



Illustration: John Muir Laws

Townsend's Warbler

Learn how to get more out of every nature ramble. Developments in neuropsychology have opened doors in our understanding of the brain and cognition and how you can train yourself to see more and to be more curious about what you discover. Naturalist and illustrator John Muir Laws will demonstrate simple and fun techniques you can incorporate into your own recreational nature study or share with others. It will be the perfect experience for teachers, home school parents and anyone interested in taking their birding and nature study to the next level.

Naturalist, educator and artist John (Jack) Muir Laws teaches the tools to help people develop as naturalists and stewards including: ways to improve your observation, memory and curiosity as well as your knowledge of conservation biology, natural history, scientific illustration and field sketching—all while having fun! He is trained as a wildlife biologist and is a Research Associate of the California Academy of Sciences. Jack is in love with the natural world and is living his life sharing this passion with others.

Come at 7:15 PM for refreshments. The meeting begins at 7:30 PM.



The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Barbara Salzman To Be Inducted Into the Marin Women's Hall of Fame

By Susan Ristow

Isn't it wonderful when good things happen to good people! Hot on the heels of being chosen by the *Pacific Sun* as one of their 2014 Heroes of Marin, for her Environmental Stewardship, our very own Marin Audubon President Barbara Salzman will be inducted into the Marin Women's Hall of Fame on March 26th.

Barbara certainly personifies the goals of the Hall of Fame: "...honoring women who serve as role models, demonstrate excellence and contribute to the well-being of Marin County."

As many of you know, Barbara has worked tirelessly for close to forty years to ensure the health and sustainability of Bay Area wetlands and aquatic ecosystems. Her compelling voice has influenced decisions and actions of our City Councils, Marin Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors and state and federal agencies. Barbara is inspired by her belief that harming our ecosystems threatens our quality of life, as well as our basic human rights to clean air and water.

What you may not know about Barbara is that prior to moving to Marin, her energy was not focused on the environment. Growing up in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, Barbara did not have much contact with open space. There simply wasn't much, if any, left! As a graduate of Rosemont College, and with a Masters of Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania, she worked as a Psychiatric Social Worker and later in a child guidance clinic.

Moving to Marin was the impetus for Barbara's move from social service to environmental protection. It wasn't much of a leap from helping those in need to appreciating how the quality of our environment affects our health, safety and well-being. In awe of Marin's abundant open space and diverse wildlife, Barbara soon turned her attention to protecting seasonal wetlands near her new home in

Larkspur. That put her in touch with Marin Audubon and sparked her passion for birds and other native wildlife.

The list of Barbara's accomplishments is breathtaking. There is no job too large: Barbara has taken on powerful development interests, and directed multi-million dollar fund raising campaigns. And no job too small: Barbara can often be found pulling invasive weeds at a restoration project or stuffing envelopes as part of the current effort to acquire the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve Expansion site.

Those of us working directly with Barbara are in awe of her ability to orchestrate a multitude of projects, keep all of us hard at work on a myriad of tasks and juggle more balls in the air than a court jester. Thousands of acres of environmentally sensitive lands have been saved from development, wildlife habitat preserved for endangered and native species, diked baylands returned to their natural state, providing us with cleaner air, cleaner water and protection from sea level rise, all as a result of her efforts.

And through it all, Barbara enjoys a rich personal life, living in Larkspur with her husband Jay, whose patience knows no bounds. Her son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren live in San Jose. She somehow finds the time to cook (producing all the quiches for Audubon's Annual Mothers' Day Picnic), travel to exotic places, knit up a storm and read the occasional mystery novel.

Barbara embodies the motto: Perseverance furthers. Marin is a better place, for wildlife, baylands, and people, as a direct result of Barbara's perseverance.



Barbara Salzman

Photo courtesy of Jude Stadler

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message	2
Field Trips	3
Conservation Report	4
Help Close the Gap	7

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
Secretary	Mariah Baird 456-3355
Treasurer	Josephine Kreider 707/230-3553
Finance Chair	Greg Block 479-8254
Conservation	Phil Peterson 828-4780 Barbara Salzman 924-6057
Field Trips	Vicky Van Meter 299-2514
Membership	Periann Wood 388-1516
Fundraising Programs	Flinn Moore Rauck 892-7554 Helen Lindqvist 789-0703
Special Projects	Jude Stalker 668-1242
Nominating	Phil Peterson 828-4780
Editor, <i>The Rail</i>	Bob Hinz, 383-8688
Volunteer Coordinator	Katy Zaremba, 847-9933
Property Management	Ed Nute 669-7710
Publicity	Martha Jarocki 461-3592
BAAC Reps	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.

The Rail is published ten times a year by the Marin Audubon Society on 100% recycled paper; edited by Bob Hinz rbrthnz@comcast.net, 383-8688; assisted by other members of MAS; and designed by Studio NaCl (www.studionacl.com). Deadline is the first of each month.

