



Mt. Diablo Audubon Society

The Quail

Volume 67, Number 10

SEPTEMBER 2022

Next Monthly Program Meeting: Thursday, September 1

Note the new meeting location! The Mt. Diablo Audubon Society will meet Thursday, September 1, in the Lakeside Room of the Heather Farm Community Center at Heather Farm, 301 N. San Carlos Dr., Walnut Creek. Everyone is welcome to bring a snack to share, if they wish.

- 6:30 PM** Doors Open
- 7:00 PM** Birding Info: *Eagle Scout Nest Box Projects*
- 7:25 PM** Announcements
- 7:40 PM** Refreshments and Raffle
- 8:00 PM** Main Program: *A Gallop Through the Galapagos*

**as a conservation organization we encourage you to bring your own mug for coffee or tea*

Main Program:
A Gallop Through the Galapagos

Wayne Narr

The Galapagos Islands sit in isolation more than 1000 km west of northern South America. This small, remote archipelago has had a strong impact on us as observers of nature. Its fauna provided a key to our understanding of biological evolution thanks to the islands' isolation and the efforts of many scientists, including Charles Darwin during his visit on the HMS Beagle. Wayne Narr will review the tectonics that shaped the island's presence and briefly discuss how the geology set the stage for our understanding of organic evolution. Then we will discuss Mr. Darwin. Finally, we'll enjoy many images that show the splendor of some of the engaging and lovely animals (mainly birds) that comprise the Galapagos Island's ecosystem and the beautiful landscapes they inhabit. The animals really do tolerate close encounters with humans.

Wayne Narr is a photography enthusiast, a novice bird-watcher, and a geologist with Ph.D., MS, and BS degrees in geology. He retired from a long career with Chevron where he did oil exploration, geological research, and technical consulting. He lives with his wife, Sandy — a retired elementary school teacher — in Danville, where they've been members of MDAS for five years.

Birding Info:

Eagle Scout Nest Box Projects

Georgette Howington, *Nest box monitor for the California Bluebird Recovery Program*

Georgette Howington will introduce several Eagle Scouts who completed Nest Box and other projects to help birds and wildlife in our community.

Be inspired by their hard work and ingenuity!

President's Letter

Jerry Britten, *MDAS President*

I hope all of you have enjoyed the summer and are looking forward to fall migration season! I'm sure many of you during this time went on a long-postponed trip to a birding destination (as I did) or to see family, and, I also wouldn't be surprised if many of you (as I did) returned with a case of COVID!

It seems that anyone who wants to venture back out into the world again

needs to expect the eventuality of this occurrence. Luckily, vaccinations and boosters, and the evolution of the pathogen, have made the vast majority of cases nowadays mild, as mine was.

I believe I contracted the virus while crammed in at the Utqiagvik (Barrow) airport in Alaska, which in terms of capacity, layout, baggage handling and passenger flow is the lousiest airport I've experienced. I was up there to see and photograph high-arctic specialties on their breeding grounds in spring, and the birding did not disappoint. The pack ice on the Chukchi Sea just started to break up as we were leaving at the end of June, and most inland waters were still ice-covered, but breeding birds on the tundra were abundant. We saw all the eider and jaeger species, numerous shorebirds and waterfowl, and as a bonus saw thousands of distant walrus drifting by on ice floes on our last day there.

In mid-July a Rose-Breasted Grosbeak hung around the sunflower seed feeders in our yard for a couple of days. Every few years one or two of these show up in Contra Costa, and I'm glad this one chose our yard. My yard list is now up to 113 species.

In Chapter news, we welcome Matt Tarlach as new Field Trip Coordinator. He has put together a field trip schedule with the help of past coordinator Hugh Harvey, that preserves the traditional destinations that members have enjoyed for years. In late September we are also trying something new, a birding-by-bicycle field trip out to Clifton Court Forebay in East County, that I will be leading. Please read about this and other scheduled trips later on in this issue and sign up through our website. Our leadership Board is in good shape, but we are still looking for a volunteer editor for this newsletter, and an Outreach Coordinator to help organize staffing for events in which we will be tabling. Such events are again happening in what I'll call the Post-Pandemic era, so we will be back to doing more of this outreach in the coming months. If anyone out there is interested in these positions, please email me at president@mtdiabloaudubon.org.

