

This month we have two speakers on Ospreys! Join us at 7:15 PM for refreshments.

THURSDAY, MAY 14 7:30 PM

Ospreys of Marin and Beyond

With Jules Evens



Photo courtesy of Jules Evens

Osprey

Jules has been monitoring an Osprey colony, annually, at Kent Lake on Marin Municipal Water District (MMWD) lands since 1981. MMWD initiated the monitoring effort to determine the number of active nests, the reproductive success of the colony and the species and location of nesting trees. The colony's population has varied over the course of this monitoring effort in response to a variety of influences. Jules will review the trends and dynamics of the Osprey in the context of the nationwide trends.

Jules conducts avian population studies in the Bay Area. He is Principal at Avocet Research Associates, a research associate of PRBO (PBCS) and an avid birder and naturalist.



Photo courtesy of Tony Brake

Ospreys and their nest

Ospreys in the Bay Area

With Tony Brake

The last decade has seen a remarkably rapid expansion of Osprey nesting into San Francisco Bay tidelands. From a single nest reported in 1990 in Vallejo, numbers have risen to 27 nesting pairs in summer 2014. What's behind this increase? What conservation challenges do nesting Ospreys face here and how can we help them?

Tony has been monitoring nesting Ospreys along San Francisco Bay since 2012 and is a volunteer with Golden Gate Raptor Observatory. He is a co-author of a paper on Bay Area Ospreys, published last fall in the journal *Western Birds*.



The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

MAS Annual Meeting, May 14

You are invited to join us for Marin Audubon Society's Annual Meeting at which we hold our annual elections of Board members. This year our Annual Meeting is on Thursday, May 14.

Because Marin Audubon is a membership organization, members of our Board of Directors are elected by our members. The election will take place prior to our speaker's presentation (see information on our special speakers in the column to the left). We will also have a brief overview of our past year's activities. MAS's fiscal year is July 1 through June 30 and Board terms begin in June.

As a volunteer organization with no paid staff, our Board realized some years ago, that our skilled and dedicated volunteers are vital to ensuring that we continue our programs and services. We are particularly engaged with our stewardship program through which we maintain our habitats, our property acquisitions in partnership with Marin

Baylands Advocates, our conservation work, and also our field trips and other programs.

This year our nominating committee presents the following slate for election for a term. Our by-laws provide that terms are for three years.

- **Phil Peterson** is the Co-chair of our Conservation Committee.
- **Ed Nute** is chair of our Property Management Committee.
- **Barbara Salzman** serves as President.
- **Katy Zaremba** filled an unexpired term three months ago and is our Volunteer Coordinator.

We greatly appreciate the willingness of these dedicated volunteers to make Marin Audubon and our work a priority in their lives. A huge thank you as well to our Nominating Committee Jude Stalker and Flinn Moore Rauck.

We hope you will exercise your right as an MAS member and join us to elect Board members for the coming year and to hear Jules Evens and Tony Brake speak about local ospreys.

SPEAKER SERIES: THURSDAY, JUNE 4 7:30 PM

Birding Tanzania

With Wendy Dreskin



Photo courtesy of William Dreskin

FIRST THURSDAY!

Southern Ground Hornbill

Famous for having the biggest concentrations of large mammals on the planet, Tanzania is also an exciting birding destination. This presentation will feature what birds travelers would be likely to see on a safari to Northern Tanzania in the winter, before migratory birds have left for their breeding grounds to the north. Birds you will meet include the **Hammerkop**, a compulsive nest-builder, the **Sacred Ibis**, extirpated from Egypt but easily seen in Tanzania, the vulnerable **Southern**

Ground Hornbill, the endangered **Saddle-billed Stork** and other storks, **Ostriches**, **Coursers**, **Bee-Eaters**, the **Secretary Bird**, and a variety of eagles.

Wendy Dreskin is a professional nature educator. She has been teaching the popular class Meandering in Marin at College of Marin for the last 17 years as well as teaching nature education classes for children. As a volunteer, she runs the Junior Bird Watcher Program for Marin Audubon. She has been leading nature trips to US destinations since 2003, and led her first trip to Tanzania in 2014. In the winter quarter she taught the College of Marin class Armchair Safari: Preparing for a Trip to Tanzania.

