



David Wimpfheimer

Laysan Albatross

The September Speaker Series program will be a Zoom meeting. Visit the Speaker Series page on the MAS website for information on joining the Zoom meeting electronically.

The Farallon Islands are not just iconic granite rocks off our coast, but an incredibly rich and dramatic refuge. The islands host the largest seabird colony in the contiguous United States. While the number of breeding bird species is small here, more than four hundred species of birds have been recorded on the island documenting its importance as a magnet for migratory birds. Additionally, this is an important breeding area for Elephant Seals and other pinnipeds. This presentation will focus on the varied natural history of the Gulf of the Farallons Marine Sanctuary, which includes Great White Sharks, and also touch on the human history of the area.

David Wimpfheimer has led hundreds of natural history cruises to the Gulf of the Farallon Marine Sanctuary since the 1980s, including MAS groups in recent years. David has also studied Elephant seals and landbird migration on the island. He is a professional naturalist, guide and biologist.

NEXT MONTH'S SPEAKER:

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10 7:30 PM

Changes in Bird Status in the Central Valley Since 1944

By John Sterling



The Rail

MARIN AUDUBON SOCIETY

Annual Report For FY 2019-20

It's been a unique and troubling year requiring an almost complete change in our way of working and living. Through most of the fiscal year we functioned as usual, but then came the virus and the need to avoid crowds, along with political and racial unrest. A month after the virus struck, we decided to try Zoom for our Speaker Programs and that's worked out well. We couldn't figure out a way to continue our field trips, so they were discontinued, temporarily we hoped. Our Board and conservation work has been able to continue on Zoom. Agencies and governments are now being held on Zoom also. Our major activities and accom-

plishments are following.

EDUCATION

Our Speaker Series usually numbers 10. We had to cancel two before we got set up on Zoom, so we only had eight. Similarly, our Field Trips had to be reduced; we had 48 total, including three boat trips. We also updated the photos on Jr. Birdwatchers, thanks to Len Blumin.

LAND PROTECTED

We completed the purchase of one parcel at Black Point, and are working on the acquisition of several more. The county suspended processing
continued on page 4

NEW BIRDING PROGRAMS!

MAS Launches Fall Online Birding Programs

In lieu of our traditional lineup of fall field trips, Marin Audubon invites you to attend a series of free online Zoom programs beginning in September. Our first series will focus on **shorebirds** and will feature presentations by some of our best-loved and respected birding leaders and researchers.

We hope these programs will help members of our vibrant birding community stay connected with each other and enable us to continue learning about the birds we all love so passionately.

Programs will all be scheduled from 7 to 8:30 PM on Wednesday evenings with a one-hour program to be followed by time for questions and discussion. Register will soon be available for these programs at www.marinaudubon.org.

SHOREBIRD IDENTIFICATION

With Lisa Hug

PART I: Tuesday, September 2, 2019
PART II: Tuesday, September 9, 2019

Identifying shorebirds is a difficult challenge for many birders. However, there are many strategies to use that can make shorebird recognition simpler. In these two sessions Lisa will share photos and present tips helping us to focus on size, shape, and behavior.

continued on page 2

MAS Volunteer of the Year Ann Thomas

We're proud to grant MAS's 2020 Volunteer of the Year Award to Ann Thomas.

Ann was on our Board 20 years ago. After, she went on to serve on other Boards, but never lost touch. She remained active with Marin Baylands

Advocates, the organization that partners with MAS in purchasing properties, for which MAS is fiduciary agent. When MAS needed a Secretary several years ago, she saved the day and accepted the position. But that wasn't all. A short time after, we needed a Membership Chair and she volunteered to take on that position, also. She worked diligently to serve our members. Then, earlier this year, we unexpectedly needed a Treasurer and she stepped up and volunteered for that job, too. Now, she's Secretary AND Treasurer. Fortunately, Bob Hinz has taken over Membership.

Feisty and smart, Ann loves to keep busy. She walks every day, drives friends to appointments, and continues to be involved with American Association of University Women, Marin Conservation League and is on the Marin Open Space Trust Board of Directors.

Thanks, Ann, for all you do for us. Where would we be without you!



Susan Strang

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message	2
Field Trips	1 and 2
Conservation Report	3 and 6
Habitat Stewardship	6
Birdlog	7

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Most 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	Ann Thomas 914-9559
Treasurer	Ann Thomas 914-9559
Conservation	Phil Peterson 828-4780 Barbara Salzman 924-6057
Field Trips	Jane Medley 559/760-1551
Membership Chair	Bob Hinz 383-8688 Contact Bob for membership problems or questions.
Outreach, Website	Elyse Omernick 694-2320
Speaker Series	Doug Waterman 415/506-4675
Special Projects	Jude Stalker 680-6291
Nominating	Doug Waterman 415/506-4675
Editor, <i>The Rail</i>	Doug Wallace 310-1693
Property Management	Ed Nute 669-7710
Volunteer Coordinator	Meghan Kehoe 209-769-8862
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 Doug Wallace, dwallace1957@yahoo.com, 310-1693; assisted by other members of MAS; and designed by Studio NaCl (www.studio-nacl.com). Deadline is the first of each month.

