



MADRONE LEAVES

Madrone Audubon Society, Inc., Post Office Box 1911, Santa Rosa, California 95402

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Bucks for California Ducks

By Mary Edith Moore

"...we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth its cost in things natural, wild, and free. For us of the minority, the opportunity to see geese is more important than television, and the chance to find a pasque-flower is a right as inalienable as free speech."

Aldo Leopold

In 1971 California began the state duck stamp program, the first state program in the country. The state program is patterned after the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act (commonly known as the Duck Stamp Act), enacted in 1934 to help restore once-bountiful waterfowl populations. Every hunter of waterfowl in California is required to buy the state duck stamp as well as the federal. Eighty-seven cents of every California duck stamp dollar goes directly into waterfowl-related conservation projects. About 70,000 duck stamps are sold annually, which include sales to collectors who value them for their artistic depiction of native ducks and geese. Also signed, limited edition prints are issued which are valued by art collectors. To-date, the program has generated over \$22 million.

To launch the stamp program, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) commissioned the late Paul B. Johnson, a much-admired freelance artist, to design the state's first seven duck stamps. Johnson sketched the Pintails, Canvasbacks, Mallards, White-fronted Geese, Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, and Cinnamon Teal which appeared on the

stamps in consecutive years beginning in 1971 through 1977. The cost of the first six sepia-and-green stamps was \$1.00 each; however, halfway through the 1977-1978 waterfowl season, the cost of the Cinnamon Teal issue was increased to \$5.

Change in selecting the featured image came in 1978 when the design became competitive and opened to the public, embracing those artists with little or no formal art schooling to well-known professionals. The first year netted 48 competitors. This competitive method of selecting the art for the California

Duck Stamp continued for the next 17 years. Change came again in 1995 when CDFG decided on a "contractual arrangement that allowed California to share the proceeds from the sale of limited edition prints of the stamp." From 1995 through 2006, professional artists competed annually for the contract. However, to commemorate the first 35 years of the country's oldest state duck stamp program, the 2007 stamp featured a reissue of the first duck stamp image.

It was at this point that CDFG decided to return to art competition for selecting

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MARCH GENERAL MEETING

"Birds and Wildlife of Cameroon"

Monday, March 15, 7:30 PM
First United Methodist Church
1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa

Cameroon is a small country on the inside curve of West Africa, extending from the ocean in the southwest to the edge of the Sahara Desert in the north. With three distinct climates and ecosystems, it is an excellent place to see rare birds and other wildlife. We will be treated to views of the blue Abyssinian Roller with its long tail, the green-and-blue White-throated Bee-eater, and the unique Standard-winged Night-Jar with long feathers that stream back from its wings. There will be a glimpse of the raptor known as Secretarybird, so named because of feathers that stick up from its head like pencils. We'll accompany Matthew Matthiessen on an arduous hike as he searches for the rare Gray-necked Picathartes. There will be giraffes, a roan, chameleons, and butterflies.

Matthew began birding at the age of eight while living with his family in Bangkok, Thailand. His interest in birds grew even more when he moved to Zambia for two years as a teenager. Since then he has birded many countries, but has retained a particular love for the countries of Africa.

COMING APRIL 19

Bob Stewart, a teacher, author, and naturalist, will introduce us to the
"Breeding Strategies of California Birds."



calendar

All walks and meetings are open to the public. Bird walks are recreational and educational in purpose, and all levels of expertise are welcome. Bring field equipment and wear comfortable shoes and layered clothing for variable weather conditions. Please carpool whenever possible. Forecasted heavy rain cancels. There is no charge for activities unless otherwise specified, but some parks have day-use fees.

The Conservation Committee exchanges information by phone and e-mail as soon as possible when an issue surfaces. Please contact Diane Hichwa at 785-1922 or dhichwa@earthlink.net.

Wednesday March 3, 7:00 PM

BOARD MEETING. Sonoma County Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa. For agenda information, contact Janeann Erickson at 795-2498.

