



Madrone LEAVES

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

VOLUME 45

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Number 5

We Seek Safer, Efficient Wind Energy Technology

By Susan Kirks

Horizontal axis wind turbines with turning blades represent the standard mechanism for wind energy conversion in California and the United States. A large wind turbine can reach a height of a 20-story building, about 180-200 feet. Siting, the number and placement of large turbines, associated structures, lighting, and changes in air pressure produced by wind turbines can be deadly for birds and bats.



Windspires Photo courtesy of Windspire Energy

The Cost to Wildlife

American Bird Conservancy recently reported a massive kill of almost 500 birds at the Laurel Mountain wind facility in West Virginia's Allegheny Mountains. Circumstances contributing to the tragedy were described as migration season, low visibility weather conditions, and an artificial light source. In Oregon, the magnificent Golden Eagle may meet a terrible destiny. West Butte Wind Power LLC

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Calendar is an insert, located on pages 5 & 6; both General Meetings are on the front page; and those receiving an eNewsletter will have the photos in color. The Leaves is evolving.

GENERAL MEETINGS

The General Meetings are held at 7:30 PM, First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa

February Meeting

"Wind Turbine Impacts on Wildlife"

Monday February 20

Shawn Smallwood earned his Ph.D. in Ecology at the University of California, Davis, where he also performed four years of post-graduate studies. He's authored more than 300 papers and reports, including 61 papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals and books. He served as Associate Editor of *Journal of Wildlife Management and Biological Conservation*, and as an Editorial Board member of *Environmental Management*. Dr. Smallwood performs research on the density and distribution of animal species, habitat restoration and the habitat concept, the ecology of biological invasions, endangered species conservation, wildlife monitoring and sampling, and on wildlife interactions with human management systems, such as agriculture, energy generation and transmission, roadways, and hazardous waste. He provides research, consulting services, and expert testimony in environmental litigation. He has 12 years of experience with the biological impacts caused by wind turbines, having performed multiple monitoring and research programs in the Altamont Pass Wind Resources Area (APWRA) and has senior-authored many reports that followed, most of which were peer reviewed. Dr. Smallwood's research on this issue has been directed toward most effectively avoiding, minimizing, and reducing bird collisions with wind turbines.

March Meeting

"Black Oystercatcher Research on the California Coast"

Monday March 19

In June 2011 a network of experienced amateur and professional observers surveyed Black Oystercatchers on approximately 9% of California's coastline, representing at least 20% of potentially suitable breeding habitat. A total of 1346 birds and 175 nests were counted. As part of this effort, Ron LeValley monitored 6 nests daily and 10 nests weekly during the nesting season. Of course this gave him plenty of opportunity to take pictures of these fascinating birds. And it allowed him to learn a lot about the biology of the species. Ron will share with you some of the stories and knowledge that he gained.

Ron LeValley has been photographing nature for over 40 years. He is a founding member of the Mendocino Coast Photographer Guild and Gallery at 301 North Main Street in Fort Bragg where his work can be seen. As a professional photographer, Ron has compiled an impressive collection (over 70,000 images) of wildlife photographs that he uses for presentations and publications.

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WIND ENERGY

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proposes a wind energy project with up to 52 wind turbines. The company applied to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the first ever Golden Eagle “take” permit under the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The permit could allow for a “take” (or wind turbine kill) of up to three protected Golden Eagles over five years, in exchange for fulfilling conservation efforts contributing to breeding (U.S. News, msnbc.com, Jan. 3, 2012). One of many concerns with such a precedent, if approved, is subsequent applications for “take” permits across the country in areas with higher known populations of Golden Eagles. (We’ve asked Dr. Shawn Smallwood to comment on the Oregon proposal during his presentation at our February General Membership meeting.)

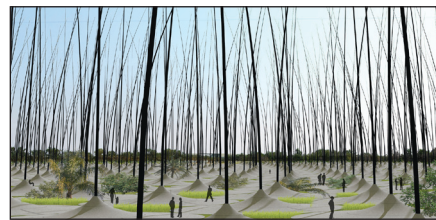
When the Madrone Audubon Society (MAS) formed our Renewable Energy Committee about two years ago at our annual 2010 planning meeting, Gerald Moore commented, “There also ought to be incentives for research and development for new technologies to protect wildlife.” How right Gerald was.

Are new designs emerging?

One new technology for large wind energy systems considered for testing in California is **FloDesign**, a large turbine encased in what looks like a jet engine. One issue related to testing FloDesign is air pressure near and around the unit. The manufacturer contends the issue of air flow near and around FloDesign is safer for flying wildlife; says the unit has the capacity to generate more energy and, thus, fewer units are required across a given landscape; and theorizes the pressure zone near and around a unit would be more easily detected by flying wildlife.

Science Illustrated (SI) Jan-Feb 2012 featured “**Wind Turbines of the Future - 12 Ways to Utilize Wind Energy.**” The article describes and shares international design concepts of new technologies for wind energy. Several designs incorporate a variety of turbine blades in different sizes. Our friend, Sheri Cardo of Sonoma Land Trust, read about a design and provided it to our MAS Renewable Energy Committee.