Wendy's husband, William Dreskin, whose photos are featured in the presentation, is an award-winning photographer whose photographs have appeared in books and magazines including *Marin* magazine, *Bay Nature* magazine, and *American Art Collector*. He has exhibited in numerous galleries and national exhibitions, and his photographs are in private and corporate collections in the US and abroad.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

President	Barbara Salzman 924-6057
Vice President	Lowell Sykes 388-2821
Secretary	Mariah Baird 456-3355
Treasurer	Josephine Kreider 707/230-3553
Finance Chair	Greg Block 479-8254
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Field Trips	Vicky Van Meter 299-2514
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Fundraising	Flinn Moore Rauck 892-7554
Programs	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.

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

May is a busy month. In addition to the ongoing flow of development projects with potential to impact habitats, we're trying to complete the purchase of the Corte Madera property and begin work on a design for its restoration so we can obtain grant funds for construction. You usually need a conceptual design in order to explain the desired restoration and obtain funds for its construction. And, of course, we have our ongoing field trips and programs.

Our Mother's Day Picnic is coming up on May 10—Mother's Day, of course. We hope you'll join us with your families and friends. This is always a special experience in a special part of Audubon Canyon Ranch that is usually closed to the public. You will have a delicious lunch (a vegetarian option is available) as well as benefit both Audubon Canyon Ranch and Marin Audubon Society. Marin Audubon has conducted this event for more than 50 years. Our early records are sketchy—we are not exactly sure how long.

We are adding a new feature "Wildlife Habitat at Home" to be published in most, but probably not all, issues of *The Rail*. The first in the series, written by MAS member and naturalist Kevin Stockman, focuses on native alders and their habitat value. If you have streams on your property, do consider planting alders. And, thank you, Kevin for getting this feature off to a great start. If you would like to see a plant species

featured in future articles—do let us know.

Our Annual Meeting at which our slate of board members will be elected will be held on May 14 as part of our Speaker Series program. I'll also make a brief presentation on our activities of the past year and you will have a chance to ask questions about any of them before our speakers, ornithologist and long-time Audubon friend, Jules Evens, and Tony Brake begin their presentations.

We are sorry but we have to change the date of the **June Speaker Series Program** from the second Thursday in June to the first Thursday because the blue classroom will be in use by the summer camp program on the second Thursday.

My apologies for the error in the listing of our Board nominees last month. Phil Peterson is up for reelection—not Jude Stalker.

You should be receiving our spring appeal letter soon, if you haven't already. As you know we sent out an extra appeal letter this year to raise critically needed funds for our property purchase. But our habitats still need your help. Other than an occasional grant, this is the only income we have to maintain and enhance habitats on our properties. So, remember wildlife when you receive our appeal letter.

To protect nesting birds in your yard, don't forget to delay your tree and shrub trimming, if possible, until nesting season is over, usually in July. Nesting is in full swing right now.

Wildlife Habitat at Home – Alders

By Kevin Stockmann

Most Marin Audubon members enjoy spending their time in the great outdoors. Whether we are hiking on Mount Tamalpais or birdwatching in Point Reyes National Seashore, we relish the sense of calm and connectedness that come after visiting these protected areas and viewing wildlife. Our home gardens and yards are also a valuable resource for birds and native wildlife. We can all help wildlife by providing native trees and plants, water, and safe places for animals to raise their young. The National Wildlife Federation's website, nwf.org, offers a simple Certified Wildlife Habitat® program with ideas to help you improve the value of your property for wildlife.

Native trees are the foundation to attract birds to your yard year-round. Establishing native trees takes some thought, time, and a little money, but it is very rewarding. Alders are hearty, fast-growing deciduous trees that provide cover and food to birds. They are common along streams and in moist soils but



White Alder Leaves

also grow well in yards and neighborhoods. Our two native species, Red Alder and White Alder, flower with golden catkins in January before their leaves emerge. The oval green leaves are held for about ten months and are dropped without turning yellow. Small, woody, conelike fruits persist through winter providing seeds for birds. The bare branches allow winter's light to

continued on page 7

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.