Stay safe, and get out there for the Birds!

Membership Updates

Rochelle Fortier, *MDAS Membership Chair*

Welcome, New Members! Twelve new members joined during May, June, and July! We hope you will attend some of the future birding field trips. Or, perhaps we will see you at the in-person September program meeting.

Rachel Cereca, San Bruno; **Lori Christensen**, Pleasanton; **Farley Connelly**, Alameda; **Terence Edwards**, Concord; **Gary Hook**, Pleasant Hill; **Janice Mitchell**, Walnut Creek; **Susan Pfau**, Walnut Creek; **George Prounis**, Alamo; **Jeff Tomer**, Pleasant Hill; **Mineko Wing**, San Ramon; **Robin Wolf**, Walnut Creek; and **Wayne Yamashita**, Danville.

I have some exciting news to announce – our Membership Brochure has been updated! It is a tri-fold brochure with beautiful photos. It lists web addresses for joining or renewing, and for our field trips.

So far we have distributed this brochure at the July 30th Pleasant Hill Library Grand Opening event. The brochure is on display at the Wild Birds Unlimited store in Pleasant Hill; the Concord Library; the Pleasant Hill Library; the Walnut Creek Library; and also at the nature kiosk in Heather Farm Park in Walnut Creek.

If you know someone who might be interested in learning more about our chapter, I would be glad to mail you one or two membership brochures to give to them. Please email me at membership@mtdiabloudubon.org and I will put the membership brochures in the mail to you right away!

Two Mt. Diablo Audubon Members Win Awards in National Audubon Photography Competition

Rosalie Howarth, *Publicity and Social Media*

Our congratulations to MDAS members Alan Krakauer and Peter Shen, who won awards in the National Audubon Photography Competition! Peter was named Amateur Award Winner for “Heads or Tails?”, his charming scene of baby Western Grebes riding on their mother’s back while fighting over a tiny fish. Alan was awarded Best Female Bird for his evocative portrait of a female Sage Grouse in winter weather, titled “Snow Queen.”

We chatted with both of them about their winning shots and their love of

birds.

Peter Shen:

Q: Tell us about that 'once in a lifetime' shot!

A: I was at Calero Reservoir County Park in San Jose when I spotted the Grebe family. I lay on the ground, trying to get as low as I could. The male brought a fish for the female and the young ones started fighting over it. The magic moment came when the mom turned and faced me, and we made eye contact. I knew I had captured an extraordinary moment!

After getting an email reminder from National on the final day to submit photographs, I thought, okay, I will pick one of my favorite photos and pay the fee as a donation for a good cause. I had never submitted to any photography contest; this was my first and only time, and I actually deleted the first email telling me I had won, because I thought it was spam!

Q: I know – I automatically delete anything that says "You are a winner!" So, how did you get into birding?

A: I was an avid golfer, but about eight years ago, I injured my right knee and could no longer play. A friend suggested birding. My first time out was at Coyote Hills Regional Park in Fremont. It was love at first sight, but I did not have a wildlife camera setup, so the following week I went out and bought a telephoto zoom lens. Over time I learned the birds' behavior and their habitats. I wanted to be able to ID their songs and calls. I also learned to respect wildlife and birding ethics.

Q: Favorite place to bird? Any advice for novices?

A: I do most of my birding at different Bay Area parks, but if I had to pick a favorite location, it would be our backyard. A few years ago we converted it into a "bird paradise" with flowers and plants that birds and butterflies enjoy. I also built a homemade water fountain. Countless afternoons I sit there to watch the birds come to drink the water and take a bath. It is tranquil and relaxing.

As for advice, I highly recommend investing in a good pair of binoculars.

Slow down, enjoy nature, and listen for calls and songs. Learn to respect those little creatures and know that when you are too close to the nest, it is perfectly okay to just walk away and not take a photo. Find one or two birding friends that share the same values; I give thanks to my birding buddy Arnold (MDAS member Arnold Joe); he's made me a better birder.

The best way for new birders to learn is to join their local Audubon society and attend bird walks. I am honored to be a member of the Mt. Diablo Audubon Society and I also belong to the Golden Gate and Ohlone chapters. I am grateful too for all I have learned from Jerry Ting in the Fremont Birding Circle. And I thank my wife and family for their love and unconditional support of my birding and wildlife photography passion.