This design appears in the *SI* article and is called Windstalk. Considered for installation outside the planned city of Masdar in the United Arab Emirates, Windstalk is described as a “forest” with 180-foot-tall carbon fiber stalks (30 cm diameter, 5 cm base and top), filled with piezoelectric discs that bend in the wind. This motion would force the discs together and a generator at the stalk’s root would create energy. **Windstalk** is described as “silent and harmless.”



Windstalk Photo courtesy of Atelier DNA

When the wind blows, the top of the stalks would glow. With no wind, the stalks appear dark and are described to appear as an art installation. Several questions arise, such as the impact of a 180-foot-tall structure multiplied several times, covering a sizable land area, on flying and ground-based wildlife. Conceptually, innovation to create different shapes and forms to produce wind energy seems positive.

A small wind energy system design featured in the *SI* article is **Windspire**. This design is a 30-foot-tall vertical turbine, rotating around its own axis. Windspire is described as generating approximately 2000 kWh of energy annually in average winds of 11 mph. For context, an average household uses about 8000 kWh annually. The Windspire manufacturer, based in Reno, considers that individual property owners could utilize a combination of wind and solar to produce a substantial percentage of their annual kWh. Windspire qualifies for small wind energy system rebates from the California Energy Commission. Several units have been installed commercially in the Bay Area, including Adobe Systems in the South Bay and Harbor Bay Business Park in Alameda, as well as nationally. The manufacturer reported that it has received no reports of bird injuries or deaths.

In Sonoma County ...

We currently have an ordinance to permit small wind energy systems. In June 2011,

the MAS Renewable Energy Committee submitted a letter with recommendations to amend the ordinance. Our recommendations included environmental review, stringent guidelines for siting away from environmentally sensitive areas, flyways, and ridge tops; setbacks from hilltops; and post-installation environmental monitoring. We recommended against large wind energy systems in Sonoma County. We recommended careful planning and installation of small and/or medium wind energy systems, designed to blend with landscapes and not harm wildlife. Ensuring the highest level of protection for flying and ground-based wildlife, our precious Sonoma County natural resource is essential.



Field Guide Apps for Smart Phone Users

Submitted by Gordon Beebe

In the Jan-Feb 2012 edition of *Birdwatcher’s Digest*, Mark Hedden of Caligo Ventures reviewed six popular apps for birders. Each one is a little different, though all of them have the following: a species list, range maps, written descriptions of both plumage and habits, and audio of calls.

Following is a synopsis of Hedden’s article:

National Geographic’s Handheld Birds: Although it has the basics, finding an unfamiliar bird is not easy. It requires searching through several layers of screens to get to some images, then back out again to check the next possibility. Also, the screen images do not enlarge well. Priced under \$15.

Peterson’s Birds of North America: Based on the printed guide, the home page has icons of all of the major groups of birds. Tapping on one of them brings up the plate of species, and by tapping on a single species, all of the information for it is quickly accessible. By swiping sideways, the next plate appears. Images enlarge well, and a small toggle switches text and Peterson’s patented field mark arrows on or off. You can add your own photos to the gallery and manually enter sightings. Priced under \$15.

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FIELD GUIDE APPS

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The Sibley eGuide to the Birds of North America: Unlike Peterson's, Sibley's does not allow viewing of similar species all at once, but you can quickly swipe from one to the next. Images are at the top of the screen, with accompanying text on the bottom. Tapping on either area fills the screen with the selection. By turning the phone sideways, the image will enlarge somewhat. It has multiple calls with recorded locations. Priced under \$30.

Audubon Birds - A Field Guide to North American Birds: Audubon uses photographs for all of the plumages and molts. The maps include both North America and South America for relevant species' wintering ranges. The song library is the most extensive of the group. This app may run a little slower than the others. Price under \$15.

iBird Explorer PRO: For the greatest number of species, iBird surpasses the others with 924 species accounts. It also includes information on ecological status, taxonomy, similar species, and links to Flickr as well as Birdpedia. The paintings, though boldly graphic, may leave out some subtleties in plumage. Priced under \$20.

BirdsEye: Though it does include basic pictures, calls, and species accounts, the main focus of this app is to help you find birds in real time. By using your current location via satellite, it coordinates with Cornell Lab's eBird program. By tapping on a button, you can select for reports within 50-to-1,000 miles, narrowing the list down to species of interest. However, to report a sighting, you have to access eBird through their website. They hope to integrate this in the future. Priced under \$20.

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JUNIOR AUDUBON'S FIELD TRIP: Mist Netting with PRBO Conservation Science at Their Field Station

By Scott Campbell, Junior Audubon Chair

The second Junior Audubon field trip was a wonderful success, due to Missy Wipf in education and outreach at PRBO. The

group met at the PRBO field station at 9:30 AM on November 12th. There were 14 students and 16 adults for the mist-netting demonstration. The staff biologist actually recaptured an 11-year-old Song Sparrow, which is fantastic when you think about it. Initially the sky was overcast, but cleared as the morning progressed. The students asked great questions and Missy was very patient in answering and explaining why this long-term project yields important information in migration patterns, populations, and general information. It was a wonderful day and a great opportunity to instill conservation values in the next generation.