©2020 Marin Audubon Society

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 LETTER

By Barbara Salzman

Those of us who haven't studied the life of John James Audubon, know him as an esteemed artist, a woodsman and keen observer of birds and wildlife, and have been as surprised as I was to find out that he was a slave holder. Today we recognize him for his interest in birds and artistic talent capturing them on canvas, which was unusual for his time. Of course, he had nothing to do with the National Audubon Society, which was established long after Audubon's death. Audubon today (be it National or Marin Audubon) absolutely renounces the intolerance and bigotry we are seeing today. I think ornithologist and author, J. Drew Lanham, said it well: "Color doesn't limit birds. It simply enhances their lives and our enjoyment of them. I think it should be the same with us."

It was gratifying to see National Audubon react so quickly and positively to the confrontation when a white woman called the police, and verbally attacked a Black birder enjoying birds in Central Park. And I'm so pleased that our Board wants to express our support for Black Lives Matter, against discrimination and for diversity. An ad hoc committee of our Board will be developing a policy on inclusiveness and diversity in our programs.

It's truly a troubling time with the pandemic, prejudice, economic uncertainty, unrest, and failure of leadership, stressing us all. With the COVID-19 numbers increasing in Marin as we go to press, it's more uncertain than ever when we will get back to a more normal way

of working. Doug Waterman is continuing to plan our speaker series on Zoom. Jane Medley is planning exciting workshops on Zoom (see below) to help keep up or advance your birding skills or introduce you to birding. The workshops will also keep us in touch with each other. We're continuing our monthly workdays on a very limited basis with social distancing at Corte Madera (contact Martha Jarocki).

For some of us staying home is easier than for others. I seem to be busier than ever. It certainly is easier to attend meetings with Zoom because you don't have to drive. Maybe it's just my imagination but there seems to be more meetings than ever. Conservation work continues and we're working on streamlining our operations and upgrading our website which will be unveiled soon. But I think we all miss that personal contact.

I'm so pleased that our new Board members are diving right in. Their energy, interest and good ideas along with input from our seasoned board members, is inspiring. We can expect a challenging, busy and exciting year ahead.

A very special thank you to our spring appeal donors. Because of you we will be able to water plants we installed last year, purchase and install more plants at Bahia, Triangle, and on our property at the Redwoods next winter; fix fencing and purchase a storage container for our equipment at Corte Madera

So avoid crowds, wear your mask, stay well and stay in touch with MAS and birds.

FALL ONLINE BIRDING PROGRAMS (continued from page 1)

In addition, we will learn to age and even sex some shorebirds. Be sure to have your field guides handy for reference.

LIFE HISTORIES OF BAY AREA SHOREBIRDS

With *Rusty Scaup*

Tuesday, September 16, 2019

Each of the 27 shorebird species found in the Bay Area has a different story: different nesting grounds, different migration, and different foraging strategy with some new discoveries and plenty of surprises. A few nest here, some stage here on migration, others call the bay home for two-thirds of their year. For a good number of these species, our bay is the most important habitat on the continent's Pacific coast.

SNOWY PLOVERS

With *Wildlife Biologist Matt Lau*

Tuesday, September 23, 2019

Matt Lau is the Snowy Plover Ecologist for Point Reyes National Seashore. The Western Snowy Plover is listed as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List and Threatened on the U.S. Endangered Species List. We'll review challenges facing Snowy Plovers, discuss their natural history and breeding ecology, and look at their population status in Point Reyes.

SHOREBIRD SURVEYS

With *Point Blue Biologist Mark Dettling*

Tuesday, September 30, 2019

The Pacific Flyway Shorebird Survey is a volunteer effort led by Point Blue Conservation Science to gather information on wintering shorebird populations along the US West Coast. The survey is part of the Migratory Shorebird Project, an international collaboration to monitor wintering shorebirds from Canada to Chile. You will hear about the purpose of the survey, how the birds are counted, some results from past years, and how to get involved. Visit the survey website at: <https://data.prbo.org/apps/pfss/>.

For those of you who might want to review Shorebirds either prior to or after these programs, we refer you to the Marin Audubon website (www.marinaudubon.org) where you will find an introduction to the most common shorebirds coupled with impressive photos taken by long-time Marin Audubon field trip leader, former board member, and friend to many in the birding community, Len Blumin. Select "Birds" on the Homepage menu, which will take you to the "Shorebird" link.

More information to follow on these possible 2020 offerings:

October – Raptors; **November** – Ducks; **December** – Wintering Gulls

INTRODUCING FERN

FERN, the Fire and Environment Resilience Network, is comprised of representatives of Marin Audubon Society, California Native Plant Society and the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin. We are working together to ensure that Marin's natural resources are protected as the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA) and FireSafe Marin ramp up their education, vegetation removal and other work to reduce fire risk.