**BIG ROCK/LOMA ALTA
LUCAS VALLEY**

Monday, May 5, 2015

8 AM to 12 PM

With Dave Herrema and friends

The north slope of Loma Alta above Lucas Valley Road is high and dry, with great vistas. This is not the place for a lot of species, but we should see some birds you may have not seen before, such as **Grasshopper, Rufus-crowned** and **Lark Sparrows; Horned Larks;** and **Lazuli Buntings. Western Meadowlarks** should provide the melody and **Western Bluebirds** are plentiful. This is also a great place for raptors. All are welcome to join us for a leisurely walk of about two miles roundtrip on a wide, graded road. Some of this is uphill. We will start early in the cool of the day but please bring a hat and plenty of water.

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

**LAS GALLINAS STORAGE PONDS
SAN RAFAEL**

Thursday, May 7, 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. Susan and Len are our gracious hosts. 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. 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 flat levees that surround the ponds.

DIRECTIONS: From Highway 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 mi to the end of the road at the Las Gallinas Ponds parking lot. Meet the group by the bridge just past the parking lot. There are restroom facilities only at the parking area.

**SAN FRANCISCO BIRDING HOTSPOTS
SAN FRANCISCO**

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

8 AM to 2 PM

With Alan Hopkins

Join us to explore some birding hot spots in eastern Golden Gate Park with Alan as our guide. We will meet in front of the San Francisco Botanical Gardens (but not bird there) at 8 when the parking is easier and the birding is best. We will start the day by looking for the **Rustic Bunting** if it is still around. We will then concentrate on some of eastern Golden Gate Park's other great birding spots. Our approximately 3 mile walk will include Stow Lake and Strawberry Hill, the De Laveaga/AIDS Dell, and the Fuchsia Gardens. There are plenty of options for lunch in the neighborhood after the trip.

DIRECTIONS: Meet in front of the Main Gate of the San Francisco Botanical Gardens located at 9th Ave and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, just inside the park. The address is 800 Lincoln Way. Look up the directions or use your GPS—there is no left turn onto Lincoln from 19th and no left turn from Lincoln into the Park.

**THE HERON AND EGRET ROOKERY
OF SANTA ROSA
SANTA ROSA, CA**

Tuesday, May 19, 2015

10:30 AM to 12 PM

With Emiko Condeso

Join us for a visit to an unexpected heron and egret nesting site in Santa

Rosa, known locally as the Ninth Street Rookery. We will observe the nesting behavior of **Great, Snowy,** and **Cattle Egrets** and **Black-crowned Night-Heron.**

Over 300 nests have been active in previous years. Our guide will be Emiko Condeso, an ecologist with Audubon Canyon Ranch who has studied the rookery. Audubon Canyon Ranch and the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory monitor this rookery and others in the San Francisco Bay Area with the assistance of many volunteers. We will learn about volunteer opportunities with the project.

DIRECTIONS: Take Hwy 101 N to the Stony Point Road exit in Santa Rosa. Head west on Hwy 12 and then bear right on Stony Point to West 9th St. Continue to Simpson St. on the right, where Emiko suggests we park. The rookery is in the median strip on West Ninth. The address is 950 West Ninth St. Be careful of traffic. Colin Talcroft recommends the excellent Vietnamese noodles at Pho Vietnam at 711 Stony Point Rd. if participants would like to convene for lunch.