Thursday March 4, 8:30 AM to Noon

SPRING LAKE REGIONAL PARK. Bird Walk. Parking fee (\$5) for non-permit holders. From Summerfield Road in Santa Rosa, go east on Hoen Avenue, turn left on Newanga Avenue, turn right inside the park entrance gate, and meet in the parking lot near the restrooms at the top of the hill. For information, contact Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday March 6, 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM

PUTAH CREEK/LAKE SOLANO. Sample the wealth of bird life in Solano County. Meet at Lake Solano Park, 8685 Pleasants Valley Road, Winters, CA at 9:30 AM. Take Calistoga Road (becomes Petrified Forest Road) to Highway 128. Turn right on Highway 128. Turn left on Deer Park Road. Turn right on Silverado Trail North. Turn left on Sage Canyon Road/128. Follow Highway 128 until you reach County Road 86/Pleasants Valley Road. Turn right. The park is immediately over the bridge to your left. There is a \$5 day-use fee at Lake Solano Park. To carpool, please arrive by 7:30 AM at our Santa Rosa meeting place, the Safeway parking lot at the northeast corner of Highway 12 and Calistoga Road. We will park at the edge of the parking lot bordering on Calistoga Road. Bring lunch, liquids, and layers of clothing. Rain cancels. Leaders: Tom Cashman, 433-2528; Bill Doyle, 483-8773; Bob Speckels, 569-0563; and Ken Wilson, 775-2558.

Wednesday March 10, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM

HUICHICA CREEK AND HUDEMANN SLOUGH. Bird Walk. Meet at the Huichica Creek Unit of Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area parking lot. From Sonoma, take Highway 12 (Carneros Highway) toward Napa. Turn right (south) on Duhig Road, left on Las Amigas Road, and right on Buchli Station Road, which leads to the wildlife area. In the afternoon, we will bird the nearby Hudemann Slough wetlands and ponds. Bring lunch, liquids, and layered clothing. For information, contact Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday March 13, 9:00 AM

SHOLLENBERGER PARK. Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads a nature walk. Meet at the first kiosk. Rain cancels. Contact Gerald Moore at 763-3577.

Saturday March 13, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Mayacamas Field Trip
Geology with Terry Wright. See page 5.

Monday March 15, 7:30 PM

General Meeting. Matthew Matthiessen presents "Birds of Cameroon" at the First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive in Santa Rosa. Please see the front page announcement. The public is always invited to attend these programs.

Thursday March 18, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM

RUSH CREEK AND LAS GALLINAS PONDS IN MARIN COUNTY. Bird Walk. Meet at Rush Creek Preserve at Novato. From Highway 101, drive east on Atherton Avenue. Turn left on Bugelia Lane, which becomes Bahia Drive. Continue to the Rush Creek trailhead at end of Bahia Drive. Bring lunch, liquids, and layered clothing. For information, contact Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday March 20, 8:30 AM to Noon

LAS GALLINAS PONDS. Birds, birds, birds! Las Gallinas has it all, from ducks to warblers. Meet at the Las Gallinas Storage Ponds parking lot. From Highway 101 in northern San Rafael, take the Smith Ranch Road exit. Go east to the McInnis Park entrance, turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks, and go to the lot at the end of the road. Informal carpools leave Santa Rosa at 7:45 AM from the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District office, 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa. The parking lot is behind the office (access from Carrillo Street.) Please arrive about ten minutes earlier to make carpool arrangements. Rain cancels. Leaders: Tom Cashman, 433-2528; Bill Doyle, 483-8773; and Bob Speckels, 569-0563.

Saturday March 20, 10:00 AM

SHOLLENBERGER PARK. Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads two children/family nature walks. One-to-two hours, dependent on age of children. Meet at the first kiosk. Rain cancels. For the children/family walk in English, contact Gerald Moore at 763-3577; for the walk in Spanish, contact Connie Peabody at 338-2237.

Wednesday March 24, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM

SHOLLENBERGER PARK/ELLIS CREEK. Bird Walk. Search for wintering birds at the Shollenberger Park ponds and wetlands in Petaluma. After lunch, we will bird the wetlands of the adjacent Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility. Meet at Shollenberger Park. From Santa Rosa, take the Highway 116 exit (Lakeville Highway), go left under Highway 101, turn right at the South McDowell traffic light, proceed to the City Park sign and turn right into the park parking lot. For information, contact Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday March 27, 9:00 AM

ELLIS CREEK WATER RECYCLING FACILITY, PETALUMA. Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads a walk at the Ellis Creek ponds. Go to the end of Cypress Drive and through the gates. Parking lot is on the left. Rain cancels. Contact Bob Dyer at 763-2934.