We've been meeting regularly, attending MWPA and committee meetings in our efforts to work for adequate environmental review of individual projects and cumulative impacts; looking at California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements; working with staff, researching other relevant documents that could be helpful in working for the protection of vegetative communities and the wildlife that depend on them, while addressing fire safety.

FARALLON ISLANDS MOUSE ERADICATION PLAN STATUS

Our Zoom webinar on the Farallones Mouse Eradication Program was an immense success. All of the presenters did an exceptional job clarifying and explaining issues providing accurate scientific information and explaining and clarifying issues that have been misrepresented by others. If you missed the webinar, you can view it by going to our website, click on Alerts and scroll down. The second Alert has the link to the Farallones Zoom Program.

Some of the answers to questions raised by attendees of the webinar:

- **Who is the opposition?** The most consistent publically-expressed opposition has been from Wildcare in San Rafael and Richard Charter from the Ocean Foundation. Wildcare's primary issue has been the use of rodenticide. Their concern is understandable as they see many birds and other wildlife that have ingested rodenticides used in agriculture and on private property by people trying to eliminate rodents. However, they fail to recognize that Brodifacoum-25D Conservation is a different chemical developed specifically for conservation purposes on islands. The Service's Plan is for a carefully planned one-time (two episodes) application of a limited dosage (1.6 ounces total) under highly controlled conditions.
- **What does hazing mean?** The term hazing covers a large number of actions intended to scare birds away, in this case to stop the gulls from landing on the islands and keep them off the islands. The activities could include noise-making, flying helicopters, shooting

firecrackers, almost anything that will scare birds away and keep them away.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

The date for the Coastal Commission hearing is still unconfirmed so the November date is uncertain. But the Commission still needs to hear from you. Commission staff has set up a dedicated email address for this project. Send your comments to: farallonislands@coastal.ca.gov or the Commission's new address: 455 Mission, Suite 300, San Francisco, CA 904105

Tell the Commission that the project is consistent with the Coastal Zone Management Program the purpose of which is to maintain and restore the ecosystem of the islands. This has been the experience on many other islands where the Service's approach has been used. See MAS's website for more information and a recorded experience at Anacapa Island off the Southern California Coast.

SAUSALITO GENERAL PLAN UPDATE DEIR

The City of Sausalito is revising its General Plan and as the first step the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was out for public evaluation in July. The DEIR found no significant impacts on natural resources. We did find areas of concern, and we made recommendations for a number of changes to strengthen and clarify policies to protect trees, wetlands and the bay.

Native tree policies only addressed views. We recommended policies to protect native trees for their habitat values, particularly along streams. Policies to protect the bay and wetlands are vague and general. We suggested clarifying and strengthening the policies by including specifics on protecting wetlands including a requirement that any wetland fill be for a public benefit. For projects that meet these criteria, mitigation sequencing, beginning with avoidance to a replacement ratio of two acres of restored marsh for each one-acre or portion thereof, of wetland filled, should be required.

A major concern is the lack of clarity about residential use of the bay. There are policies to protect bay waters and wetlands along the waterfront but some policies on housing appear to conflict with policies to protect bay waters. Curiously, anchor outs are never mentioned — the term "liveaboard" is used, but not defined. The Richardson Bay Special Area Plan defines live-aboard as "a vessel having capability for

continued on page 6

Atlas Project Ahead of Schedule

By Juan García

As previously announced in the pages of this newsletter, the Marin Audubon Society has a big project afoot. Beginning early next year, several dozen volunteers will fan out across the county in search of our breeding birds. The long-term plan is to provide an updated account of the distribution and abundance of these birds, the first such study since Dave Shuford's beloved *Marin County Breeding Bird Atlas of 1993*.

We're still in our organizational phase, but I can announce that we're ahead of schedule! We're closing in on two major landmarks: the establishment of a state-of-the-art database and the imminent launch of our project website.

Meanwhile, having organized the terrain of the county into "study blocks" — the irreducible units of area that will form the basis of our distributional study — we have been working diligently to populate this grid system with the most skilled observers we can find. And Marin County, as you can imagine, has some of the best anywhere.

We could still use help! Seasoned birders with exceptional "ear-birding" skills, as well as the ability to make several visits to a particular patch over the course of a season, should certainly get in touch. We're especially interested in birders who can cover our more urban settings, especially in San Rafael, along the 101 corridor, and in agricultural areas in the northwestern part of the county. Birders with plenty of enthusiasm, but perhaps more limited experience, can still collaborate as "additional observers" — find out how! You may reach me at this email address: jfgarcia@tutanota.de

BENEFIT MAS

Make your next Amazon order through AmazonSmile and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases to MAS. For information, visit <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/94-6076664>.

Annual Report *continued from page 1*

of tax default parcels due to COVID-19, which has delayed several acquisitions. MAS now owns 20 parcels in Black Point. We actually purchased more but have had some combined to reduce our parcel taxes.