**OUTER POINT VAGRANTS
WEST MARIN**

Saturday, June 6, 2015

Meet at 7:30 – 8 AM,

Trip ends mid-afternoon

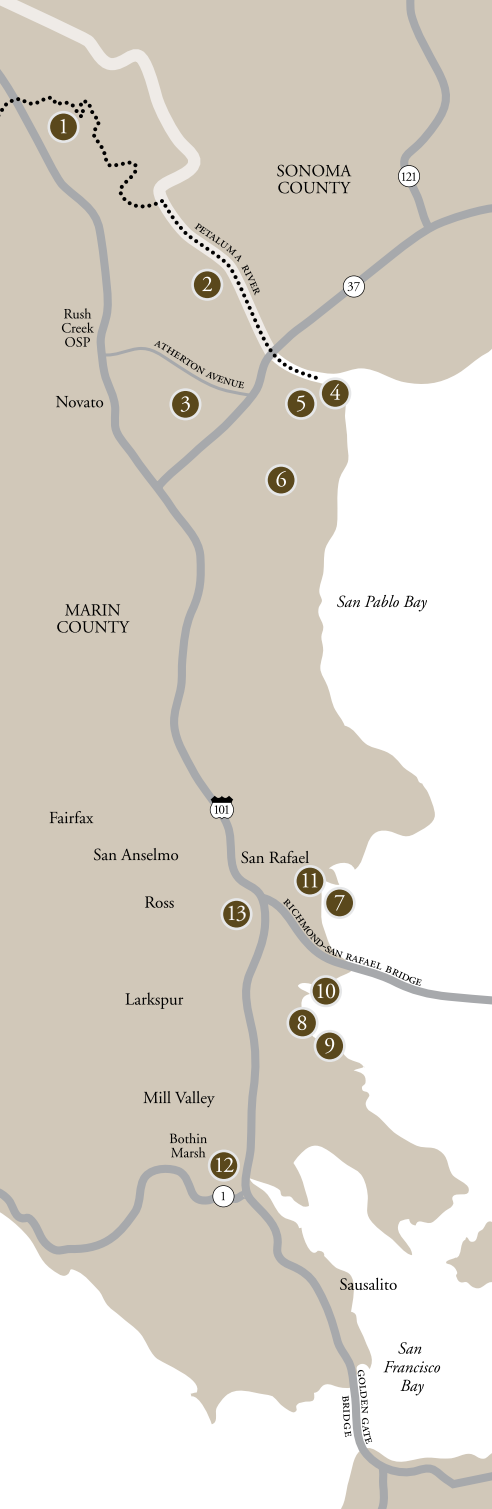
With Peter Colasanti

We will meet at Whitehouse Pool and bird the area as the group gathers. The first two weeks of June is coastal vagrant season. Peter promises to bring along somebody with great ears who can recognize displaced chip notes. Our itinerary for the day will depend on what has been happening in the area.

DIRECTIONS: From Hwy 101 in Larkspur, take the Sir Francis Drake exit 20.4 miles to Olema. Turn right onto Hwy 1 and go 2 miles. Before the green bridge, turn left (continuing on Sir Francis Drake Blvd) and drive 0.7 mile. Look for the White House Pool sign and parking lot on the right.

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.



CLOSE THE GAP

Even though the acquisition is in sight and the final funding almost in place, there's still plenty to do to complete the purchase and ensure habitat restoration of the Corte Madera property. The Coastal Conservancy Board meeting at which approval of our grant application will take place is scheduled for May 25. Word from Marin County is that the hearing before the Supervisors about a county contribution will be in May.

We are required by major government grants to restore habitat on the property. So, we've been working on grant applications for the restoration. We're seeking grants to develop the restoration design and to construct tidal marsh habitat from the Wildlife Conservation Board and the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation (NCWC). Our application to NCWC was rated high last year, but all of the available funds were distributed just before our project came up in the ranking. We were urged to reapply and so we are.

We're also coordinating with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to integrate our restoration design with the adjacent Ecological Reserve habitats, coordinating access with State Lands, which holds an easement on the property and with SMART which owns the adjacent levee we must cross to do the work.

PLAN SUBMITTED FOR HAMILTON FIELD AREA

After a hiatus of several years, an application has been submitted by a group of private developers, calling themselves the Marin Sports Academy, to the City of Novato to build a sports complex on the undeveloped land vacated by the Army north of the existing development and the skate board park, east of the railroad and west of the inland end of the marsh restoration.