Thursday April 1, 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM

BODEGA BAY. Bird Walk. From the center of the town of Bodega Bay, drive north on Highway 1, turn left at East Shore Road (the Bodega Head turnoff), then turn right at the stop sign, and continue 0.3 mile to the unpaved parking lot on the right. Bring lunch, liquids, and layered clothing. For information, contact Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday April 3, 8:00 AM to Noon

CRANE CREEK REGIONAL PARK. A beautiful trail through a thriving sample of Sonoma County oak savannah and riparian woodland. Meet at Crane Creek Regional Park parking lot. Take Roberts Ranch Road from Petaluma Hill Road, just south of Sonoma State University. There is a \$6 per car entrance fee. Informal carpool meets at 7:15 AM at the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District office, 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa. The parking lot is behind the office (access from Carrillo Street.) Rain cancels. Leaders: Tom Cashman, 433-2528; Bill Doyle, 483-8773; and Bob Speckels, 569-0563.

Sunday April 11, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Mayacamas Field Trip. Digital nature photography for the eco-tourists with Bryant Hichwa. See page 5.



BUCKS FOR DUCKS

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the image on future duck stamps. Help in promoting the program and enticing artists to compete came from the master waterfowl artist Harry C. Adamson who, at the age of 92, agreed to create an original oil painting of Mallards in flight. The use of the image was donated to the state for the 2008 California Duck Stamp. And so after 15 years, the art contest for selecting the stamp images was re-born.

The 2009 California Duck Stamp contest's primary subject was the Northern Shoveler; it was won by Indiana artist Jeffrey Klinefelter. He depicted a pair of Northern Shovelers, wading in a pond with golden reflections in the background. The colors are vibrant; the image is absolutely beautiful. This 2009 stamp is available through June 30, which corresponds to the hunting season's calendar year from July 1 through June 30.

The contest for the 2010 California Duck Stamp opens in March and art submissions will be accepted from March 1 through April 30, followed by a public judging event in May. The species which will appear on the 2010 stamp is the Redhead. Contest results can be found at www.dfg.ca.gov/duckstamp/ (visit this site---these paintings are fabulous!)

Because California Duck Stamp prices are tied to the cost-of-living index, the cost changes slightly each year. This year's stamp is \$17.85. It can be purchased online at www.calwaterfowl.org/web2/supportcwa/makeadonation/duck_stamp.htm or from any Department of Fish and Game office, or license agent which includes major retailers such as Walmart, Big 5, K-Mart and Sports Authority. Statewide, there are more than 1,200 license agents. To find a license agent in your area, visit: <http://dfginternal5.dfg.ca.gov/lasweb/>.

I encourage all bird lovers to purchase both the state and the federal duck stamps to benefit our wetlands and waterfowl.

For more information, e-mail Lorna Bernard at the CDFG lbernard@dfg.ca.gov.

Bird-A-Thon 2009 is History...

The Time to Collect Pledges is Now

By Marcia Johnson,
Bird-A-Thon Coordinator

This year's biggest fundraising for Madrone, the Bird-A-Thon, has come and gone. However, it is not too late to pledge money towards your favorite team(s).

If you have already pledged, please get your money in soon to your team's leader.

Our three teams this year were: the flying **Feather Questers** with Diane Hichwa, Karen Nagel, and Phyllis Schmitt; the running **Roadrunners** with Betty Groce and Don McCarthy; and the busy team of **Gray-headed Seersuckers** with Betty Burridge, Ted Eliot, Ian Morrison, Bill Payne, Ken Wilson, and Becky Olsen. When you see them, thank them for their time and commitment.

Now it is your "tern", please get your pledge money in as soon as possible. Our conservation and educational programs depend upon it.



Petaluma Wetlands Alliance Thanks Eagle Optics

The Petaluma Wetlands Alliance recently purchased five pairs of Audubon binoculars from Eagle Optics for our school docent program. Eagle generously donated five more pairs through their Nonprofit Educational Matching Donation Program. Thank you, Eagle Optics, for helping us introduce birding to third-grade students.

Help with Bird Surveys is needed – be a Citizen Scientist

By Diane Hichwa

Madrone participates in several research surveys around Sonoma County. Each season we welcome new help and often NEED additional assistance. Time commitment and place varies, but we need backup depth in a survey team so we welcome your help.