PLANNING/ADVISORY COMMITTEES

We are part of the following ongoing committees: Environmental Roundtable, China Camp Adaptation Planning, Corte Madera Adaptation Planning Process, Bothin Marsh Adaptation Committee, Lagunitas Creek Technical Advisory Committee, San Francisco Bay Water Trail, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, San Francisco Estuary Partnership, San Francisco Bay Shoreline Advocates, and the Baylands Working

Marin Audubon Society Statement of Financial Position As of June 30, 2020

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Operating Bank Accounts	188,561
Property Bank Accounts	88,539
Marin Baylands Advocates Bank Account	35,772
Total Current Assets	312,873
Real Property	466,7993
Investment Account	1,512,019
TOTAL ASSETS	\$6,492,886

Marin Audubon Society Statement of Activities July 2019 through June 2020

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

Donations	364,206
Grant Income for Property Restoration, and Enhancement	81,494
Membership	31,887
Events and Activities	11,332
Interest and Dividend Income	46,026
Marin Baylands Advocates Income	23,165
TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT	558,110

EXPENSES

Property Restoration, Enhancement, and Management	5,906
Professional Services	175,958
Office Supplies, Printing, and Postage	32,924
Program Expenses	45,529
Insurance	9,720
Property Parcel Taxes	10,261
Permits and Fees	4,831
Website and Social Media	8,234
Other General Expenses	6,937
Marin Baylands Advocates Expenses	6,472
TOTAL EXPENSES	306,771

RESULTS FROM OPERATIONS

Investment Gain – Realized and Unrealized	(2,844)
CHANGE IN EQUITY	248,495

TOTAL EQUITY – BEGINNING OF YEAR

6,246,696

TOTAL EQUITY – END OF YEAR

\$6,495,191

Group for Highway 37. Participation in these focused committees requires attendance at quarterly, or more frequent, meetings.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

Last winter, our volunteers installed native plants at Bahia and Triangle. We also hired On Point Land Management to plant at Bahia and STRAW to plant at Simmons Slough. Summer maintenance involves removing non-native plants and watering new plants. Our volunteer Lowell Sykes mowed weeds at Corte Madera and Bahia. We have a dedicated volunteer watering crew at Corte Madera consisting of Martha and Gerry Jarocki, Lowell Sykes, Bob Hinz, Dave Chenoweth, Doug Waterman and Ed Nute. At Bahia, watering was done by Lowell Sykes and, because the job was too big for one person, crews from On Point Land Management were hired. Martha Jarocki held monthly Volunteer work days at Corte Madera with Bob Hinz at Triangle Marsh. Winter stewardship work involves planting and weeding also.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

- **Monarch Project** Managed by Ed Nute, this project area on our Simmons property has been planted with narrow leaf milkweed and weeded to benefit Monarch Butterfly. Ed is planning to expand this project to a section of Bahia.
- **Limonium Removal** This project is organized by Jude Stalker. In spring, Jude and her volunteers removed the non-native *Limonium* from the Corte Madera Ecological Reserve lands and our adjacent property, and from properties owned by others along the Sausalito waterfront.

GRANTS

We were awarded a major grant from: the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority of Measure AA funds to develop a sea level rise adaptation plan for Tiscornia Marsh. Additional grants were received for purchase of tools from Marin County Fish and Wildlife Commission; and from Marin County Flood Control District for planting wetland plants at Simmons. Another grant through the Flood Control District will fund installation of a water control structure to enable us to manage the water levels on our Simmons Slough diked baylands property.

STUDIES

Hired ESA to do a drainage assessment for Norton Pond at Black Point. We also contracted with Point Blue Conservation Science to do bird surveys for Richardson Bay to help inform our work to ensure anchor outs are not moored in the Bay.

The Year 1 monitoring report for our Corte Madera restoration was completed. The monitoring surveys were undertaken in 2019, the first year after completion of the marsh restoration project.

CITIZEN SCIENCE

Sponsored three Christmas Bird Counts: Southern Marin, Point Reyes, and Cheep Thrills in North Marin. Our Board also agreed to sponsor an update of the 1993 Breeding Bird Atlas by Juan Garcia. The first year is being funded by a bequest from Mimi Burton's estate.

CONSERVATION

Policies: The Board adopted two conservation policies: on Solar Facilities designed to protect wetlands and baylands which are a prime target for solar because they are flat; and on Fire Safety intended to protect natural resources as work to provide protection from fires increases.