A few of the elements of an earlier proposal have been dropped so the project is somewhat smaller, but it still is huge. Promotional material from the applicant emphasizes that the project will maintain the integrity of the cap on the landfill closed by the Army and will move and rebuild an access road. The project has a number of components: A 3.5-mile pedestrian and bicycle trail encircling the property and connecting with neighborhoods, businesses and other trails; a 12-acre community park

maintained by the operators of the fields with a 1-acre dog park, little league field, children's play equipment, bocce ball and volley ball courts; sports complex with 4 non-lighted fields for baseball and softball, two unlighted international fields for soccer, rugby, lacrosse and football; an indoor training center and a 1,000-seat ballpark for college, high school and exhibition games; an almost 800-car parking lot; and an interpretive pavilion that would inform visitors about the native ecological and historical aspects of the nearby restoration project—never mind that this entire complex would be built on historic marsh.

Although the full extent of impacts is yet unclear, aspects that are of concern include the 1,000-seat ball field and large parking lot which are adjacent to the new marsh, and development in several areas where wetlands were present. It is unclear whether wetlands to the west would be directly impacted but it looks like they could be. Residents are concerned about these and other impacts, particularly traffic and noise.

A community meeting is planned for April 29 and this is an opportunity to hear about the project and provide comments and questions to be addressed in the Environmental Impact Report. Environmental review for this huge project is likely to be long and contentious. There should be many opportunities for comment.

LEGISLATION OF INTEREST

Senate Bill 718 State Senators Mark Leno and Loni Hancock are co-sponsoring SB 718, a bill to ensure there is funding to rehabilitate birds in the event of future spills in the Bay. Currently, the only funding available for cleanup is from the oil companies and this only covers spills of petroleum-based products. There is no funding for non-petroleum-based spills, as became very clear several months when the "mystery goo" appeared and coated hundreds of diving birds. Non-profit organizations have had to spend scarce resources of up to \$300,000 by some estimates for rehabilitating wildlife that were covered by the as-yet unidentified substance.

SB 718 would authorize the Office of Spill Prevention and Response to borrow up to \$500,000 from the Oil Spill Response Trust Fund for the purpose of rehabilitating and rescuing wildlife in the event of a spill of

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

a non-petroleum-based substance. Once the party responsible for the spill is identified, they will be required to repay the loan with interest. In the event that the responsible party is never found, the loan will be repaid from the General Fund. This bill is clearly needed. Tell our Senator Marc McGuire you want him to support the bill. Thanks also go to Audubon California which was responsible for the promoting the bill.



The environmentally sound alignment for the North-South Ferry Connector Path

NORTH-SOUTH FERRY BIKE PATH MOVES AHEAD

The proposed 12-foot-wide path called the North-South Greenway (or Ungreenway to us) or the North-South Ferry Connector Path, has now morphed into two paths. One runs along the east side of Highway 101 from the north side of Corte Madera Creek over the existing creek-crossing extending south to the Greenbrae Pedestrian Overcrossing on the east side of 101. The lead agency for this section is the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM). The second path, still being planned by the county, will be aligned along the Ecological Reserve marsh. This redundant 12-foot wide path is planned to be presented at some later time.

The plan for this section along Highway 101 was presented and discussed at a workshop on April 6. The project proposes replacing the existing walkway crossing the creek along the Highway 101 Northbound off-ramp with a wider multiuse path, and improving pedestrian and bicycle access along Old Redwood Highway. Planning, environmental review and the design process for this alignment are expected to take two years.

Stated goals of the project include: improving safety and accessibility for all users; improving connectivity by providing linkages to the various transit facilities; protecting the bay and other natural resources and enhancing opportunities for their environmentally responsible enjoyment; attracting and accommodating a greater number of pedestrian and bicycle users; and minimizing impacts on existing parking.

At the workshop, input was sought on a variety of aspects of the project including the width of the path, whether it should be a divided or

undivided path, design of railings, and whether users should be visible to motorists. Another public workshop will be held this summer.