©2015 Marin Audubon Society

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

Members can receive *The Rail* electronically instead of a hard copy by emailing joandbijou@sbcgloba.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 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

I am honored to have been chosen as an inductee to the Marin Women's Hall of Fame, an annual event that is under the direction of the YWCA. I am moved by Susan Ristow's wonderful write up about me (see page 1) and Kathy Lowrey's glowing application which resulted in my being chosen to receive this distinguished award. I am also grateful to all the very special MAS volunteers, members and supporters without whom all of the accomplishments attributed to me would not have happened. I might have provided the persistence and vision, but I couldn't do it alone. This award is an opportunity to bring the importance of protecting wetlands and wildlife habitat more into public attention. I hope it will lead to a greater understanding of the importance of the natural environment to us all.

We at Marin Audubon continue to be focused on raising the funds necessary to purchase the Corte Madera property. While we are disappointed that we did not get the federal funding that would have enabled us to purchase the property now, this just means we need to work harder to raise the rest of the needed funds. We hope you will all help by donating if you haven't or, if you have already

given, considering increasing your gift.

Thank you all again for your generous donations to our end-of-year appeal. It is gratifying to have your support for both our acquisition and our operating needs. We raised just about what we need and had budgeted for the end-of-year appeal. Your generous support will keep us going by covering our basic costs, including the programs, field trips, newsletter, taxes and insurance.

We're sorry that two of our feature contributors are away this month so you will not see the Birdlog or Junior Bird Watchers columns. They will return next month.

The Point Reyes Birding and Nature Festival is coming up. See page 6 for information.

We have some interesting and fun activities coming up. Meryl Sundove and Roger Harris's "Spring Birds and Their Songs" class will occur in April. This class fills up quickly so don't delay signing up. And, of course, our famous Mother's Day Picnic is coming up in May.

The nesting season is beginning, and for some it is here already, for many species—this is not the time to be trimming or cutting down your trees! Wait until nesting is over in August.

Spring Birds and Their Songs

APRIL 30, MAY 2 AND 9, 2015



Join the *Spring Birds and Their Songs* class and tune into the varied chorus of birds nesting in the Bay Area. Once you cue into bird songs, the enjoyment of spring will be forever heightened.

Sign up early as this class fills quickly.

Naturalist **Meryl Sundove** and wildlife biologist **Roger Harris** teach the class for beginning and intermediate bird watchers who want to use calls and songs to help find and identify birds. **Jean Schulz**, an experienced birding-by-ear birder, will be assisting.

The class consists of an evening classroom presentation with slides and recorded bird songs on Wednesday, **April 30**, from 7-9 pm, at the Richardson Bay Audubon Center. Then, two early morning field trips, on Saturday, **May 2** and a second on Saturday, **May 9**, are designed to get us outdoors practicing what we learned in class. The May 9th dawn chorus field trip starts a few minutes before dawn. If you have never experienced the spring dawn chorus, you are in for a treat.

For information, contact Meryl Sundove at 415/927-4115 or msundove@comcast.net.

FEE: \$75 non-Audubon members
\$65 Audubon members
\$120 2 members from same household

TO REGISTER: Send this form and a check made out to "Marin Audubon Society" to:

Marin Audubon Society
P.O. Box 599
Mill Valley, CA 94942

All proceeds go to the Marin Audubon Society to support their conservation work.

NAME

TELEPHONE

ADDRESS

CITY

ZIP

EMAIL

Audubon member? Yes No

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.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR THE MOST RECENT UPDATES.

LAS GALLINAS STORAGE PONDS

SAN RAFAEL

Thursday, March 5, 2015, April 2, 2015
9 AM to 12 PM

With Susan Kelly, Len Blumin and friends

On the first Thursday of each month we meet for a birding walk around the Las Gallinas Storage Ponds just north of McInnis Park, continuing a tradition started years ago by Bruce Bajema. Birders of all levels are welcome. Each month the avian cast of characters will change, and we'll try to keep track of newly arriving species. Early spring 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 bird families, as well as getting tips on optics, birding books, and birding etiquette. Try to bring a pair of binoculars, as well as some water. We'll be walking about 2 miles on the levees that surround the ponds.

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101 take the Smith Ranch Road exit, then go east on Smith Ranch Rd. toward the McInnis Park entrance. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks, staying on Smith Ranch Rd., and go about 0.5 mile to the end of the road at the Las Gallinas Ponds parking lot. Meet the group by the bridge just past the parking lot. Late arrivals should easily be able to find the group. There are rest room facilities only at the parking area.