1. Heron Egret Project (HEP) monitors Great, Snowy, and Cattle Egrets; and Great Blue, and Black-crowned Night Herons throughout Sonoma County: Petaluma, Penngrove, Cloverdale, Guerneville, Santa Rosa, Valley Ford, the Laguna and into Napa County. The count is of nests and chicks to fledging success. The surveys are done March-June.
2. In the northwest section of the county, off Sea Ranch, weekly counts are done April-August at three nesting sites for Western Gulls, Black Oystercatchers, Brandt's Cormorants, Pigeon Guillemots, and sometimes Pelagic Cormorants. There is a separate study with daily counts June 25-July 14; and a third study involving a quarterly hike of two miles of coast, noting species use of the rock islands.
3. Shollenberger Park in Petaluma is in its sixth year of a long-term bird survey study; and a separate survey has just begun in the adjoining wetlands at the Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility. A study of Tree Swallow nesting in Shollenberger/Alman Marsh is entering its fourth year; this is part of an international research program.
4. Coastal nesting from Bodega Bay to Jenner may be surveyed periodically to determine what birds are nesting where.
5. Our Breeding Bird Atlas will be updated; training begins this spring and surveys in 2011. See the February *Leaves* for details or contact Bob Speckels 569-0563 robertspeckels@yahoo.com.

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BIRD SURVEYS

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6. Other surveys? We are contacted periodically to survey a new property or project such as Poff Ranch, the Laguna, etc.

Please contact Diane Hichwa at 785-1922 or dhichwa@earthlink.net for additional information about any of these projects AND to indicate your willingness to help. You can also contact Cypress Grove Research Center at 415-663-8203 or cgrc@egret.org for the HEP surveys.

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We Couldn't Do It Without You!

Madrone Audubon Society thanks all of you who made donations in 2009. Your contributions will make it possible for us to continue with our valuable local programs and conservation work.

Madrone Audubon is a respected voice of the environmental community. We are able to influence environmental decisions both locally and regionally. We sponsor many regular events, outings, and special events, such as our Migratory Bird Day celebration in May. Junior Audubon connects young people with nature and helps expand their horizons. We strive to provide educational and entertaining general meetings, which are enriched by the sharing of our members' experiences. The Petaluma Wetlands Alliance Committee relies on your support to strengthen their innovative educational and stewardship program.

Janeann Erickson
Madrone Audubon Society President

\$500 and Above

Athleta LLC, Econscious, Gerald & Mary Edith Moore, Barbara Rice, Rochester Area Community Foundation

\$200 - \$499

Autodesk, Inc., Betty Burrige, Nancy Conzett, Kathleen Garvey, D.D. Gregor, Ellie Insley, Jimtown Store, Ryan Phelan,

Unitarian Universalists of Petaluma, Jan Vannatta, Wild Birds Unlimited

\$100 - \$199

Mary Abbott, Kerry Burke, Clover Stornetta Farms, Inc., Karen Dann, Ron & Kris Dick, Theodore Eliot, Janeann Erickson, Steven Gelber, Randall Gibbons, Linda Hanes, Diane & Bryant Hichwa, Kimberly Wasson & Jeffrey Holtzman, Frances Joos, Ellen Krebs, Joy Mander, Anthony Mountain & Cheryl Maynard, Thomas Novoryta, Dr. & Mrs. Roger Stewart, Raini Sugg, Laurence & Barbara Taylor, Tasha Thomson, Barbara & Gene Toschi, Warren & Janis Watkins, Janet Ross & Patrick Whitfield

\$50 - \$99

Design in Wood, Deborah Ablin, Patricia Anderson, Lance & J. Barlas, George Batchelder, Helen Bates, Lorraine Bazan, Frank Beck, Robin Beeman, Michael Beeson, Barbara Biebush, Chester Bowles, Jr., Dennis Buss, Mary Pat Degagne, H.D. Denton, Dawn & K.C. Dewell, Dennis Duggan, Norris R. Dyer, Wendy Eliot, Claire Else, Anna Ransome & Cary Fargo, Patricia Gilmore, Doris Gospe, Betty & Jack Groce, Louise Hallberg, Linda Hanes, Jeremy Joan Hewes, Gisela Hewitt, Larry Houghton, Emile & Linda Catlin Houle, Kathleen Jacobs, Gordon Jasoni, Don & Louise Johnston, Chris & Nancy Kuhn, Rich Kuehn & Dean Schuler, Louisa Leavitt, Barbara Mackenzie, Mary Macleod, Sandra Martensen, Thomas McCuller, Randi Megorden, Robert & Anne O'Donnell, David Oliver, Hal & Renee Peters, Lisa Peters, Martha Pogue, Frank & Marilyn Rathman, Suzanne Reta, Elizabeth Rice, L. Willard Richards, Brantly & Nancy Richardson, Stanley Saloman, Virgil & Virginia Schrock, John Schuyler, Jean Schulz, Daphne Smith, Diane & Morry Strauss, Elinor & Jim Taylor, Don & Marilyn Toms, Jean Tonascia, Eva Waters, Alice Webb, Mary & Dennis Wheeler, Valerie & Bruce White, A.Y. & Yolanda Wood, Elaine Woodriff

Petaluma Wetlands Alliance (PWA) Gets Major Impact Grant from the Petaluma Educational Foundation, 2009-2010.