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The Third Annual Petaluma Christmas Bird Count for Kids

By Al Hesla

Petaluma's Third Annual Christmas Bird Count for Kids, 7 January 2012, was a great success with 18 kids and their parents participating in the event. Following Binocular Boot Camp by their birding team leaders at the Kenilworth Recreation Center, three teams of kids, accompanied by their parents, set out to their assigned trails in the Petaluma public wetlands for 90 minutes of birding. They identified 61 species in a total count of 1,741 birds. The teams then returned to the center for a cup of Mary Edith Moore and Sally Rowland's famous hot chocolate to warm-up.

The group enjoyed a brown-bag lunch and Gerald Moore followed with a history of the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Each team reported his/her favorite bird observations during the tabulation celebration. The kids then enjoyed a rousing game of Bird Bingo—including prizes—where they matched bird names on their bingo cards with Bob Dyer's bird photographs projected on a screen. We were then treated to a special presentation from the Bird Rescue Center of Santa Rosa with two of their captive, wild raptors: a Turkey Vulture and a Great-horned Owl. The kids learned about the care of injured wild birds and what harm humans can have from "imprinting" on the birds when attempting to care for them. All-in-all, a great day was had by all!

Madrone Audubon's Weekend Trip to the Central Valley Refuges, December 10 and 11, 2011

Submitted by Bob Speckels

Fifteen birders participated in this yearly overnight trip to the Central Valley's National and State Wildlife Refuges. Several of the participants started the outing with a visit to Colusa National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and a possible glimpse of the very rare Falcated Duck that had been reported. The duck drew observers from across the nation, including John Vanderpoel who was completing his Big Year and flew in from Houston. Unfortunately, the duck was absent for our morning's visit, but it is still present and still drawing crowds.

The group met Saturday at Grey Lodge State Wildlife Area and followed a spectacular walk around the refuge with an equally rewarding auto tour. The number of Snow Geese was overwhelming (not such a good thing for the Snow Geese) and the sight and sound of them continually lifting off was nothing short of spectacular.



Photo courtesy of Gerald Moore

Continuing on to Sacramento NWR we were once again rewarded by many thousands of Snow Geese lifting off and nearly obscuring the late afternoon sun. In addition to the geese huge strands of White-faced Ibis were a constant presence, returning to the refuge from the rice field; the length of the strands literally extended from horizon to horizon.

Many of the group returned to Colusa Sunday morning and were rewarded with excellent views of the Falcated Duck. We counted a total of 99 species in 35 families.



Lessons We Learn From Geese

Author Unknown; submitted by Sharon Mansfield, former Petaluma Wetlands Alliance Education Chair

Fact 1: As each goose flaps its wings it creates an “uplift” for the birds that follow. By flying in a “V” formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

Fact 2: When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as a goose we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

Fact 3: When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position.

Lesson: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on each other’s skills, capabilities and unique arrangements of gifts, talents or resources.

Fact 4: The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson: We need to make sure honking is encouraging. In groups where there is encouragement the production is much greater. The power of encouragement (to stand by one’s heart or core values and encourage the heart and core of others) is the quality of honking we seek.

Fact 5: When a goose gets sick or wounded, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then, they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock.

Lesson: If we have as much sense as geese, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

Report from Cornell Lab eNews

Using “Rosetta Stone for Warblers,” the Cornell Lab is creating tools to listen to the night sky and identify the birds passing overhead. By day, warblers dazzle us with their colors and songs. By night, they migrate unseen, uttering calls lasting a fraction of a second. Thanks to new grants and gifts, Cornell is also developing a project called BirdCast to forecast migration using radar, sound, weather data, and observations from eBird.

Cornell Lab uses spectrograms as a visual representation of the very brief flight calls made by North American warblers during their nocturnal migrations. Some of these call notes sound almost identical to our ears, but spectrograms show minute differences between them. Scientists can compare spectrograms of night recordings to spectrograms of known species to identify nocturnal migrants in total darkness. Andrew Farnsworth, a scientist in the Cornell Lab’s Conservation Science program, developed this “Rosetta Stone” in 2006 in collaboration with Michael Lanzone, Cellular Tracking Technologies, William R. Evans, and Michael O’Brien. It covers all 48 warbler species of the U.S. and Canada, and is a major tool in their Acoustic Monitoring Project.

Putting Sound to Work for Conservation

It’s been an exciting year for sound-analysis teams at the Cornell Lab. A recent gift from the Kenneth L. Harder Trust will help their Acoustic Monitoring Project make automated acoustic analysis a reality. As sound recordings continue to pour in from studies conducted around the world, computers become essential to the problem of analyzing all the data they contain.

Cornell staff will use results from the Rosetta Stone and funding from the Harder gift to “train” computers to identify the sounds of warblers and other nocturnally migrating birds, as well as other species including whales and forest elephants.

Working Toward a Bird Migration Forecast

A new grant from the National Science Foundation will fund BirdCast, a proj-

ect that will combine bird observations (both sightings and sound recordings) with weather models and terrain data to forecast migrations. The results of the predictions will help scientists understand migratory behavior and may aid decisions about wind turbine placement and other questions about environmental hazards to birds.