CAPAY VALLEY

Saturday, March 7, 2015
8:30 AM to 3:30 PM

With Terry Colborn

Join Terry Colborn for a delightful day in Yolo County's picturesque Capay Valley. The almond orchards should be in bloom, signaling the coming of spring in the valley. Our stops will include historic Capay Cemetery, Cache Creek and several of Terry's favorite birding spots in idyllic Capay Valley. We'll look for Yellow-billed Magpie, Lewis's Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Phainopepla, Western Bluebird as well as any lingering winter residents. We also hope to see some raptors and early spring arrivals such as Cliff, Barn, Rough-winged and Violet-green Swallows, and perhaps a warbler species or two. Past trips have produced Golden and Bald Eagles, Western Kingbird, Prairie Falcon and Lawrence's Goldfinch. We also expect to see some early spring wildflowers as well as Redbud, that very conspicuous flowering shrub along the roadside. Terry will meet everyone at the Community Park in Esparto at 8:30 AM. Participants will be encouraged

to form carpools from there.

DIRECTIONS: From Marin County, take Hwy 37 east to Vallejo then go east on I-80. Just past the Nut Tree Center in Vacaville, take I-505 north for about 20 miles to the Route 16 exit; turn left (west). Esparto is located about 4 miles west on Route 16; the park is in the center of town. Driving time is about 1½ hours but allow a little extra time, as there may be early morning fog.

Bring lunch/snacks, liquids; dress in layers and wear sturdy footwear, as we will do a little walking on flat roads. Heavy rain cancels. For more information contact Terry at: tlcbirding@gmail.com, 530/312-9947; www.TLCBirding.com

TOLAY LAKE REGIONAL PARK

PETALUMA

Saturday, March 14, 2015
8:30 AM to mid-afternoon

With Gene Hunn

This 1,700-acre park, located between the Petaluma River and Sonoma Valley, includes pristine farm- and grasslands, ridges, a seasonal freshwater lake that has water this year, ponds, wetlands, and many other natural resources. This area is not open to the general public without permits or a guide with a permit; Gene Hunn will be our guide.

We will meet at 8:30 at the boat launch parking lot next to Papa's Taverna (restaurant now closed) on Lakeville Highway and then carpool up Cannon Drive to the Tolay Lake Regional Park. There is a \$7.00/day vehicle use fee at the park. We will hike several miles to check all the available habitats at the park: grassland, oak woodland, riparian corridors, ponds, ridge lines, and ranch buildings. For those who wish to continue birding after lunch, we can visit the Ellis Creek ponds a few miles north at the south edge of Petaluma. Wear sturdy hiking shoes and be prepared to hike for several miles. Bring water, lunch, sunscreen and hat; dress in layers.

DIRECTIONS: The address of Papa's Taverna is 5688 Lakeville Hwy., Petaluma. From Marin take Hwy. 101 north to CA-37 E toward Napa/Vallejo. Continue about 6 miles on Hwy 37 to Lakeville Hwy. Take a left on Lakeville and continue for another 6 miles. The entrance to the boat ramp will be on your left, the first drive just south of the Papa's entrance.

NICASIO RESERVOIR

No. 11, Birding in Marin Series

Saturday, March 21, 2015
8:30 AM to mid-afternoon

With Jim White and Bob Battagin

We will meet at the backstop to the

baseball field in the small West Marin hamlet of Nicasio. There, riparian, open field, and wooded habitats are good for a nice variety of sparrows, gleaners, and woodpeckers. Then we'll head to nearby Nicasio Reservoir and make several stops along the shoreline. Many water bird species hang out there, while raptors grace the sky, and who knows what will be flitting around in the willows and shrubs that line the shore.

DIRECTIONS: The baseball field is in the center of Nicasio on Nicasio Valley Road. Nicasio can be reached from Hwy 101 by taking Lucas Valley Road to the end and then turning right on Nicasio Valley Road. Those coming from the south can take Nicasio Valley Road through Fairfax and San Geronimo. For GPS, the address of the Rancho Nicasio Restaurant across from the ball field is 1 Old Rancheria Road, Nicasio.

MINES ROAD AND DEL PUERTO CANYON

Saturday, April 18, 2015
7 AM to 4:30 PM

With Terry Colborn

This year Terry will lead a one-day Mines Road trip. Long recognized as one of the premier springtime birding areas in the Bay Area to observe an array of resident species and Neotropical migrants, the combination of Mines Road and Del Puerto Canyon provides easy access to a number of unique habitats, including oak woodland, grasslands and chaparral. The bird list is quite impressive for this popular destination, and includes Costa's Hummingbird, Lewis's Woodpecker, Western Wood-Pewee, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Yellow-billed Magpie, Rock Wren, Canyon Wren, Nashville, Orange-crowned, Hermit, Yellow and MacGillivray's Warblers, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Black-headed Grosbeak, Bullock's Oriole, Western Tanager, Wood Duck and Lawrence's Goldfinch, just to name a few. The elusive Greater Roadrunner is reported annually. We'll also visit Del Valle Regional Park (fee) and Frank Raines Park. This all-day trek will start in Livermore on Saturday morning. There are a number of hotels in Livermore for those wishing to spend Friday night and thus eliminate the early Saturday morning departure from home.