By Gerald Moore

For the second consecutive year, the PWA Education Committee has received the Major Impact Grant from the Petaluma Educational Foundation to help support their third grade wetlands educational program. The goal of this partnership is to grow the docent program so that we can reach every third grade class in Petaluma.

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Mayacamas Mountain Audubon Sanctuary Field Trips

Sponsored by the Madrone Audubon Society

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL EVENTS: *The field trips are free, open to the public, and suitable for all levels of interest. Bring your lunch and refreshments for the day; wear layered clothing, hats, and sun protection. Sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots are recommended. Be prepared for rain showers, but heavy rain cancels the hikes unless otherwise indicated. No dogs, no smoking, and the preserve is not wheelchair accessible. Also be aware that spring is the season for the emergence of poison oak, ticks, and rattlesnakes. Meet on Pine Flat Road between Red Winery Road and the Sausal Creek Bridge, 1/4 mile past the Jimtown Store on Highway 128 East at the first sharp right hand turn. Some may wish to form informal carpools, about a half-hour before the field trip, at the parking area along Russian River Road just west of Hwy 101.*

NOTE: *If you are interested in any of the field trips, please keep these details. In subsequent Leaves, the upcoming field trip will be listed only in the calendar.*

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MAYACAMAS MOUNTAIN

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Saturday March 13, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Terry Wright, professor emeritus of geology at SSU and president of Terry Wright Geology, an educational consulting company, will help us become more familiar with the dynamic geological history of the sanctuary and the Mayacamas Mountains. We will travel by car and make stops along the road, with short moderate hikes to geologic features. Bring pocket magnifiers and binoculars. Limited to adults.

Sunday April 11, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Come to the Mayacamas at the height of the wildflower season and experience the beauty and ruggedness of the preserve. Bryant Hichwa will lead a photoworkshop, Digital Nature Photography for the Eco-Tourists. Included will be tips for the semi-professional nature photographer, as well as fundamentals for the beginner. The workshop covers various types of digital cameras, closeup shooting techniques, and the use of instantaneous feedback of digital to constructively critique participants' photos.

Friday April 16, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Join naturalist and retired biology professor Peter Leveque in a general nature hike. We might find the Fawn Lily, *Erythronium helena*. A moderately strenuous hike on Clark Foss Road; you'll need to get out your hiking sticks and boots. Limited to adults.

Sunday May 2, 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM

Jeanne Wirka, resident biologist at Audubon Canyon Research Bouverie Preserve, will provide an introduction to local California grasslands with an emphasis on native species and grassland ecology. Participants will be introduced to basic grass morphology and learn how to identify common grasses, both native and non-native species, in the field. If you bring a camera, you'll have the opportunity to build a photographic record of grasses, as well as beautiful wildflowers. Please bring a hand lens and notebook.

Sunday May 9, 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM

Enjoy a wildflower and plant walk with Peter Warner, plant ecologist and botanical consultant. While appreciating the diverse wonders of the Sonoma County spring flora, we'll also look at the Sanctuary's general ecology and its plant distributions, and once again witness the gradual changes in vegetation as the landscape rebounds from the 2004 fire. A moderate hike; bring plant guides, hand lenses, cameras, and notebooks. A plant list will be available to participants. Children OK with supervision.

Thursday May 13, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM

Birdwatchers Walkabout. Meet for carpooling at Alexander Valley Community Church on Alexander Valley Road, immediately west of the Jimtown Store. Bring lunch and liquids. For information: contact Tom McCuller at sisyphus@sonic.net or 546-1812.

Sunday May 23, 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM

Kathy and Dave Biggs will help us find and identify the dragonflies along Pine Flat Road and on the Mayacamas Sanctuary. Behavior and biology will be explained. We'll visit seeps, springs, ponds, creeks, and end at the Russian River. Each habitat should present us with a different *Odonata* (Dragonflies and Damselflies) fauna. Close-focus binoculars are best, but 10X or higher hand lenses would be helpful for viewing these insects. Please wear shoes and clothes that can get wet. Children 12+ okay. **NOTE:** Any rain cancels this easy hike.