Note: **Check out Peter's YouTube channel StoneWaterWildlife here.**

Alan Krakauer:

Q: You're quite an accomplished bird photographer, Alan. Have you entered many competitions?

A: I've entered the National Audubon Photography Awards a few times. Up til now, my best result was a picture of roosting Marbled Godwits at Arrowhead Marsh that made the "Top 100" in 2019. Beyond Audubon, I submitted the grand prize-winning photo for Outdoor Photographer Nature's Colors contest in 2018, and was a finalist or honorable mention for other contests in Outdoor Photographer and Birdwatching Magazine.

I actually submitted this same shot to the Mt. Diablo Audubon contest a few years ago in the "Birds and Native Plants" category, but didn't win. When the Female Bird category was added at National, I decided to give it another shot.

Q: Wow, our loss, Alan, though at the time our contest was limited to California shots. Why do you think this photo won on a larger, national stage?

A: It was taken on BLM land in Fremont County in Wyoming, and the lighting really conveys the mood of the cold and snowy weather. I thought it was technically pretty good in being in sharp focus with a lot of detail on

the feathers. Bonus for great lighting reflecting off the snow and an eye-level vantage point that puts the viewer in the world of the grouse. Double bonus: the snow covers up any cow pies from the summer-ranging cattle!

Q: Makes up for the frigid weather I guess. How did you get into photographing birds?

A: I was fortunate to grow up with parents who were already into birding, so I was out on Christmas Bird Counts before I could walk. Some favorites growing up were Evening Grosbeak and Red-headed Woodpecker. I remember getting my first little automatic point-and-shoot film camera when I was around 5 years old and blowing the whole roll of film on some mallards in a local park.

Q: Mallards . . . the underrated favorite among the younger set! Your favorite local birding location, and favorite species?

A: I usually stick close to home – I'm most often birding in Wildcat Canyon in the regional park or at the Gyuto Foundation monastery in East Richmond Heights. I like being able to connect with neighbors over the amazing birdlife we have on our doorstep. Otherwise, you might find me at other spots in the East Bay like Tilden, Albany Bulb or Meeker Slough, Franklin Canyon, Briones, or Arrowhead Marsh. It's very hard to pick a favorite local bird but some favorites are Varied Thrush, Wrentit, California Thrasher, and California Quail. I'd say Wild Turkey too but nobody would believe me!

Q: Secret guilty pleasure here, too. What do you most want to share with other birders or would-be birders?

Birds are amazing, and there's always more to see, hear and learn. I get a lot of comments from people "I had no idea we had those here!" I also love getting to use photography as a common point to share our experiences and love for nature and the outdoors.

I love the way technology is changing birding and making it more accessible, whether it's through photography, social media, ID apps, and online field guides, etc. However, I think it's important to be mindful when using them as well. For example, Facebook birding sites are great places to learn and view wonderful photos, but new birders should understand

they can enjoy birding without thousands of dollars worth of photo equipment, or focusing only on the most dramatic birds.

I also think birders and photographers have a responsibility to 'do no harm' and moreover to clearly model and explain how they are minimizing impact to wildlife and landscapes.

Note: Visit Alan's site website at <https://www.alankrakauerphotography.com>, which also has links to his Instagram and Facebook feeds, and his Etsy shop.

*Comments have been lightly edited for space. For more in-depth interviews and articles featuring both photographers, **see Golden Gate Audubon's blog here.***

Click here to see the gallery of all this year's National Audubon Photography awards.

We Have a New Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee

Juan Pablo Galván Martínez, *MDAS Conservation Chair*

The last few years have seen a great deal of discussion, action, and tragedy surrounding issues related to race, diversity, and equity in the US and all over the world. These issues affect everything, including birding and the Audubon Society. Harmful events ([HERE](#)), renewed conversations ([HERE](#)), new efforts ([HERE](#)), and revisiting names and identity ([HERE](#) and [HERE](#)) are all a part of it.

In this context, we're happy to announce that Mount Diablo Audubon Society has a new committee focused on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB). Its purpose is to promote a thriving, respectful, and welcoming environment in all spaces within the chapter, regardless of age, gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, language, culture, religion, and/or other identities. We want to create a community where members can come together to discuss and mobilize around equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging issues specific to MDAS.

