and relatives to join us, too.

You can join MAS or make a donation on our website using your credit card or PayPal by going to www.marinaudubon.org. Alternatively, you can join by filling out this form and sending us your payment by mail.

ALTERNATIVELY, IF YOU ARE LOOKING TO JOIN NATIONAL AUDUBON FOR THE FIRST TIME ...

MAS will receive 100% of your initial membership if you enter **MAS's chapter code C04** on your application. To join, go to www.audubon.org/join.

The best option for the birds: Join MAS **and** NAS.

Join or Donate to the Marin Audubon Society

Please fill in this form and mail to the address below. If you are paying by check, please make it payable to **Marin Audubon Society**.

- Enroll me as a Chapter-Supporting Member
- Renewal
- New Member
- \$25 Annual rate for students (18 years and under) and seniors (65 and over)
- \$35 Basic
- \$50 Sponsor
- \$500 Patron
- \$100 Sustaining
- \$1,000 Benefactor
- Please accept my donation in the amount of \$ _____

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Fill out form and mail to:
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Marin Audubon Society
P.O. Box 599
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