Sunday June 13, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Join Lynn Houser, an active board member of the California Native Plant Society, to see spring flowers and plant growth. Plant identification, ecology, and natural history of the Mayacamas area will be featured. This is a moderate, one-to two-mile hike. Bring binoculars, field guides, and camera. Plant lists will be available. Older children OK with supervision.

Sunday June 17, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Retired ranger and archaeologist Daniel

Murley will lead a moderately strenuous hike. He will discuss the pre-history, human history, and natural history of the area northeast of Healdsburg, near the old town of Pine Flat. Bring a light lunch and your curiosity. Older children OK with supervision.

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Spring Outings

Audubon Canyon Ranch

It's time to host again at Audubon Canyon Ranch. Saturday and Sunday hosts are needed to staff the reception table. Experience is not required, and you won't be alone at the table. Madrone's assigned dates are: April 10 and 11, May 9 (Mother's Day and extra help is needed), June 12 and 13, and July 11. Other dates are also available and need to be filled. You'll meet new and interesting people, and you will have time to hike and view the egret nests. Please call Janet Bosshard at 526-5883.

April 23-26

Point Reyes Birding and Nature Festival

The first Point Reyes Birding and Nature Festival will be held in West Marin and Sonoma Counties April 23-26. It will feature more than 50 walks, presentations, and classes on birding, butterflies, wildflowers, and other nature subjects. Unfortunately, most of these activities have already reached the maximum number of registrants and are no longer available. Visit the Web site www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org to learn which activities have not reached capacity.

The Point Reyes area has one of the highest bird species counts in North America; the festival is timed to take advantage of spring migration, local breeding, and nesting. A special CD "Birding by Ear at Point Reyes" is available and can be purchased from the Web site.

There will be an online auction of birding trips to Peru, Ecuador, and South Africa; bed and breakfasts stays in West Marin; high quality binoculars; and many other birding and related items.

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SPRING OUTINGS

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Friday evening 23 April, will feature a program by PRBO Conservation Science on life at the Farallon Islands, and the Saturday evening banquet includes an illustrated talk about the Natural History of Point Reyes and its birds by Jules Evens, author of *The Natural History of the Point Reyes Peninsula and California Birdlife*. A very affordable boat trip to Cordell Bank to see pelagic birds and marine mammals is scheduled for Monday 26 April, (weather permitting.)

The festival benefits the habitat conservation work of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin.



The Petaluma Christmas Bird Count for Kids, Ages 9-15

by Al Hesla

Petaluma's first-ever Christmas Bird Count for Kids in 2009 was a great success with 24 kids and their parents participating. Following some Binocular Boot Camp lessons by their birding team leaders at the Kenilworth Recreation Center, the five teams of kids, accompanied by their parents, set out on a cold, foggy morning to their assigned trails in the Petaluma wetlands. They identified 68 species in a total count of 2,610 birds. Eventually the teams returned to the center very cold, but energized about their discoveries.

During our brown-bag lunch and review of the species count, Bob Dyer projected images of the birds to reinforce the kids' knowledge of each species. After lunch, we were treated to a special presentation from the Bird Rescue Center of Santa Rosa with four of their live, wild birds: a Great-horned Owl, a Turkey Vulture, a Merlin, and a Red-tailed Hawk. The kids learned about the care of injured wild birds and what harm humans can have from "imprinting" on the birds who attempt to care for them. All-in-all, Page 6

a great day was had by all!

Special thanks to all who helped out in the event: Marilyn Blume, Matti Christensen, Peter Colasanti, Bob Dyer, Janeann Erickson, Helen Heal, Andy LaCasse, Gerald Moore, Mary Edith Moore, Len Nelson, Sandy O'Hare, Connie Peabody, John Richards, Tom Rusert, Tommy Smith, and Bob Speckels. A very special thanks goes to co-sponsor Jan Mandrell, Recreation Supervisor in the Petaluma Parks & Recreation Department.



Madrone Audubon's Christmas Count—the First Three Years

by Daphne Smith

The Christmas Bird Count has been a fixture in Madrone's program since the chapter was founded in February of 1967.

In the December 1967 issue of the *Madrone Leaves* an "experimental count" was announced, to be held on December 30. Madrone's first field trip chairman, Joel Hornstein—there are lots of firsts coming up in this article—asked for volunteers either to make field observations or assist with tallying. He noted: "The area we plan to cover will be the Bodega Bay to Jenner coastline and the interior."