You'll hear more about it in the future. If you're interested in learning more now or would like to participate, please get in touch with the MDAS Board. We look forward to introducing ourselves more in the coming months.

Mt. Diablo Audubon Represents at Audubon Advocacy Days

Georgette Howington, Jerry Britten

Audubon Advocacy Day is an annual event organized by Audubon California that allows local Audubon chapter members to interact with their representatives in the California Assembly and Senate, and advocate for environmental/conservation legislation and budget allocations on behalf of birds and the environment. Pre-pandemic, people would gather at the capitol and roam the halls talking with legislators and their staff, but now the meetings are virtual, which allows for higher participation.

This year's event was on August 3 - 4, and MDAS was well-represented. Several MDAS members and two Audubon CA staff met on August 3 with Sophia Quach, a staffer for Senator Glazer of Senate District 7, which comprises most of our territory. Member Herb Long gave an impassioned endorsement of Assembly Bill 30 which would make it the policy of the state that every Californian should have safe and affordable access to nature and outdoor activities. Board member Rochelle Fortier advocated for Assembly Bill 2382, which would require state-owned and operated buildings to install lighting fixtures that minimize unnecessary light pollution, for the obvious benefit of migrating birds. Finally, board member Rosemary Nishikawa expressed our concern over the effect of neonicotinoid pesticides on birds and insect pollinators and encouraged the passage of legislation to control its use (**see the recent article** on this subject in the Summer 2022 issue of Cornell Labs Living Birds magazine).

On Aug. 4, our own Ariana Rickard and others from Audubon CA and Napa-Solano Audubon met with Madison Vanderklay from Assemblymember Tim Grayson's office. They discussed how the loss of grasslands in California is leading to a rapid decline in grassland bird species and urged Assemblymember Grayson to support SB 977, which

will create the Conservation Ranching Incentive Program at the Wildlife Conservation Board. This program will incentivize willing ranchers to improve practices to reduce emissions, sequester carbon, and improve biodiversity on grazed rangelands. They also asked Assemblymember Grayson to support SB 260, which will require large corporations to report their emissions to the state to improve our efforts to reduce emissions and address climate change. They thanked Assemblymember Grayson for his budget request for funding for the new Thurgood Marshall park, part of the old Concord Naval Weapons Station. They offered to provide binoculars and birding resources at any future events there.

Estefani Avila from Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan's office met with three MDAS members on Thursday, Aug. 4. Board Member Rochelle Fortier asked the Assemblymember to support SB 977: the Conservation Ranching Incentive Program. Member Randi Long spoke up for Assembly Bill 2278: 30 x 30 Reporting and member constituent Georgette Howington urged the Assemblymember to support Senate Bill 260: Climate Corporate Accountability. They thanked Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan for her time and consideration. Jerry Britten invited her to meet with MDAS members for a walk at Heather Farm Park in the near future.

Members Call to Action:
Call Your State Senator to Support AB 2146
Protect Bees & Other Pollinators! Reduce Insect
& Bird-Harming Neonic Insecticides!

Juan Pablo Galván Martínez, *MDAS Conservation Chair*

Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan has introduced AB 2146 to greatly reduce the use of harmful neonicotinoid insecticides. Much research has linked pollinator declines with increased use of insecticides, especially neonicotinoids (neonics). These poisons threaten California nature, water quality and kill bees and other important pollinators that birds and our entire ecosystem depend on.

We're asking you to call your state Senator (in the Diablo area, most likely Senator Steve Glazer) and ask him to support AB 2146 and hold a Yes vote on it this month. You can find your Senator [HERE](#).

Call Senator Glazer (Sacramento office 916-651-4007, Contra Costa office

925-258-1176) and ask him to vote Yes on AB 2146, encourage a Senate vote this month, and co-sponsor the bill.

Calls are most important. Once you've done that, if you're on social media, please retweet and share supportive FB posts, like these **HERE** and **HERE**.

Thank you for helping to get these harmful insecticides banned and for helping pollinators and birds!

Part-Time Sales Associate Opening – Wild Birds Unlimited of Pleasant Hill

Susan Pfau

Do you love to smile and talk to people? Do you enjoy birds and nature? **Wild Birds Unlimited of Pleasant Hill** has a part-time opportunity for an outgoing person. The store seeks a part-time Sales Associate with great retail and service skills. Working at your locally owned Wild Birds Unlimited store is an opportunity to support and educate friendly customers about birds and nature. Please note retail experience is preferred, but not necessary for the right candidate.