Activities/Projects:

- **Farallon Island Restoration** Continued our efforts to support restoration of the ecosystem of the Farallones through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's plan to eradicate the invasive house mice from the islands. We sponsored a webinar, with significant help from Point Blue Conservation Science, featuring presentations by the refuge manager, two biologists and a veterinarian who have worked on and studied the islands. See page 3 for more information.
- **Anchor-Outs** Continued advocating for the removal of anchor outs from Richardson Bay both at the Richardson Bay Regional Agency (RBRA) and at BCDC, which is actively engaged in enforcing the Richardson Bay Special Area Plan with both Sausalito and the RBRA. Following this problem involves attending meetings and reviewing staff reports and other documents and testifying in support of removing anchor outs.
- **FERN** Partnered with representatives of the California Native Plant Society Marin Chapter and the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin to form the Fire and Environment Resilience Network coalition, focused on integrating the protection of natural resources with fire protection.
- **Northern Spotted Owl** Sent information packets to residents within a half-mile of spotted owl nests near San Anselmo, Corte Madera, Fairfax, and San Rafael. The packet contained a letter and fact sheet explaining the problem, recommending actions to protect nesting

owls, and who to contact if there are threats to the owls.

- **Solar Appeal** Appealed the solar facility project on Silveira land adjacent to Redwood Landfill because of its location on baylands (former tidal marsh) and adjacent upland habitat. The project will cover wildlife habitat, baylands, wetlands and grasslands. The Planning Commission voted to approve the project. We were joined in this appeal by Marin Conservation League and Marin Baylands Advocates.
- **Brescia Appeals** Appealed the zoning administrator's approval of this project to build two houses on a Black Point hillside adjacent to four of our properties. MAS appealed in partnership with Marin Baylands Advocates and Black Point Homeowners to the Planning Commission and then to the Supervisors. The project would block access to several of our parcels and adversely impact habitat by destroying native trees and grasslands. For unclear reasons, the supervisors voted to support the developer.
- **BCDC Bay Plan Amendment on Fill for Habitat** Supported change in BCDC's policies to allow limited filling of the Bay for the purpose of creating habitat. The amendment was approved by the Commission.
- **San Geronimo Golf Course/No on D** Supported protecting the golf course site for open space and natural resource protection and successfully opposed Measure D which would have allowed the golf course to continue and required the entire county to vote on any changes proposed for community plans anywhere in the county.
- **Las Gallinas Wildlife Pond** Objected to the Las Gallinas Sanitary District's removal of a massive amount of cattails from around the wildlife pond, adversely impacting nesting Least Bittern (the only one in the Bay) and nesting habitat for many other species. We were pleased to be joined by Joe Moreland in advocating for protecting habitat of this pond.
- **MMWD** Engaged on various watershed activities including eBikes and watershed protection.
- **Gross Field EIS** Commented in support of limiting the runway expansion, which would avoid wetlands, as recommended by the Federal Aviation Administration.
- **Stone Tree Driving Range** Submitted comment letters objecting to the proposed change in the land use designation and zoning of the site, from Open Space to Conservation, because the change would allow more development on the site. Interestingly, Novato's Conservation designation allows for housing

and other structures on a property, which the Open Space designation does not allow.

- **North Bay Mitigation Bank** Submitted letters commenting on potential adverse impacts of creating a mitigation bank along San Antonio Creek. Then requesting that a CEQA document be prepared, then commented to the RWQCB on deficiencies in the Negative Declaration that was prepared. The project would allow grazing in wetlands and other impacts.
- **Bald Eagle** Wrote to owners of properties adjacent to the Bald Eagle nest in an effort to protect the nest.
- **Vegetation at Creekside development, Larkspur** Sent a letter to Homeowners Association asking them to replace the plants their crew removed.
- **Highway 37** Attended Policy Committee meetings (elected officials), Caltrans and county transportation agencies. This committee discusses design options, existing and potential adverse and beneficial impacts, opportunities and constraints, traffic conditions and other relevant factors for short- and long-term alternatives for improving traffic, are discussed. Also participated in the Highway 37 – Baylands Group that focuses on protecting the North Bay wetlands.
- **Sid Commons** Sent a letter to Sonoma supervisors expressing objections about the impacts of this large residential project, just across the border in Sonoma County, on wetlands.
- **Gallinas/Santa Venetia Levee Improvement** Submitted a letter to Marin County Public Works with comments about wetland vegetation that would be impacted by a project to improve this low levee using wood planks. The plan is to use lumber to shore up the low levee and backfill so the amount of fill in the marsh should be non-existent or negligible.
- **San Quentin Pump Station** Submitted comments to the city of San Rafael on this project to replace the pump station at the Canalways site along the San Rafael Bayfront.
- **Canalways Vegetation Removal** Reviewed and commented on this year's plan to remove pampas grass from the high area on the west side of the Canalways property and save a nest in one of the plants. Also recommended removing the nest plant after nesting season and then remove the plant.
- **AquaCulture, with National Audubon Society** Testified before the Fish and Game Commission in support of protecting aquatic habitat and not extending oyster farms into sensitive locations in Tomales Bay.