This is a very popular springtime trip and often fills up very quickly. Sign-ups are required, and are on a first-come, first-served basis. Carpooling is a must as there is very limited space for vehicles to park on Mines Road. To sign up and receive further details, contact Terry Colborn at: tlcbirding@gmail.com, 530/312-9947; www.TLCBirding.com

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.

FOLLOW UP MEETINGS ON COUNTY ROAD AND TRAILS PLAN

Now that the County Road and Trails Plan has been approved by the Marin County Board of Supervisors, the Marin County Parks' staff is planning meetings to share their recommendations for each Region's road and trail system at a series of community meetings, the first of which will be held on March 22.

Staff recommendations could include legalizing some unauthorized trails (e.g., social trails, illegally-built trails), decommissioning some trails, improving some trails or roads, and narrowing existing nonessential fire roads. Using an "Evaluation Tool" developed for the Plan, staff will compute a baseline by scoring about two dozen individual physical and biological criteria, plus some social criteria.

The intent is to reduce the environmental effects of "projects" from the baseline score so as to achieve net environmental benefit, even as new trails might be added to the system or recreational uses changed.

Each region's baseline point score will serve as a starting point for evaluating the environmental effects of future "projects" and management actions. It is not clear, however, how the changes in use, including opening narrow trails to bikes, opening new trails or improving trails and bridges to trail width, will affect wildlife or their habitat.

At the community meetings, the public will have the opportunity to weigh in on the District's draft recommendations and presumably influence these trail decisions. These meetings are your opportunity to make our concerns known about resource protection and trail safety. Staff will also introduce "Project In-take" forms, the form on which members of the public may submit proposals for trail improvements or other changes for consideration by the Open Space District.

Vigorous participation is anticipated from the mountain bike community whose paid lobbyists have already been meeting with Parks staff to make their trail wishes known. It is critical that those of us speaking for wildlife and the passive users attend the meetings and speak out for protecting the wildlife and habitat these special places support. We depend on our valued members to speak out.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Attend the meetings and speak out. The first meeting will focus on Region One (covering King Mountain OSP, Baltimore Canyon OSP,

Blithedale Summit OSP, Camino Alto OSP, Alto Bowl OSP and Horse Hill OSP), and is scheduled for March 22 at the Mill Valley Community Center, 9:00 pm.

DREDGING AT LARKSPUR (FORMERLY GREENBRAE) MARINA

The Army Corps of Engineers has published a Public Notice (PN) for a 10-year permit to dredge the Larkspur Marina (across from Redwood High School). This residential project was constructed more than 40 years ago and consists of housing around an enclosed lagoon. The houses on the outer perimeter have docks. Maintaining access for the large boats residents own requires regular dredging because sediments deposit quickly in dead-end channels. The PN reports that the dredged material will be disposed of either at the San Pablo Bay site, Alcatraz or "if necessary to a beneficial-use site or upland location."

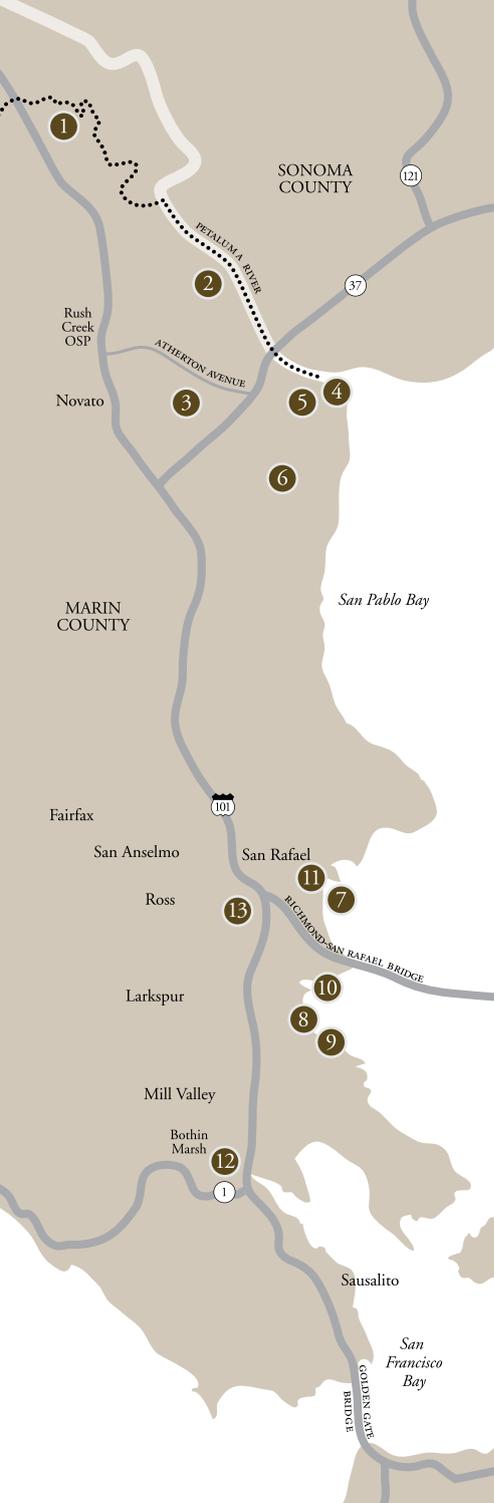
The PN discusses the potential impacts to endangered and threatened species of salmon and steelhead. To mitigate impacts to fish, dredging would be restricted to times when the fish will not be in the area. The PN, however, fails to mention the presence of the endangered Ridgway's Rail that inhabit the marsh surrounding Piper Park. Part of this tidal marsh is on the other side of the channel that will be dredged on the west side of the Marina project.