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Petaluma Wetlands Alliance Receives Certificate of Appreciation

On 16 November 2011, the Petaluma Wetlands Alliance (PWA) received a Certificate of Appreciation from the City of Petaluma -- Recreation, Music and Parks Commission. This certificate recognized PWA’s commitment, dedication, and performance in answering the City’s call for help to clear the nonnative plants off the Alman Marsh trail. Within six weeks, 65 PWA docents and volunteers worked a total of 315 man-hours to clear the one-mile trail between Shollenberger Park and the Petaluma Marina. Today this trail is a pleasure to walk.

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FESTIVALS GALORE, and all so close

The 16th Annual San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival

February 10-12, Mare Island, 500 Connolly Street, Building 223, Vallejo CA

The festival celebrates the annual wildlife migration through the San Francisco Bay Estuary. Friday is the opening reception, a film showing, and outings throughout the area; however, the Birding and Wildlife Expo is Saturday and Sunday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Activities include family wildlife exploration, birdwatching outings, guided nature walks, boat tours, and tours to discover some of the best local wetlands, wildlands, open spaces, and historic sites in the Bay Area. There will be exhibits, live bird visits, educational presentations, art, photography, and optics. There will



February 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.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE exchanges information by phone and email as soon as possible when an issue surfaces. Please contact Diane Hichwa at 785-1922 or dhichwa@earthlink.net.

February 1-28

BIRD-A-THON. Madrone's major fundraiser.

Wednesday February 1, 7:00 PM

BOARD MEETING. Sonoma County Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa. For agenda information, contact Bob Speckels at robertspeckels@yahoo.com.

Thursday February 2, 8:30 AM to 2:30 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. Bring lunch. In the afternoon, we will bird the nearby Hudemann Slough wetlands and ponds. For information contact Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday February 4, 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM

BODEGA BAY. Come explore with us one of Sonoma County's richest bird areas. From the center of the town of Bodega Bay, drive north on Highway 1, turn left at East Shore Road (the Bodega Head turnoff), turn right at the stop sign, and continue 0.3 mile to the large, dirt parking lot on the right. Informal carpools leave Santa Rosa at 7:15 AM from the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District Office, 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa. To participate, please arrive by 7:05 AM to make arrangements. The parking lot is behind the office, accessed from Carillo Street. Bring lunch. Leaders: Bill Doyle, 483-8773 and Bob Speckels, 569-0563.

Saturday February 4, 9:00 to 11:00 AM

JUNIOR AUDUBON. We will join PRBO educators on this winter walk at Shollenberger Marsh and Ellis Creek Ponds to explore our local Petaluma wetlands and their importance to bird communities. Meet at PRBO's headquarters, 3820 Cypress Drive #11, Petaluma. Call Scott Campbell at 530-828-6115 for reservations and suggested donation.

Wednesday February 8, 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM.

BODEGA BAY. Bird Walk. See February 4 Bodega Bay trip for driving directions to the dirt parking lot at Bodega Bay. Bring lunch. For information contact Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday February 11, 9:00 AM

SHOLLENBERGER PARK. Petaluma Wetlands Alliance/Madrone leads a nature walk. Meet at the first kiosk. Contact Bob Dyer, 763-2934.

Thursday February 16, 8:30 AM to Noon

SPRING LAKE REGIONAL PARK. Bird Walk. Parking fee (\$7) 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 February 18, 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. For the children/family walk in English, contact Gerald Moore at 763-3577; for the walk in Spanish, contact Connie Peabody at 338-2237.

Saturday February 18, 8:00 AM to Noon

SONOMA BAYLANDS. A variety of ducks, raptors, and shorebirds with good, closeup views. Meet in the parking lot of Port Sonoma Marina at the mouth of the Petaluma River. From Petaluma, take Lakeville Highway south to Highway 37. Go west on Highway 37, approximately one mile, and then turn left into the Port Sonoma entrance. Follow the entrance road west all the way to the lot on the river. Carpooling is encouraged. We will visit a number of productive spots. Rain at the meeting site cancels. Leaders: Bill Doyle, 483-8773 and Helen Kochenderfer, 484-2479.

Monday February 20, 7:30 PM

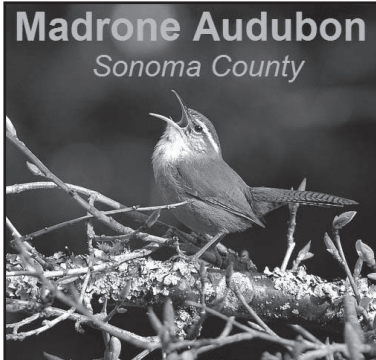
GENERAL MEETING. Shawn Smallwood will present "Wind Turbine Impacts on Wildlife." First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa. Please see the front page announcement. The public is always invited to attend these programs.

Wednesday February 22, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM

GRIZZLY ISLAND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA. Bird Walk. Meet at McDonalds in the Sunset Shopping Center in Suisun City, located at the intersection of Highway 12 and Grizzly Island Road. Bring lunch. Driving time to meeting point from Santa Rosa is approximately 1-1/4 hours. For information contact Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday February 25, 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. Contact Bob Dyer, 763-2934.