This alignment along 101 is by far the most environmentally sound location for an access path because it is away from the Ecological Reserve Marsh. In addition to its potential environmental impacts, the fact that the second path would travel between the same points makes it a duplicative trail requiring an unnecessary expenditure of public funds. A wide improved trail next to the marsh would attract more people who would disturb wildlife, possibly fill marsh and/or intrude into a needed high tide refugia area because space in the railroad right-of-way is limited.

Cyclists are well represented at these meetings. It is important that TAM hear what non-bikers would want the path to be like to make it safe, more usable and enjoyable for them and encourage them to use it.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

To provide your input, use the form provided on the project website: www.nsgreenwaygapclosure.com. Scroll down to "Online Project Survey" and click on "online survey." Add your comments on the environmental sensitivity of the nearby marsh and unacceptability of having a busy trail go through or beside it. This is the same form used by participants in the public meeting.

TAM has agreed to keep the survey on their web site until May 6 at which time it will be removed. So, do not delay visiting the website and completing the survey.

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Thank You to Corte Madera Property Acquisition Donors

Richard Bergmann
& Denise Filakosky
Ayris Hatton
Rick Johnson
& Maria Straatmann
Craig Love
Marin Community Foundation
Sharon McCloskey
Jeanine L. Starritt

Thank You to Donors to Support Marin Audubon Operations

Julie Allecta
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David L. Berry
Barbara Gifford
Harry & Elaine Hicks
Richard Jennings
Kaiulani P. Jerman
Jack Lloyd
Diane Parish & Paul Gelburd
The Watershed Nursery
(donation of native plants)
Sheila M. Tuffanelli
Elise Youmans

Marin Audubon Needs

- A photographer to make our newsletter better by taking photos at some of the sites that are the subjects of our conservation articles.
- Someone to help set up and maintain an automatic mailing list server, such as Listserv or Majordomo.

Call Barbara Salzman, 924-6057, if you are interested.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

PETALUMA MARSH

This month five volunteers from our Board, Ed Nute, Jude Stalker, Bob Hinz, Lowell Sykes and Katy Zaremba, spent most of a day planting coyote bush and pulling invasive radish from our property on San Antonio Creek. The late rains seem to be spurring the growth of this invasive weed. It has proliferated on this site as well as at Bahia.

But there are many positives. The tidal marsh looks great. On the side of the levee, there is lots of creeping wild rye and much of the coyote bush we planted last year has survived in spite of the drought, along with marsh baccharis and western goldenrod.

After many years of trying to correct the problem of high sulfide soil with the associated difficulty getting vegetation to grow on the habitat bench we created, plants are finally coming in on their own. Some are native (alkali heath), several are not (brass buttons, radish and several grass species) and the status of others is unclear (Atriplex, spurry). Even though some are not native, it is a sign that soils are now able to support vegetation and we should plan on planting next year.

BAHIA

Since our last report, a group of nine junior high school students from Marin Montessori School at St. Vincent's planted and mulched gumplants. In addition, sixteen volunteers planted, mulched and watered about 100 creeping wild rye and gumplant, and watered about another 100 creeping wild rye plants that had been planted last month. Our Special Projects chair, Jude Stalker has done such a good job attracting volunteer crews.

Monitoring of the major marsh restoration



All photos on this page courtesy of Jude Stalker

At MAS's Petaluma Marsh Expansion Project some small plants are finally beginning to grow on the habitat bench between the levee and the marsh.

project we completed in 2008 began this month, with a crew doing surveys in the marsh.

SIMMONS SLOUGH

We hired a crew from Shelterbelt Builders to plant the 310 wetland plants and creeping wild rye donated to us by The Watershed Nursery. After getting caught in a horrendous traffic jam from a truck fire on the Richmond Bridge, the crew managed to plant them in one of the depressions we excavated several years ago with a Natural Resource Conservation Service's grant. Thank you, Watershed Nursery, for your donation!

We're trying to establish native wetland plants in the depressions, but have had a difficult time. The first year was a flood year, and we have had two subsequent drought years. We are now trying plugs in the hope that they will do better than the seeds we used first.