MAS will be submitting several recommendations in response to the PN: that impacts to endangered Ridgway's Rails be avoided by limiting the time of dredging to outside the breeding season, and that the material be used to benefit the environment of the Corte Madera Creek. We suggest using it for a project to protect habitat and to stop erosion of the Ecological Reserve marsh.

Unfortunately comments are due by February 27, so this *Rail* may not get out in time. Send comments anyway to: Mark D'Avignon, Army Corps of Engineers, 1455 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

UPDATE OF THE BLACK POINT COMMUNITY PLAN CONTINUES

The update of the 1978 Black Point Community Plan is underway and public workshops are scheduled. The Plan encompasses 1,560 acres of Black Point, generally the hills along the Petaluma River south of Highway 37, and Green Point, generally the area north of Atherton Avenue. Many parcels owned by MAS are in the area covered by the Plan. MAS



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
13. Cal Park	<1 acre

parcels include the 145-acre diked bayland property between Deer Island and Olive and Atherton Avenues, a number of small parcels at Norton Pond and small parcels in the area referred to as the gridiron at Black Point.

An advisory committee was appointed and community workshops are being held to engage residents and solicit input. Changes to the plan that have been recommended by the advisory committee so far would benefit wildlife. The changes would protect wildlife movement corridors, reduce night lighting, encourage wildlife-friendly fencing (allows wildlife to move through), promote planting native vegetation, and discourage herbicide and pesticide use. MAS will be recommending that the plan encourage people to view their properties as homes for wildlife and establish “bird friendly backyards.”

Also, we would like to see more discussion of sea level rise and flood protection, including the importance of the Marin Audubon’s diked baylands as a flood basin—where rain and runoff collect, thereby, providing flood protection for Olive and Atherton Avenues—and an explanation of how the flood waters are managed by the county. As we understand, the county manages pumps that drain the ponded water to Novato Creek. Sea level rise will likely require modification to the management and facilities of the county’s pumping system.

We have also requested that all of our properties be rezoned as Open Space.

So far community input has favored keeping the area rural. Some folks from Green Point want to have Green Point included in the name of the plan. Some do not want limits on the size of houses they can build, and some are objecting to using wildlife-friendly fencing.

A public workshop is scheduled for March 5 at the Civic Center. Check the county’s website to review the plan. For more information contact Marin County Planner Kristin Drumm at 415/473-6290 or kdrumm@marincounty.org.

UPDATES

Gross Field At its meeting on January 27, the Marin County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to extend contracts for consultants to do further studies to comply with the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) requirement to update the 2009 aviation forecast for the airport. The additional work will identify the runway length needed for typical aircraft that use the runway. At the hearing, a

few members of the public objected to hiring the same consultants that prepared the current documents. Staff argued that hiring the same consultants would save money but that the consultants should be hired because the money expended for their input would be minor compared to the additional funding they could get from the FAA with the additional information. The county will be seeking funding from the FAA for construction. We hope the revised analysis will result in a recommendation for a reduced extension or, better yet, no extension at all.

Wind Facilities at Altamont The East County Board of Zoning Adjustments (EBZA) certified the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for Altamont Wind Energy Inc.’s (AWI) proposed project on a 2:1 vote. The project would extend the use of their old generation turbines until 2018. This conflicts with the evaluation in the project’s original EIR that such a delay in installing new-generation turbines is infeasible because it would increase avian mortality. US Fish and Wildlife Service policy is that local mortality of Golden Eagles from wind turbines should not exceed 5% annually. Golden Eagle mortality at Altamont is currently 12%. Then, after several hours of testimony and debate, the EBZA voted unanimously to deny the project.

Audubon California is preparing an appeal of the EBZA’s certification of the SEIR. MAS was a party to earlier legal action on Altamont.

Highway 37 Integrated Traffic, Infrastructure and Sea Level Rise Analysis

The second meeting in the second series of stakeholder meetings for the Highway 37 corridor was held in late January. The first series of stakeholder meetings was held in 2012 and focused on design and location options to address this heavily-used two-lane route that extends through one of the largest remaining wetlands in the Bay. This second series is focusing on studying the potential effects of, and ways to accommodate, sea level rise.