THANK YOU, DONORS TO THE SPRING APPEAL

Bud Alderson, Donna Allen, Elizabeth Anderson, Robert Atwood, Jeanne Azen, Margot Avery, Phyllis Barry, Anne Baxter, David Berry, Judi Bersaglieri, Maark & Bev Birnbaum, Cal Blom, Kay Bolla, Ben Bonnander, Lesley Brown, John & Patricia Cahill, Steve Capper, Robert & Sandra Chilvers, William Clark, James Cleaves, Patricia Collins, Carroll Covey, Christine Cuccia, Rudolph DeMay, Laura Disterhoft, Elaine Drude, Carl Duisberg & Laura Lindskog, Audrey Earl, Lisa & Aaron Ferguson, Richard Finley, Ross Flewelling, James Fowler, Erin Frazier, Christine Geiger, Raymond Gergus, Jim Gibbons, Carl & Donna Gowan, Steve Grayson & Barbara Kriz, Marty Griffin, Mick Griffin, Sallie Griffith, Jeanette Gustafson, Roger Harris, Bob Hinz, Roger Hooper, Stephanie Horn, Donald Howard, Paula and Russell Hunt, Mary Hynes, Victoria Jackson, Susan Janson, Martha Jarocki, Jewish Community Federation, Mary Wood Johnides, Rich & Nancy Keaton, David Kimball, Rama Kumar, Sondra & Ron Lanstein, Derek Lecy, William Legge, Mardi Leland, Levine Equitable Program at Fidelity Charitable, Anne Libbin, Irene & Thomas Lopez, Carolyn Losee, Carolyn Lown & Carolyn Kneibler, Ellanor Malinowski, Marin Subaru, Sarah Martin, Peter Mason, Vivian Mazur, Nancy McCarthy, Sharon McCloskey, Doyleen McMurty, Jane Medley, Barbara Merino, Stephanie Miller, Gerald Mitchell, Julie Munro, Gerald Mitchell, Gene Moore, Jean Moore, Susan Moore, Kari Mueller, Lawrence Mulryan, Ruth Nash, Barbara Nathan, Terri Nevins, Debra Newman, Colin & Lisa Nicholls, Ed Nute, Lucienne O'Keefe, Richard Paillon, Susan Peters, David Peterson, Steve Piatek, Cathleen Plevin, Stacey Pogorzelski, Alison Quoyser, Marianna Riser, Susan & John Ristow, Judy & Dennis Rodoni, Richard & Ann Ruben, Mary Lee Sammis, Georgia & Hugh Schall, Sonja Schmid, Richard Scott, Eugene Sechser, Harold Sherley, Sandra Slichter, Sharie & Clem Shute, Thomas Silk, Joanne Solberg, Charles Stanberry, Jeanine Starritt, Helen Stoddard, Roger Stoll, Kandice Strako, Mary Lee Strebl, Sandra Swanson, Jeanne Tymstra, Valorie Van Dahl, Berry Jo Van Gelder, Doug Waterman, Wendy Webster, Wild Birds (Novato), Marion Weeks, Barbara Ann Wingate

Memorial Donations

Thank you to John Crawford for the donation in memory of Will Hynes, to Gretchen Hoskins for the donation in memory of Tony Harrow, and Bill Richardson for the donation in memory of Betsy Richardson.

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Our volunteer days remain on the schedule. Staying a healthy distance apart from others on our outdoor volunteer days is easy.

Now is when stinkweed (*Dittrichia graveolens*), one of the invasive annual nonnative plants, makes its appearance, and we try to make it disappear from our properties. It pulls quite easily. Harding grass and bristly ox-tongue are the two other species at the top of our removal list. They provide the opportunity for a little more strenuous work that is good for easing your stress!

Extra time on your hands? Act locally to improve our natural world and join us on a workday. We all make a difference.

Volunteer Workdays

Triangle Marsh, East Corte Madera:

First Saturdays: September 5, October 3

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

Corte Madera Ecological Reserve:

Second Saturdays: September 12, October 10

Meet at the end of Industrial Way. Parking on Industrial Way is now limited to just a few spots by a new gate built by Corte Madera, or we might open the locked gates to the parking lot. Parking at the Cost Plus shopping center is possible.

For up-to-date information, contact Martha Jarocki, marthajarocki@gmail.com or phone 415/461-3592.

Bahia, Novato:

If you'd like to help, please contact Jude at judestalker@gmail.com.

THANK YOU, STEWARDSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Debbie Ablin, Katharine Cagney, Rich Cimino, Dave Chenoweth, Catherine Cole, Bob Hinz, Gerry and Martha Jarocki, Ed Nute, Erika Perino, Lowell Sykes, Doug Waterman

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Judy Bersaglieri, Patricia Collins, Joel DeVilbiss, Carl Duisberg & Laura Lindskog, Erin Frazier, Christine Geiger, Steve Grayson & Barbara Kriz, Lauren Houde, Mary Johnides, Ernest Kodama, Nancy McCarthy, Molly Merin, Barbara Merino, Stephanie Miller, Gene F. Moore, Susan Moore, Janis Olvarado, Rob Pavey, David Peterson, Steve Piatek, Johanna Pitocchelli, Julianne Schrick, Thomas Silk, Mary Lee Strelb, Kim Suppes, Dr. Barbara Wingate

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

Since our last newsletter, our property committee has been busier than ever over the summer, managing our properties, planning for the winter's activities, and removing invasive plants. Specifics on some of our activities are below.