TRIANGLE MARSH

On April's first Saturday workday at Triangle, 12 volunteers came and succeeded in removing Harding grass, Italian thistle and fennel. They

also watered the newest upland plantings. On April 1 a group of sixth graders from the Marin Country Day School (MCDS) planted gumplant and creeping wild rye and removed fennel. We always appreciate the help of our MCDS neighbors whose students helped with the first planting on the upland ten years ago. We are also lucky to have two high school volunteers who want to have ongoing work and they were set up to remove invasives at Triangle.



San Rafael Rotary volunteers at Bahia

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

It will be our last chance to stop the earliest-blooming invasive non-native annuals from producing seeds. The most troublesome of those are radish and Italian thistle. It might be difficult to get the very last of these, but their numbers are already much lower than they were a few years ago. After a rather dry rainy season, especially so in late winter and spring, we might be watering the newer plantings

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: May 2, June 6

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

Bahia, Novato:

Second Saturdays: May 9, June 13

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

THANK YOU TO OUR

STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Ian Beer, Breana Biggi, Bob Bundy, Dave Chenoweth, Bob Hinz, Amal, Isra & Qasim Jamal, Steve Maddox, Linda Nicoletto, Ed Nute, Caroline Spence, Jude Stalker, Lowell Sykes, Alexis Toruno, Lacey Winthorne, Katy Zaremba

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Katherine & Gary Ashkin, John Bagarozzi, Marjorie Belknap, Debra Bernard, Janet Braff, Celia Burdick, Bob Casey, Ruth Collins, Margaret Conner, Orrin Cook, Sarah Laughran & Dabney, John F. Fiorito, Sampason Goff, Richard R. Goldman, Meghan Harris, Theo Hausammann, Katherine Hermann, Karsson Hevia, Jennifer Holland, Alison Johnston, Claudis Lewis, Emily & Christophe Marlowe, Ann Marteau, James A. Martin, Edward Meagor, Teresa Miller, Erma Murphy, Susan Naretto, D. S. Nash, Karina Nielsen, Beth Niles, William Perez, Michael Prados, Kimberlie Reval, Richard F. Ruben, John Schaver, K. Scott, L. G. Siemens, Renee F. Silveira, Holly Sletteland, Barry Spitz, Molly Sterling, Susan Sternau, Suzan & Jay Sweet, Wes Temby, Rosemary Wakeham, Ben Woodard

MARIN BIRDLOG: MARCH - APRIL 2015

By Josiah Clark

April brings the highest bird diversity seen all year to Northern California. With wintering birds lingering, resident birds breeding and colorful northbound migrants showing up each day this period of peak migration is among the more exciting times of year for observing birds. While the



Glen Tepke, gtepk@phsac.com

Cassin's Auklet

Twenty-five **Black-footed Albatrosses**, five **Sabine's Gulls** and forty-five **Cassin's Auklets** were a testament to the importance of this protected Marin area (PP).

Spring arrivals take much of the spotlight. A few less common species of note include **Hermit Warbler** and **Black-throated Gray Warbler** on Bolinas-Fairfax Road on 4/3 (DE), a **Western Kingbird** at Stafford Lake on 3/29 (DH) and **MacGillivray's Warbler** on 4/10 at the base of Mt. Vision Road (EC). On 4/12 at least three **House Wrens** were on territory in the eastern part of the county, two on Lucas Valley and one at Stafford Lake (JC). These are uncommon breeders in Marin in all but the most northeastern part of the county.

On the east side of the county a wintering **Lewis's Woodpecker** continued at the edge of the county along San Antonio Road until at least 4/10 (DW, JD). **Aleutian Canada Geese** numbered 8 at Las Gallinas and there were at least as many territorial **Great-tailed Grackles** on 4/1 (DE). A female **Hooded Merganser** there on 4/12 was getting late (JC).