So far, the researchers have identified the elevations along the entire length of the highway. The western section, in Marin and Sonoma Counties, is the lowest and, therefore, the most at risk, but the entire roadway is vulnerable. The vulnerability analysis is continuing, further studying the rate of change, threats to infrastructure and resources which will affect the road, and other variables such as rate of settlement and

the depth of bay mud.

Raising the highway on a causeway or a floating bridge are the current options being considered. Changing the road into a toll road is still being promoted by some special interests.

These Highway 37 stakeholder meetings are conducted under the direction of UC Davis’ Road Ecology Center in cooperation with Caltrans District 4 and are made possible with federal funding.

Cliff Swallow Nesting on the Petaluma River Bridge

Now that nesting season is imminent, Caltrans is changing its approach, installing exclusion devices along the whole length of the bridge, so that it is unclear whether there will be any place for the swallows to establish nests. Caltrans also wants to demolish the bridge earlier than anticipated and is blaming a \$5.33 million cost overrun on the swallow problem. Hard to believe it cost that much. If they had done it right in the first place, there would not be any cost overruns.

Madrone Audubon, as the lead organization, our partners, and our attorneys have been working to address the issue. As this *Rail* goes to press, our attorneys have requested that access for the birds to nest sites be provided under the southbound lanes as previously promised, and that plaintiffs have an opportunity to meet with Caltrans before they demolish the bridge to determine the status of nests. If there is late nesting, they would be destroying nests with young.

MAS BOARD CONFIRMS POLICY ON NON-NATIVE SPECIES

At its February meeting the MAS Board reconfirmed a policy on non-native species. The policy is basically the same as the one the Board adopted in 2003 with a few minor changes. It is:

Whereas the introduction and presence of non-native species often lead to the displacement of native species and subsequent degradation of habitat, MAS policy is to advocate against the introduction of non-native species. In instances where non-native species present a risk of becoming invasive or already are negatively impacting or threatening the viability and integrity of existing native species, such invasives shall be eliminated in the most expedient, cost-effective and humane manner.

In the case of non-native domestic and exotic animals as well as plant species ownership of such species should be accompanied by a responsibility to avoid contact with native species and natural ecosystems.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Planting season is over. Now we start going after some of the native plants' competitors such as annual non-native plants radish and Italian thistle. Both are growing rapidly in this warm February. Some mustard lives beyond a single year and it is already blooming.

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: March 7, April 4

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

Bahia, Novato:

Second Saturdays: March 14, April 11

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 rbrthnz@comcast.net or 415/383-8688 for more information.

THANK YOU TO OUR STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Marisa Alvarez, Gabriela Bello, Breana Biggi, Dave Chenoweth, Vianna Crocitto, Patrick Doughty, Kevin Gill, Sarah Goldstein, Wilma Gramajo, Kim Grandi, Lukas & Zofie Haulena, Bob Hinz, Steve Maddox, Elliot Payne, Julia Reynolds, Cullen & David Robbins, Eliza Ross, Molly, Anne & Spencer Schmidt, Caroline Spence, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, Rachel Welch, Lacey Winthorne, Katy Zaremba

CORRECTION

The Cheep Thrills Christmas Bird Count takes place in northern Marin and a small part of southern Sonoma County including southern Petaluma and Neil's Island where Peter Colasanti and Gene Hunn observed 13 **Lewis's Woodpeckers**. The number of species seen during the 2014 Cheep Thrills Christmas Bird Count was 159.

POINT REYES BIRDING AND NATURE FESTIVAL

APRIL 24-26, 2015

For more information, please visit www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org. Registration is now open.

SIMMONS SLOUGH

We hired Shelterbelt Builders to plant 1,000-plus *Carex* (sedge) and *Juncus* (rush) plants at the south end of our Simmons Slough property adjacent to Deer Island. The crew worked diligently through two stormy days in early February to complete the job. They had to work within the window of time after the water subsided from the last big storm in December and before it filled up again in February.

This is the third year of this funding that came from the Novato Sanitary District, for spills of sludge and waste onto our property, through a program of the State Water Resources Control Board. The State Board's program allows dischargers to contribute to projects that would benefit the environment.

BAHIA

We also hired Shelterbelt to plant in mid-February plants we ordered from The Watershed Nursery, the same nursery that grew the plants for the Simmons planting. They will be installing DriWater on about half of them. The plants without DriWater will have to be watered more frequently during the summer. Plants with DriWater may still benefit from watering but watering will not need to be as frequent.

Eight volunteers came to Bahia on Valentine's Day and enjoyed gorgeous weather and a really nice time planting 160 native creeping wild rye (*Elymus triticoides*) plants on the western peninsula.



Volunteers on Valentine's Day planted creeping wild rye upslope from the adjacent tidal marsh on the western peninsula at Bahia.

We hope these plants will spread out and join the past plantings to eventually cover the levee slope and provide native upland habitat for the wildlife at Bahia.