Madrone Audubon
Sonoma County

**Find us on
Facebook for
conservation
alerts, birdwalk
reminders, special
announcements
and more.**



March calendar

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE exchanges information by phone and email as soon as possible when an issue surfaces. Please contact Diane Hichwa at 785-1922 or dhichwa@earthlink.net.

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

SONOMA COAST: DUNCAN'S LANDING TO GOAT ROCK. Bird Walk. Meet at Duncan's Landing (within the Sonoma Coast State Beach), approximately three miles south of the Russian River on Highway 1. Bring lunch. For information contact Tom McCuller, sisypus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday March 3, 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. Take Calistoga Road (becomes Petrified Forest Road) to Highway 128. Turn right onto Highway 128, left onto Deer Park Road, right onto Silverado Trail North, and then left onto 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. Leaders: Bill Doyle, 483-8773 and Helen Kochenderfer, 484-2479.

Wednesday March 7, 7:00 PM

BOARD MEETING. Sonoma County Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa. For agenda information, contact Bob Speckels at robertspeckels@yahoo.com.

Wednesday March 7, 8:30 AM to Noon

SHOLLENBERGER PARK. Bird Walk. Half-day search for birds at the Shollenberger Park ponds and wetlands in Petaluma. Meet in the Shollenberger Park parking lot. From Santa Rosa, take the Highway 116 exit (Lakeville Highway), go left under Highway 101, turn right at the South McDowell traffic light, proceed 1/3 mile to the City Park sign, and then turn right into the parking lot. For information contact Tom McCuller, sisypus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday March 10, 9:00 AM

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

Thursday March 15, 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM

POINT REYES AREA. Bird Walk. Meet in the parking lot across from the Bear Valley Visitor Center, which is just west of Olema. Bring lunch. For information contact Tom McCuller, sisypus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday March 17, 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. For the children/family walk in English, contact Gerald Moore at 763-3577; for the walk in Spanish, contact Connie Peabody at 338-2237.

Saturday March 17, 8:00 AM to Noon

ELLIS CREEK WATER RECYCLING FACILITY and SHOLLENBERGER PONDS. A morning high tide should produce good shore-bird conditions. Meet at Ellis Creek promptly at 8:00 AM; the group may decide to go to Shollenberger first. From Highway 101 in Petaluma, go east on Highway 116 (Lakeville Highway), right on Pine View Way, and then left on Cypress Drive. Go to the end of Cypress Drive and through the gates. We will meet at the large signboard at the beginning of the trail. Informal carpools meet at Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District Office, 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa, at 7:20 AM. The parking lot is behind the office (access from Carrillo Street). Leaders: Bill Doyle, 483-8773 and Bob Speckels, 569-0563.

Saturday March 17, 9:00 AM

JUNIOR AUDUBON. Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with Scott at Howarth Park (free parking) and a walk to Spring Lake. All that is required is good walking shoes, lots of questions, and binoculars (if you have them). The walk is about 1½ miles. Let's see what we can find. Meet at the west end of the Howarth Park parking lot close to Lake Ralphine. Call Scott Campell at 530-828-6115 for reservations.

Monday March 19, 7:30 PM

GENERAL MEETING. Ron LeValley will speak about "Black Oystercatcher Research on the California Coast." First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa. Please see the front page announcement. The public is always invited to attend these programs.

Wednesday March 21, 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM

BODEGA BAY. Bird Walk. See February 4 Bodega Bay trip for driving directions to the dirt parking lot at Bodega Bay. Bring lunch. For information contact Tom McCuller, sisypus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday March 24, 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. Contact Bob Dyer, 763-2934.

Thursday March 29, 8:30 AM to Noon

CRANE CREEK REGIONAL PARK. Bird Walk. Parking fee (\$7) for non-permit holders. From Petaluma Hill Road, immediately east of Cotati, go a short distance on Robert's Road to the park's parking lot. For information contact Tom McCuller, sisypus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Wednesday April 4, 8:30 AM to Noon.

HUDEMAN SLOUGH WETLAND ENHANCEMENT PROJECT. Bird Walk. There are no restrooms at this facility. Meet in the project parking lot. From Petaluma and Sonoma, turn right from Highway 12/121 onto Ramal Road. Continue 2.4 miles on Ramal Road to the gravel project parking lot on the right. For information contact Tom McCuller, sisypus@sonic.net, 546-1812.



FESTIVALS GALORE

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be docent-led tours at the Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility, 9:30 to 11:30 AM on Friday and Saturday (call Gerald at 763-3577). For more information: contact Myrna Hayes, Festival Coordinator: 557-9816, myrnahay@pacbell.net or visit www.sfbayflywayfestival.com.

Migration Festival at Natural Bridges State Park

February 11, Saturday

Fly, swim, waddle, walk, bike, or drive as you migrate to Natural Bridges State Beach for a full-day of activities, 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM, that celebrate the migration of whales, butterflies, birds, and the many creatures that travel. The park will host migratory animal talks, active kids' games, crafts, skits, live music by the nature-loving 5M's Band, educational booths and displays, along with the now-famous free habitat-cake served at the end of the event.