Observers and Acronyms **EC:** Everett Clark, **DE:** Daniel Edelstein, **DH:** Daphne Hatch, **JD:** Joannie Dranginis, **JC:** Josiah Clark, **PP:** Peter Pyle, **SH:** Steve Howell, **DW:** David Wimpfheimer, **KH:** Keith Hansen

Conservation

continued from page 5

PROPOSED SINGLE FAMILY HOUSE ON ATHERTON AVENUE

A 5,958-square-foot house proposed by Gary Niebuhr of Concord on Atherton Avenue near H Lane would require the removal of 166 native trees, several species of oak and Bay trees. No apparent attempt has been made to avoid the oaks that would be destroyed by a long driveway from Atherton to this massive house.

YET ANOTHER BIKE PROJECT—BIKE LANE PLAN FOR OLIVE AVENUE

Marin County and the City of Novato have obtained grant funds to provide bike lanes along Olive Avenue between Samson and Atherton Avenues in both the city and county's jurisdiction. The bike lanes would be on both sides of Olive and include striping the street for

extreme rarities are generally less common at this time of year, it is the rapid pace of change that can keep birders engaged.

Things come and things go. Marin's first **Black Vulture** was last seen near Bolinas on 3/29 (KH, PP) and has not been seen since. The first **Elegant Terns** of the year on the lagoon were noted on 3/21; this early date was very noteworthy. These birds are likely dispersing from the south in search of better breeding areas (PP, SH).

Around this same time a calm period allowed a rare early spring birding visit to the Cordell Bank.



Glen Tepke, gtepk@phsac.com

Sabine's gull

bike use and paving four feet on either side of Olive Avenue. We are concerned about impacts to our seasonal wetlands at Olive and Atherton Avenues and other wetlands Olive Avenue.

Wildlife Habitat at Home

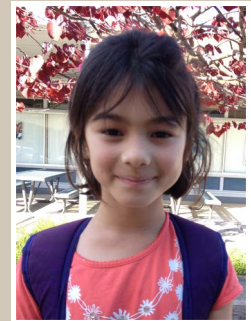
continued from page 1

filter through into your yard and provide perches for songbirds. In downtown San Rafael, the Red Alders that I've planted are well-used by **Yellow-rumped Warblers**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** and **Hermit Thrushes** in winter. Alders are not always readily available at the plant nurseries. O'Donnell's Fairfax Nursery usually has White Alders available (they can order Red Alders). Mostly Natives Nursery in Tomales usually has small Red Alders available. Consider planting a native Alder in your yard to attract birds.

Junior Bird Watchers

By Wendy Dreskin

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



Alma Soria is a first grader at Mark Day School. Alma says, "I'd love to see a Red-shouldered Hawk. I know they live in the area."

Last Chance to Get Tickets for Mother's Day Picnic

SUNDAY, MAY 14, 2015

ACR's Volunteer Canyon
4800 Shoreline, Highway 1
Stinson Beach

Join us for a delicious chicken or vegetarian lunch, served from Noon to 2 PM.

\$28 adults
\$12 children 12 and younger

TO GET TICKETS, SEND CHECK TO:

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San Anselmo, CA 94960

OR online at www.marinaudubon.org

Volunteer Canyon entrance is 2.66 miles north of Stinson Beach and 1/3 mile south of the entrance to ACR's Griffin Canyon.



The Rail

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- June 4 **Speaker Series:** Birding Tanzania
With Wendy Dreskin
- June 6 **Stewardship Day,** Triangle Marsh
- June 13 **Stewardship Day,** Bahia
- June 13 **Field Trip:** Muddy Hollow Trail
West Marin
With Dan Singer
- June 19-21 Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua
Lee Vining
www.birdchautauqua.org
- June 20 **Field Trip:** Five Brooks/Bear Valley
With Jim White and Bob Battagin

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SUPPORT MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

The success of Marin Audubon Society's (MAS) work depends greatly on its chapter supporting members. We work collaboratively with the National Audubon Society (NAS) on issues of mutual concern, but very little of our funding comes from NAS. MAS relies on local support for our habitat protection efforts, conservation advocacy, birding field trips, educational speakers series, and publication of *The 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.

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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.

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