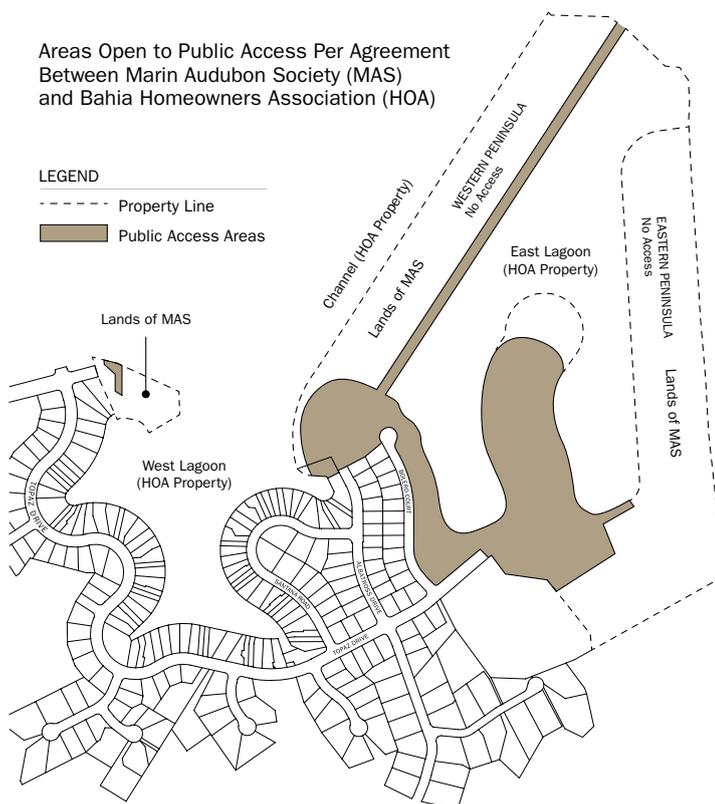
A big thanks to all of the volunteers and to the Center for Volunteer and Nonprofit Leadership for recruiting many of the volunteers that have come to help us with our stewardship work.

We had our annual meeting with the Bahia Homeowners Association in late January. Our Agreement with the Homeowners Association, recorded in 2008 soon after the restoration project was completed, provides that we meet annually to discuss communication and access, including restrictions on vehicular use and keeping dogs on-leash. MAS representatives reminded those in attendance that dogs are often off-leash which is against our Agreement, that access is

allowed everywhere except on the eastern peninsula and on top of the berm on the western peninsula (see map). We verified that both the HOA and MAS would convey this to the residents.

TRIANGLE MARSH

On the first Saturday in February volunteers at Triangle Marsh removed fennel, Harding grass and a few other non-native plants from a section of the berm where we have few native plants. Perhaps next winter we will be able to add some coyote brush or other natives. The native gray rush (*Juncus patens*) that was planted in December is looking very good, and the early February rain will give it a welcome boost toward becoming established before summer.



Donate Now to Help Close the Gap

Save the Property That Will Be Part of the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve

We're getting really close but the gap is not closed yet. We still need funding to complete the purchase of the 5.2-acre property bounded by the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve. We've been working diligently to raise the \$1,075,000 necessary to complete the purchase. The good news is we have raised more than half of the needed funds and the end is in sight.

We are very pleased to announce that while we did not receive the federal grant, the State Coastal Conservancy staff will be taking our application for a grant to help purchase the property to their board in June, after completing the necessary review and paperwork. This grant will cover most, but not all, of the funding gap. So we need to continue our fundraising.

We have extended the deadline for closing escrow to May 2015, and our purchase agreement gives us the ability to extend for another 60 days. Given the Coastal Conservancy's support, we're now focusing our efforts on the county and on supporters, like you, to raise the rest of the money needed.

After 25 years of trying, we can't lose the opportunity to permanently protect and restore this crucial property. The endangered Ridgway's Rails, and other species that depend on this habitat, need to have the property protected and restored.



Photos courtesy of Robert Hinz

Now dominated by non-native grasses and fennel, the property for acquisition will be restored to tidal marsh and an upland with native plants before becoming part of the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve.

You can help close the funding gap and make our purchase of this important property a reality.

Once purchased, Marin Audubon will restore about half of the site to tidal marsh and the other half to high tide refuge habitat that will also provide for the marsh to move landward with sea level rise. We will be seeking funds to restore habitat on the property from state and federal agencies.

Thank you for your past and future support. We need you to dig into your pockets to help us close the gap.

Make your check out and send it to MAS, P.O. Box 599, Mill Valley 94942 or go to **our website** and contribute through **PayPal**.

SAVE THE DATE:

SUNDAY, MAY 10, 11 AM TO 3 PM ON BEAUTIFUL BOLINAS LAGOON

Mother's Day Picnic on Sunday, May 10th

Join us on Mother's Day for our annual Picnic at Audubon Canyon Ranch's Volunteer Canyon.