BAHIA

Every two weeks we've had a crew from On Point Land Management (OPLM) remove weeds and water the plants they planted along the levee last winter. Over the summer, they've been watering these plants along with oaks planted last winter. We've ordered more plants to install along another section of the levee this coming winters.

MAS representatives attended a Bahia Homeowners Association meeting for our annual check-in as provided for in the 2008 Agreement between our two organizations we negotiated when we undertook the restoration project. We appreciate that residents have been picking up the trash from our property. It seems the pandemic has meant more visitors to and more trash on the trails at Bahia. We are not able to have a trash can for users of our lands to deposit their trash because we are not residents and do not have an address. Although we will be looking into this further. One unfortunate incident that resulted from trash left on the shoreline of the lagoon, is that a young egret got caught in fishing line. Fortunately it was rescued by a resident who caught it and removed the line.

Ed Nute is looking into establishing a new patch of milkweed on our Bahia property at the end of Bugeia Lane.

CORTE MADERA RESTORATION SITE

Our watering crew of Martha and Gerry Jarocki, Ed Nute, Lowell Sykes, Dave Chenoweth, Bob Hinz and Doug Waterman, have been irrigating the upland plants every three weeks and weeding as well. The water will keep our native plants alive over the dry summer, and the non-natives are thriving. Usually recently planted native plants are watered for two summers. We're looking forward to the plants being on their own next year.

We've hired Hanford to do some fence fixing. We had left spaces under the fencing as

access for the jackrabbits. However, dogs have been getting under the fencing and into the habitat. We checked with the Department of Fish and Wildlife as to the height jackrabbits need for access, and hired Hanford to fill in the gaps. As part of the restoration, we constructed a trail to the overlook, but people have been taking an off trail short cut through vegetation. Hanford also extended the fence along the other side of the trail and placed habitat signs to remind people that this is not an access area and to stay on the trail

SIMMONS SLOUGH

This summer STRAW (Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed) staff have been watering and weeding plants that were planted last winter by STRAW and OPLM. This work is funded by a grant from Marin County Public Works.

We've had a check-in from the Natural Resource Conservation Service as part of their responsibility for the conservation easement they hold on the property.

Construction work has begun on the structure to allow water to be held onto our property and for access to the culvert structure. This will enable us to manage the water levels so that we will be able to provide more wetland habitat these diked baylands for a longer period of time.

TISCORNIA

Our engineering consultants, ESA, continue their work doing background studies necessary for the project design and for the CEQA analysis. We have received the Cultural and the Biological Reports and are in the process of reviewing them.

TRIANGLE MARSH

This summer's work by volunteers at Triangle Marsh centered on watering and adding mulch to the recent plantings of blue elderberry and western goldentop (*Euthamia occidentalis*). In addition, work continued on nonnative invasive species. Italian thistles, an annual, were pulled; bull thistles, a biennial, were cut off; and Harding grass and bristly ox-tongue, both perennials, were dug or "mowed" with a string trimmer. Smaller numbers of a few other nonnative species were cut off.

GUERRILLA GARDENING

Think twice before following the recommendation, in the most recent issue of Audubon magazine, to toss balls of native seeds onto abandoned or neglected yards lots. First of all, seeds you may buy from a local nursery may not be the natives you want. Secondly throwing objects, even mud and seed, onto someone else's property is a highly questionable activity.

Conservation *continued from page 3*

active self-propelled navigation moored for an extended period of time and used continuously during that time for private residential use..." So a live-aboard could be in a marina or out on the bay. This appears to allow residential use in marinas or on the water. We want the policies clarified, particularly that residential use is allowed only in marinas, not on the Bay.

MARIN BIRDLOG: MAY – JUNE 2020

By Noah Arthur



Worm-eating Warbler

www.birdphotos.com, CC-BY-3.0



Bristle-thighed Curlew

Glen Tepke, www.photos.com/gepke

Despite the pandemic this was a phenomenal spring and summer season for rarities in Marin, probably one of the best in recent memory, and included several really megare birds.

One of the rarest came early on, a **Worm-eating Warbler** at Bald Hill OSP on May 4th (LC, EM, & CC). The early trickle of eastern migrants continued on the 12th with a singing **Black-and-white Warbler** on the 12th (JC), and **Red-eyed Vireo** on the 16th (MD), at Bear Valley Rd. in Inverness. An exceedingly late **White-throated Sparrow** was at Bahia Marsh on the 13th (HC).

By far the best find of the spring was a **Bristle-thighed Curlew** on the closed beaches at Pt. Reyes on May 19th (ML), found during a **Snowy Plover** survey authorized by the park. On May 22nd, a **Brown Booby** flew by Stinson Beach (JC). On the 24th a **Brewer's Sparrow** was banded at Palomarin (BD), and a **Northern Parula Warbler** was singing at Bear Valley (EM).