The event is geared toward families and children, but there is sure to be something for everyone, including adults. You can purchase a picnic at the park or bring your own. For more information call 831-423-4609 or visit <http://www.santacruzstateparks.org>. The park is located at 2531 West Cliff Drive, Santa Cruz CA

Point Reyes Birding & Nature Festival

April 27 to 30

The Point Reyes region is endowed with unique geography and extensive wildlands and ranches. Its pristine coastline, beaches, dunes, mudflats, bays, estuaries, freshwater wetlands, forests, grasslands, coastal bluffs, and chaparral together support one of the highest levels of bird diversity in the country. As home base for some of the nation's top birders and naturalists, it offers the ideal setting for a spring festival for bird and nature enthusiasts of all levels.

Last year, festival participants took part in over 70 fabulous bird walks guided by such top birders as Jules Evens, Lisa Hug, David Wimpfheimer, Alvaro Jaramillo, Peter Pyle, Joe Morlan, Sarah Allen, and Keith Hansen. All enjoyed the tremendous camaraderie experienced by the more than 500 people who

attended. As a whole, festival outings tallied a cumulative total of 200 species of birds (not to mention dozens of mammals, butterflies, marine mammals, and other wildlife) in Western Marin and Sonoma County.

This year the festival will again offer a lineup of over 70 outings and presentations, with events for beginners and kids. This year's roster also includes Rich Stallcup, Allen Fish, and John Muir Laws, who will give the keynote address at the Saturday evening banquet.

The 2012 festival website and registration will go live in mid-February. Last year, nearly every walk and outing sold out well before the festival weekend, so, before you forget, send an email to prbnfestival@gmail.com requesting to be notified when registration opens. For more information, contact Carolyn Longstreth, 415-669-7514 or visit www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org.

The festival benefits the habitat conservation work of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin (EAC). You can read about some of EAC's conservation work at www.eacmarin.org.

Third Annual Bird Festival at the Lincoln Elementary School

May 2

This festival event, organized by Madrone volunteers and former third grade Lincoln schoolteacher Kathie Noguchi, is a half-day of outdoor activities, art projects, and presentations. Look for details in the April-May *Leaves*. For many students the highlight of the day is getting a closeup look at their neighborhood birds - the herons and egrets nesting in the middle of West Ninth Street, a block from the school. Volunteers are needed, especially those with scopes who will help at the rookery. Call Janeann Erickson at 795-2498 and let her know you'll help.



Upcoming Winter and Summer Classes

PEPPERWOOD PRESERVE

Classes are held in the Dwight Center for Conservation Science, 2130 Pepperwood Preserve Road, approximately midway between the towns of Santa Rosa and Calistoga,

and adjacent to Safari West. Education Director Sandi Funke, 591-9310 x 205, sfunke@pepperwoodpreserve.org.

Explore Pepperwood, Contribute to Science with your Smart Phone

February 18, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Join us for a workshop on discovering and recording plant and wildlife sightings in our local habitats at the Pepperwood Preserve. Participants will be introduced to the iNaturalist.org and learn how citizen scientists can contribute to a regional assessment of Bay Area biodiversity. This workshop is free and appropriate for ages 14 years and older, but registration is required. You do not need a smart phone to participate. Contact Joel Cervantes, 591-9310, jcervantes@pepperwoodpreserve.org for more information or to register.

Record, share, and verify species at Pepperwood Preserve in this hands-on workshop. Participants will learn about Pepperwood's Vital Signs Project on iNaturalist.org, a social network that enhances awareness of biodiversity and collects critical data for conservation planning. They will then explore and collect information about the flora and fauna of Pepperwood with staff and other citizen scientists. After the workshop, participants will be able to make observations and track them online, sharing this data with scientists worldwide.

Family Birding and Nesting Box Building Class

March 10, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Learn how to identify local birds and then make a nesting box to take home at a fun, family class at Pepperwood Preserve. The cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children. Register online at Brown Paper Tickets, www.brownpapertickets.com/, and search for "Pepperwood."

Each family will receive materials to construct one box as well as information about placing the box on their property. Participants will also explore Pepperwood to see birds and learn to care for existing bird boxes. Instructor for the class is Peter Leveque, a highly respected naturalist and retired professor of Biology at Santa Rosa Junior College, where he taught for

Continued on page 8



UPCOMING CLASSES

Continued from page 7

35 years. Peter is an active member of Madrone Audubon Society and has built hundreds of nesting boxes.

HOG ISLAND AUDUBON CAMP

Classes available June to Sept 21

Registration is open for the legendary 6-day residential birding and environmental education programs at the historic Audubon Camp in Maine on Hog Island. Programs are for adult birders, teens, families, educators, and Audubon Chapter leaders. Pete Dunne, Scott Weidensaul, Steve Kress, Lang Elliott, Don Kroodsma, Bill Thompson III and many more expert ornithologists, naturalists, educators, and authors will be in residence during the 2012 sessions. All summer programs include field trips to nearby Eastern Egg Rock, where Dr. Steve Kress and his team of biologists have successfully restored an island colony of Atlantic Puffins, and Roseate, Arctic and Common Terns. Roger Tory Peterson was the camp's first bird instructor in 1936 and many of America's finest naturalists, including Rachel Carson, have spent time on the 330-acre wildlife sanctuary, located in mid-coast Maine, on Muscongus Bay. Participants live in restored wooden buildings, dating back to the early 1900s and are treated to three fabulous meals each day, prepared by chef extraordinaire Janii Laberge. Scholarships available.