We've held this event for more than fifty years and for many it is a family tradition. Volunteer Canyon in May is spectacular—plus we offer a delicious lunch under the blooming fruit trees with (possible) sightings of California Quail, a stroll on canyon trails rarely open to the public—all and all a glorious celebration of Spring.

This year is the event is particularly important for Marin Audubon, as we are in the home stretch of a fundraising campaign for the

new acquisition on the Corte Madera Marsh. Ranch guides will be on hand to lead nature walks and provide updates on ACR's work.

Tickets will go on sale later this month on the Marin Audubon website at marinaudubon.org. The ticket price is as last year, \$28 for adults, and \$12 for children under 12. The menu will be salad, garlic bread, beans, your choice of lemon rosemary grilled chicken or vegetarian quiche (made by Barbara herself) plus ice cream for dessert and coffee, tea and lemonade. Wine and beer will be available to purchase.

We could use volunteers to help. If you are able to help, contact Martha at 415/461-3592.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS TO PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY

Ronald C. Brown, Wendy and William Dreskin, Jane R. Medley, Michael Mooney, James & Abbie Ann Read, Patrick Murray, Eliot Henderson & Deborah Childress, Robert & Marion Huber, Colin Kennedy, Lincoln Financial Foundation, Inc. (donor match), LEF Foundation, Larry Sultan, Dyanna Taylor, Elliott Zalta

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY THANKS YOU FOR YOUR DONATION

Jane A. Allen, Judy Ardzooni, Gary & Joan Bardwell, William Broder, Roger Duba, Anice W. Flesh, Abe Froman, Madelon & Gerald Halpern, Jeanne Kline, Robert & Karen Kustel, Ewan MacDonald, Maria Mangold, Paul Minault, J. Morrow Otis, Sonja D. Schmid

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Calvin Ahlgren, Joseph Antonetti, Bob Arigi, Gene Arnold, Alicia Arrigoni, Maggie Auerbach, Cindy Bansen, Alyson Becker, Susan Beech, George Biagini, Dorothy Boswell, Mary Brand, Peter B. Colasanti, Paul M. Coopersmith, Merlyn Corcoran, Joseph Danielson, Paula S. Dawson, Jorge Defensor, Georgianna Farren, Gerbert Forfota, Betty Freudman, Justine Frischmann, Peter Granoff, Lori Greenleaf, Karen Guasco, Desy D. Handra, Jeffrey S. Harris, Bennet Harvey, Karen Hazelhurst, Pat Healy, Deborah Childress & Eliot Henderson, Robert & Marion Huber, Else-Marie Johnson, Valerie Josephson, M. & J. Kim, LEF Foundation, Patricia Karasoff Lloyd, Robert & Kathle McDonald, Colin Kennedy, Sue King, Cathy Kirk, Suzanne B. Lampard, Dona Larkin, Anne Layzer, Miriam Licht, Mike Linvill, C. E. Long, Paula MacNeill, Joy R. Mann, Juliana Masseloux, Kathy McDevitt, Cynthia A. Meigs, Frank Moeslein, Christina Mueller, James Nelson, Marjorie A. Nevitt, Lucienne O'Keefe, Clark Omholt, Julia Polasik, Christine Prusiner, Jean Randall, Robert Rettig, Natalie Riley, Bill Rude, Leda Sanford, Sioban Scanlon, Jacqueline Shapiro, Dorothy Sprey, Chris Starkweather, Jacqueline Sue, Larry Sultan, Olivier Suzor, Dyanna Taylor, Jo Lynn Taylor, Esther C. Turner, Susan Waters, Elliott Zalta, Loretta Zarza



The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SAN RAFAEL, CA
PERMIT NO. 87

Box 599 | MILL VALLEY, CA 94942-0599

Return Service Requested

Time Value

SAVE THE DATE

- April 2 **Field Trip: Las Gallinas**
- April 4 **Stewardship Day**, Triangle Marsh
- April 11 **Stewardship Day**, Bahia
- April 11 **Field Trip: Olompali State Park**
With Jim White and Bob Battagin
- April 18 **Field Trip: Mines Road**
With Terry Colborn
- April 19 **Field Trip: Jean & John Starkweather Shoreline Park**
With Rich Cimino
- April 22 **Field Trip: ACR's Modini Mayacamas Preserves**
Healdsburg
Details at www.marinaudubon.org

♻️ Printed on 100% recycled paper

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 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 website using your credit card or PayPal. Please go to 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

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 Basic
- \$50 Sponsor
- \$500 Patron
- \$100 Sustaining
- \$1,000 Benefactor
- Please accept my donation in the amount of \$ _____

- Master Card
- Visa

Fill out form and mail to:
Membership Secretary
Marin Audubon Society
P.O. Box 599
Mill Valley, CA 94942

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL _____ TELEPHONE _____

This is a Gift Membership from: _____

Please send me *The Rail* by email only.

PAYMENT BY CREDIT CARD:

NAME ON CREDIT CARD _____

CREDIT CARD NO. _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____

SIGNATURE _____