A few birders obtained access to Pt. Reyes during spring vagrant season, and the first reports came in on May 28th with a **Blue Grosbeak** and a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at the New Willows (MS & LS). Quite rare in the Bay Area but certainly under-reported, a 1st-spring '**Alberta**' **Gull (California Gull, subspecies 'albertaensis')** was at Rodeo Lagoon on the 29th (WL).

A third major rarity for the month of May came on the 31st, a **Lesser Nighthawk** at Pt. Reyes Nunes Ranch (LS). Also on the Outer Point on this unbelievable day were **Black-and-white Warbler**, **American Redstart**, **Northern Parula Warbler**, **Magnolia Warbler**, **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, and two **Red-eyed Vireos** (MS, LS, LC, MSch, EMO, & LN). This was one of the best Outer Point warbler days in recent memory, and hints at what a spectacular spring 2020 would have been if it weren't for COVID-19. Meanwhile, a **Summer Tanager** was on the Marin Headlands (JB).

June started out with a bang in the form of a **Tropical Kingbird** in Muir Beach on the 2nd (DM). A frequent consolation prize on otherwise unsuccessful vagrant hunts in fall, the familiar "TK" is much rarer in spring.

The wave of eastern warblers continued with a singing male **Chestnut-sided** in Bolinas on the 3rd (DH), an **American Redstart** at Tennessee Valley on the 4th (AM), and a singing **Hooded** at the Estero Trail riparian on the 8th (RD). One of the

rarest eastern migrants of the season was a **Yellow-throated Vireo** at White House Pool on the 6th (MS).

Scaly-breasted Munias are beginning to trickle into Northern California, and an adult was at AD's feeders on Jun. 4th. The first of several **Franklin's Gulls** this season was at Drakes Beach on the 10th (SH). A **Magnolia Warbler** was banded at Palomarin on the 10th (BD), yet another **American Redstart** was at Drakes on the 13th (RC), and yet another **Red-eyed Vireo** at Muir Beach on the 17th (AM). Another semi-regular spring gull rarity, a 1st-summer **Laughing Gull** was found at Rodeo Lagoon on the 17th (DW).

Rarity reports dwindled toward the end of June as migration tailed off and coronavirus cases surged. The last eastern warblers were a 1st-spring male **American Redstart** banded at Muddy Hollow on the 24th (MD), and a singing male **Hooded Warbler** at Muir Beach on the 25th (DL).

Rare in Marin though a breeder farther south in the Bay, a **Least Tern** flew by by McNears Beach on the 25th (LC). Summer shorebird season kicked off on June 30th with a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** at the Valley Ford wetlands (DL).

July started with a tattered **Franklin's Gull** off Limantour on the 3rd (JC), and yet another individual flew by Fort Baker on the 12th (DL). A singing **Northern Parula Warbler** was at the Five Brooks pond on the 10th (PD, SS, & CP), interestingly continuing through at least the 16th. A few parulas seem to summer along Marin riparian corridors annually, and breeding may occur more regularly than we know. Very late was a **Summer Tanager** in Bolinas on the 12th (MD).

Much rarer than the regular late-fall juveniles, an adult **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at the Valley Ford wetlands July 13th (AW), joined the next morning by a **Stilt Sandpiper** (LH), and on the 16th by an adult **Semipalmated Sandpiper** (EL). An **Eastern Kingbird** was at Mt. Burdell on the 17th (JCS).

The last mega-rarity of this incredible spring/summer season flew by Fort Baker on July 21st, in the form of a stunning adult **Nazca Booby** (DL).

An **Indigo Bunting** was at Muir Beach on July 26th (AM), and the last rarity of the month was another **Laughing Gull** at Kehoe Beach on the 31st (RD).

Observers and Acronyms **EM:** Eddie Monson, **LC:** Lucas Corneliussen, **CC:** Connor Cochrane, **JC:** Josiah Clark, **MD:** Mark Dettling, **HC:** Heather Cameron, **ML:** Matt Lau, **BD:** Brandon Dunnahoo, **JP:** Jeff Perkins, **MS:** Mark Stephenson, **LS:** Lucas Stephenson, **WL:** William Legge, **EMO:** Ethan Monk, **MSch:** Mark Schulist, **LN:** Larry Nigro, **JB:** Jonah Benningfield, **DM:** David MacKenzie, **DH:** Diana Humple, **AM:** Alex Merritt, **AD:** Adam Donkin, **RD:** Ryan DiGaudio, **SH:** Steve Hampton, **RC:** Richard Cimino, **DW:** David Wiechers, **DL:** Derek Lecy, **PD:** Patricia DiLuzio, **SS:** Sylvie Silverstein, **CP:** Carla Parkinson, **AW:** Alan Wight, **LH:** Lisa Hug, **EL:** Evan Lipton, **JCS:** Juan-Carlos Solis



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

♻️ Printed on 100% recycled paper

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 \$ _____

- 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 _____