For more information on the programs, visit <http://hogisland.audubon.org>. For questions, contact the Hog Island registrar, Erica Marx (VanEtten), at evanetten@audubon.org or 607-257-7308 x 14.

Wanted: Docents at the Laguna de Santa Rosa

Classes begin March 12

Expand and share your knowledge and love of nature—train to become a Laguna de Santa Rosa docent. Volunteers learn about the natural and cultural history of Sonoma

County's unique natural treasure, the Laguna de Santa Rosa, and then lead dynamic, hands-on environmental education activities in 2nd - 4th grade classrooms throughout the watershed and field trips to Laguna Preserves. An informational meeting will be held from 6:00-7:30 PM on February 29, Wednesday, at the Central Santa Rosa Library. For information, including the application and training schedule, visit www.lagunafoundation.org or contact Christine Fontaine, Laguna Foundation Education Programs Director: 527-9277 x102 christine@lagunafoundation.org.

Needed: Volunteers at The Songbird Hospital

Orientation class March 11, Sunday, 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM

Location: Sebastopol Community Center, Youth Annex Music Room, 390 Morris Street, Sebastopol

Help injured, ill, and orphaned native passerines receive a second chance at life in the wild. This spring and summer, volunteers are needed to help care for baby birds as well as transport birds to the hospital and assist with releasing birds back into the wild. We provide care for over 600 songbirds annually, and over 70% of them are successfully released back into the wild. To register, call 484-6502 or visit www.songbirdhospital.org.

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OUT & ABOUT

Fifteenth Annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)

February 17-20

This count is a joint project of Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon. Participants include all levels of birders. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. Here's what to do:

- 1) Plan to count birds for at least 15 minutes during the four days. Count birds at as many places and on as many days as you like—just keep a separate list of counts for each day and/or location.
- 2) Count the greatest number of individuals of each species that you see together

at any one time, and write it down.

- 3) Enter your results at www.birdsource.org/gbbc.

PRBO's Monthly Bird Walks

Two-hour walks are held on the first weekend of each month, 9:00 to 11:00 AM. They are free to PRBO members and \$10 per person for non-members. Rain cancels. For more information, contact Missy Wipf 781-2555 x 302, mwipf@prbo.org; or visit www.prbo.org/birding.

Birds of Pickleweed Park and the San Rafael Shoreline

March 4, Sunday

Join PRBO educators as they walk along the San Rafael shoreline on the Jean and John Starkweather Trail. Learn about PRBO's educational programs in this community as they explore several Bay Area habitats, including tidal salt marsh and parts of the San Rafael Bay. Meet at 9:00 AM at the Pickleweed Community Center, 50 Canal Street, San Rafael.

Wood Ducks and Woodpeckers at Five Brooks

April 7, Saturday

Join PRBO biologists as they search for Wood Ducks, woodpeckers, and spring's first migrants. Meet at Five Brooks parking lot, about 10 minutes south of Olema on Highway 1.

Memorial and Honor Gifts

In memory of Sharon Audiss

Donald K. Howard and Donald McCarthy

In memory of "Bird" (Charlie Parker)

Richard Conte

In memory of Dennis E. Calligan, husband

Brenda Calligan

In memory of Phyllis Schmitt

Diane & Bryant Hichwa

In memory of Kimberly D. Sharke (daughter)