Joel Hornstein was also the compiler, and the January 1968 *Leaves* includes the complete results, with the following summary of the action (and the usual plea for volunteers): "One hundred and thirty-two species of birds were seen despite the presence of fog all day along the coast and into the interior during the early morning... Twenty participants in seven groups took part in the count over a very challenging area. I hope there will be more of you participating next Christmas." The total number counted was 23,934 birds.

Among the 20 observers were Les and Evelyn Bowen—Evalyn was Madrone's first president—and Jack and Deyea Harper,

charter members who are still active with Madrone. Deyea was Madrone's first corresponding secretary and *Madrone Leaves* editor; Jack later served as president. Deyea remembers that, in fact, "We had very big territories for that first count."

Joel Hornstein had moved to North Carolina in 1968, but he sent encouraging messages back to Baron McLean (Madrone's first vice-president) who took over as organizer and compiler. There were a total of 160 count areas in the United States in 1967, of which 12 were in California. Madrone's count would be the 13th.

The 1968 Western Sonoma County Christmas Count, no longer "experimental," was held on December 21, with 43 observers in 13 teams. It was reportedly on the "coldest day of the year," but very successful with 160 species and 31,744 birds counted. There were several new additions to the day: an offshore boat, courtesy of the Bodega Bay Marine Lab, would count pelagic species, and three teams planned to do before-dawn owling. The counters were asked to each contribute \$1, and the official results would be submitted to the publication, *Audubon Field Notes*.

Eighteen guest observers came from around the Bay Area—Sacramento, Palo Alto and San Francisco—plus six Redwood Regional Ornithological Society members. The Social Committee provided an excellent post-count buffet supper at the home of the Bowens, and the count was made with the help of a secretary (Martha Bentley), several folks on adding machines (one was Deyea Harper), and a few more "calling and compiling." Baron McLean was able to state, "The results were known immediately." Maybe we should go back to those adding machines!

Correction

Madrone Audubon Society has scheduled the Breeding Bird Atlas training course, not Breeding Bird Survey as reported in the February *Leaves*. Dates and times are unchanged.