Richard & Lucille Sharke

In memory of Dr. Henry K. Silberman

Eleanor Silberman

In honor of Betsy Hall

Kay Allen

In honor and memory of Jim Tonascia

Jean L. Tonascia

In honor of Marge Van Lente

Bill & Donna Lou Brown

**Observations**December - January • Dan Nelson • 479-2918 • birdsurf64@sbcglobal.net

Northern Pintail (8-10)	1/1	Seen from Bodega Head, over ocean.	DN, BDP
Eurasian Wigeon (1)	Dec.	Doran Park kiosk pond	M.Ob
Falcated Duck (male)	Dec.	Colusa National Wildlife Refuge, seen from observation deck – 3rd record for California	M.Ob
Redhead (19)	12/30	Hudemann Slough ponds, flew toward Skaggs' Island	LK et al.
Barrow's Goldeneye	Dec.	Lake Hennessey, Napa County	M.Ob
Hooded Merganser	11/7	Bodega Harbor, out of place on salt water	GW, PL
Hooded Merganser (2)	12/18	Laguna de Santa Rosa, near Sebastopol Community Center	DN
Hooded Merganser	Dec.	Sullivan Road farm pond	K & GJ
Greater White-fronted Goose	Dec.	Lower Russian River near Penny Island	M.Ob
Snow Goose (8-10)	1/1	Seen from Bodega Head, flying off ocean toward golf course	BDP, DN
Ross's Goose (2)	12/30	Hudemann Slough ponds	LK et al.
Cackling Goose "minima" (22)	12/4	Lower Russian River, near Penny Island	DB
Tundra Swan (2)	Dec.	Hudemann Slough ponds	M.Ob
Rhinoceros Auklet (1)	12/30	Seen from Bodega Head	PH
Ancient Murrelet (8)	1/1	Seen from Bodega Head	BDP, DN
Glaucous Gull	12/13	Shollenberger Park	MEM et al.
Bonaparte's Gull (8)	1/1	Tomales Road farm pond	DN
Northern Fulmar (2)	1/1	Seen offshore from Bodega Head	DN, BDP
Bald Eagle (1 ad.)	12/10	Lower Russian River	DB
Burrowing Owl (1)	12/18	Northpoint Drive stakeout bird	LH
Short-eared Owl	Dec.	Several hunting northeast of bridge leading into Skaggs' Island from #37 (prior to dusk)	M.Ob
Long-eared Owl	12/30	Single bird heard calling from redwood at 0430, near Kenwood residence	RR
White-faced Ibis (2)	12/30	Hudemann Slough ponds	LK et al.
Cattle Egret (38)	12/18	Sebastopol/ High School Road area	DN
Cattle Egret (1)	1/1	Valley Ford cattle pen	DN
American Bittern (10)	12/30	Hudemann Slough ponds; seen in flight twice	LK et al.
Wilson's Snipe	Dec.	Sullivan Road farm pond	K & GJ
Wilson's Snipe	12/30	Chanslor Ranch near ditch	PH
Ruff	Dec.	Hudemann Slough ponds	RR et al.
Lesser Yellowlegs (1)	12/30	Hudemann Slough ponds	LK et al.
"Yellow-shafted" Flicker	1/3	Petaluma Cypress Hill Cemetery (one female, one fully-marked male)	DN
Bohemian Waxwing	12/28	M.P. 10, Highway 128 near Conn Dam, in flock of Cedar Waxwings	RR
Phainopepla	Dec.	Tolay Creek property-Sonoma Valley Christmas Bird Count	JC
Yellow Warbler	12/30	Diekmann's store, continuing	PH, DN
Nashville Warbler (2)	12/30	Diekmann's store, continuing	PH
Nashville Warbler (1)	1/18	West Third Street	LH
Black-and-white Warbler	12/21	Spring Lake peninsula, north end in willows	RO'D
Vesper Sparrow	Dec.	Tolay Creek property - Sonoma Valley Christmas Bird Count	JC
Purple Finch (15+)	1/3	Cypress Hill Cemetery, Petaluma	DN
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	11/11	Visiting suet feeder (male), in Sebastopol's Hessel district	GW

CONTRIBUTORS: Dave Barry, Josiah Clark, Phil Henderson, Lisa Hug, Kathi and Greg Jacobs, Logan Kahle, Marcia Kyne, Peter Leveque, Mary Edith Moore, Dan Nelson, Rob O'Donnell, Benjamin D. Parmeter, Ruth Rudesill, and Giel Witt.

Welcome New Friend of Madrone Audubon Society**Bodega Bay**

Lowell B. Pfeiffer

Cotati

Richard Bloom

Glen Ellen

William Remick

Healdsburg

Sally Ann McInerney

Occidental

Judi Binkley

Petaluma

Bonnie Black and Marie Park

Rio Nido

Kate Noonan

Rohnert Park

Bill Mannone and Kathy Mannone

San Francisco

James H. McKerrow

Santa Rosa

Margaret S. Beale, Glenn Caesar, Gail & Robert Cafferata,

Marilee Jensen, Pamela Kind, Harry Lysell, Eleanor Silberman, Jan Simonin, and Carol Vellutini

Sebastopol

Joan Dudschus, George Powers, Paul & Patty Schoch, Christian Gerike & Suzanne Stewart, and Marge VanLente

Sonoma

Jackie Lee Nystrom Parker, Monica Schaeffert, and Brian Smucker



Madrone Audubon Society

Post Office Box 1911
Santa Rosa, California 95402

February/March 2012

**TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY
CALENDAR ENCLOSED**



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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The Songbird Hospital 484-6502
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National Audubon Society: 225 Varick Street, NY, NY 10014 212-979-3000

Join Madrone Audubon – Support Your Local Chapter

Please complete this form if you wish to join Madrone Audubon, renew your Madrone membership or make a contribution to Madrone.

Joining or renewing with Madrone only. Basic Madrone Audubon membership dues cover the cost of your subscription to the Madrone Leaves newsletter. Please consider joining or renewing at a higher level to support the important work of Madrone Audubon in environmental education and conservation critical to the protection of wildlife and the environment. **Note: By joining Madrone you will not become a member of National Audubon.**

I am a new member _____ I am renewing my Madrone membership
 Basic Member \$20 _____ Senior \$15 _____ Student \$15 _____ Family \$30 _____
 Sustaining \$50 _____ Supporting \$100 _____ Donor \$500 _____ Other _____
 _____ I am a National Audubon member who wishes to make a **tax deductible contribution**
 to Madrone in the amount of \$ _____
 Madrone's nonprofit 501(c)3 tax number is 94-6172986

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please make your check payable to "Madrone Audubon Society."
 Detach this panel and mail to: **Madrone Audubon Society, Membership**
P.O. Box 1911, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Visit us on the World Wide Web at: <http://audubon.sonoma.net>