**43rd Western Sonoma Christmas Bird Count 2009**

132	Greater White-fronted Goose	86	Great Egret	51	Herring Gull	20	White-breasted Nuthatch
-	Snow Goose	96	Snowy Egret	3	Thayer's Gull	185	Pygmy Nuthatch
1,038	Brant	2	Green Heron	2,816	Western Gull	43	Brown Creeper
180	Canada Goose	2	Black-crowned Night-Heron	593	Glaucous-winged Gull	5	Rock Wren
-	Cackling Goose	406	Turkey Vulture	1	Glaucous X Western	38	Bewick's Wren
110	Goose, sp.	2	Osprey	-	Glaucous Gull	1	House Wren
22	Wood Duck	31	White-tailed Kite	-	Black-legged Kittiwake	19	Winter Wren
7	Gadwall	-	Bald Eagle	2,320	Gull, sp.	50	Marsh Wren
-	Eurasian Wigeon	49	Northern Harrier	-	Forster's Tern	216	Golden-crowned Kinglet
21	American Wigeon	9	Sharp-shinned Hawk	229	Common Murre	311	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
218	Mallard	15	Cooper's Hawk	2	Pigeon Guillemot	3	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
-	Blue-winged Teal	1	Accipiter, sp.	14	Marbled Murrelet	476	Western Bluebird
6	Cinnamon Teal	57	Red-shouldered Hawk	10	Ancient Murrelet	84	Hermit Thrush
8	Northern Shoveler	229	Red-tailed Hawk	3	Murrelet, sp.	2,006	American Robin
2	Northern Pintail	7	Ferruginous Hawk	4	Rhinoceros Auklet	45	Varied Thrush
7	Green-winged Teal	7	Rough-legged Hawk	18	Rock Pigeon	60	Wrentit
34	Canvasback	1	Golden Eagle	75	Band-tailed Pigeon	17	Northern Mockingbird
-	Redhead	145	American Kestrel	100	Mourning Dove	1,410	European Starling
17	Ring-necked Duck	11	Merlin	44	Eurasian Collared-dove	40	American Pipit
258	Greater Scaup	13	Peregrine Falcon	5	Barn Owl	74	Cedar Waxwing
297	Lesser Scaup	1	Prairie Falcon	1	Short-eared Owl	2	Orange-crowned Warbler
41	Scaup, sp.	-	Black Rail	-	Western Screech-Owl	-	Nashville Warbler
1	Harlequin Duck	18	Virginia Rail	12	Great Horned Owl	1	Yellow Warbler
613	Surf Scoter	6	Sora	1	Northern Pygmy-owl	875	Yellow-rumped Warbler
3	White-winged Scoter	6	Common Moorhen	1	Spotted Owl	21	Audubon's Warbler
1	Black Scoter	692	American Coot	-	Northern Saw-whet Owl	5	Myrtle Warbler
30	Scoter, sp.	21	Black-bellied Plover	-	Burrowing Owl	67	Townsend's Warbler
-	Long-tailed Duck	6	Snowy Plover	145	Anna's Hummingbird	1	Hermit Warbler
1,246	Bufflehead	3	Semipalmated Plover	24	Belted Kingfisher	2	Common Yellowthroat
98	Common Goldeneye	51	Killdeer	-	Lewis's Woodpecker	139	Spotted Towhee
7	Hooded Merganser	61	Black Oystercatcher	144	Acorn Woodpecker	257	California Towhee
98	Common Merganser	-	American Avocet	1	Red-naped Sapsucker	-	Lark Sparrow
34	Red-breasted Merganser	1	Spotted Sandpiper	14	Red-breasted Sapsucker	38	Savannah Sparrow
396	Ruddy Duck	43	Greater Yellowlegs	43	Nuttall's Woodpecker	63	Fox Sparrow
4	Duck, sp.	155	Willet	31	Downy Woodpecker	245	Song Sparrow
52	Wild Turkey	6	Whimbrel	11	Hairy Woodpecker	3	Lincoln's Sparrow
928	California Quail	1,125	Marbled Godwit	149	Northern Flicker	12	White-throated Sparrow
86	Red-throated Loon	13	Ruddy Turnstone	-	Red-shafted Flicker	774	White-crowned Sparrow
69	Pacific Loon	100	Black Turnstone	-	Yellow-shafted Flicker	724	Golden-crowned Sparrow
84	Common Loon	1	Wandering Tattler	-	Yellow X Red Flicker	14	Sparrow, sp.
72	Pied-billed Grebe	34	Surfbird	8	Pileated Woodpecker	1,235	Dark-eyed Junco
126	Horned Grebe	1	Red Knot	171	Black Phoebe	567	Red-winged Blackbird
10	Red-necked Grebe	1	Rock Sandpiper	21	Say's Phoebe	-	Tri-colored Blackbird
176	Eared Grebe	219	Sanderling	-	Loggerhead Shrike	1,973	Brewer's Blackbird
324	Western Grebe	122	Western Sandpiper	18	Hutton's Vireo	348	Western Meadowlark
14	Clark's Grebe	176	Least Sandpiper	323	Steller's Jay	6	Brown-headed Cowbird
196	Aechmophorus, sp.	646	Dunlin	387	Western Scrub-Jay	15	Blackbird, sp.
1	Northern Fulmar	1	Dowitcher, sp.	636	American Crow	30	Purple Finch
1	Pink-footed Shearwater	17	Wilson's Snipe	282	Common Raven	328	House Finch
1	Shearwater, sp.	-	Common Snipe	4	Horned Lark	2	Finch, sp.
54	American White Pelican	-	Red Phalarope	40	Tree Swallow	-	Red Crossbill
780	Brown Pelican	65	Bonaparte's Gull	-	Barn Swallow	269	Pine Siskin
59	Brandt's Cormorant	43	Heermann's Gull	506	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	187	Lesser Goldfinch
71	Double-crested Cormorant	248	Mew Gull	32	Oak Titmouse	313	American Goldfinch
149	Pelagic Cormorant	717	Ring-billed Gull	498	Bushtit	-	Evening Grosbeak
47	Great Blue Heron	2,653	California Gull	46	Red-breasted Nuthatch	113	House Sparrow

212	Total species reported	40,219	Total individuals counted
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Madrone Audubon Society

Post Office Box 1911
Santa Rosa, California 95402

March 2010

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MADRONE LEAVES



Madrone Audubon Society meets on the third Monday of each month, except in June, July, August, and December. Meetings start at 7:30 PM at First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa. All meetings and walks are open to the public. Information: telephone answering service - 546-7492, e-mail - madroneaudubon@um.att.com.

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