Sales Associates work with other staff, including the owner, to bring to life the store's mission – "We Bring People and Nature Together® ... And We Do It With Excellence!" To that end, staff are provided training with regard to backyard bird feeding, bird watching and product knowledge.

For more information about the position and to apply, please click on the following link: **<https://pleasanthill.wbu.com/join-our-team>**

Please be sure to read the job description before applying.

To apply, please download and fill out an application **<https://pleasanthill.wbu.com/employment-app-11-2021>** and either email it to **hiringteamwbu@gmail.com** or drop off your application in person at the store.

Thank you and Happy Birding!

Finally! Significant Good News on Climate! Much More Is Needed, But It's Real Progress

Juan Pablo Galván Martínez, *MDAS Conservation Chair*

You've probably heard about the Recent Inflation Reduction Act, and IT REALLY IS, FINALLY, GOOD NEWS. Check out some of the details below and see how you'll benefit, because there's a good chance you will! But, some grave threats to birds and the planet are not addressed, and huge challenges remain. Everyone should celebrate this rare positive progress, and work to help to repeat it again and again over the next few years.

1) Big Takeaways from the Inflation Reduction Act. \$370 billion for the climate. You, yes YOU, may qualify for thousands, and even tens of thousands of dollars, in tax breaks and rebates to purchase electric vehicles, make green changes to your home that help the planet and your health, and even just save you money on your electric bill. Check it out [HERE](#) and [HERE](#). While the Act goes big on green technology, it also includes nature-based solutions, including \$20 billion for agriculture conservation and \$5 billion to combatting climate change by protecting US forests (more [HERE](#)). This is all good news, but the Act isn't all good. Politics being what it is, the Act also includes money for new fossil fuel projects that'll make climate change worse. Even more striking, the reality that only one of the two major US political parties is taking real action to avoid climate catastrophe has never been clearer. Can this progress be undone? Details [HERE](#) and [HERE](#). What does all this mean: 1) the Inflation Reduction Act is good news, 2) the US (and all the world) must do MUCH more if the planet is to avoid climate catastrophe, 3) every one of us must be a part of the solution.

2) It's Easy to Make Good Climate Food Choices. We've mentioned how food waste is a big contributor to climate change. Now there's an easy, fun TooGoodToGo ([HERE](#)) phone app that allows you to get food from stores and restaurants near you every day at a really cheap price, and rescue it from the landfill every day. Think it's impossible to produce more climate-friendly eating habits on a large scale? Germany has done it, and on purpose (read [HERE](#))! You can chat with your employers,

friends, social groups, and city leaders about doing the same. Simply eating less meat and more beans, grains, and vegetables has a huge positive impact on the planet. You can also enjoy the taste and feel of meat without the meat! As is proven [HERE](#), fake meat choices are way better for the environment than actual meat, and they taste good too!

3) Don't Destroy the Amazon With Your Meat Choices. In the two years since Washington lifted a moratorium that was imposed on Brazilian beef over food safety concerns, the US has become its second-biggest buyer (more [HERE](#)). Cattle ranching is a huge driver of Amazon forest destruction, which has reached new highs this year ([HERE](#)). The lungs of the planet are being burnt for US consumers' love of beef. Are YOU eating beef produced in the ashes of the Amazon? Read the above article, specifically ask your store, school, employer, and City where they get their beef, write to your federal Congressmembers and Senators to ask Brazilian beef imports to be banned, and tell your store you want to know if their beef comes from Brazil. If it does, ask them to stop and tell them you'll shop elsewhere until it does. Never buy beef from JBS companies.

4) Fossil Fuel Companies Must Pay. \$3 billion . . . every day . . . for the last 50 years. That is what the oil and gas industry has yielded, in pure profit ([HERE](#)). Profit is good, right? Not when it's used to buy politicians, kill crucial scientific discoveries that would have helped the planet, poison politics ([HERE](#)), and orchestrate a campaign to ridicule, minimize and deny the planetary catastrophe that these same companies have directly created (watch [HERE](#) and read [HERE](#)). There are good companies to invest in ([HERE](#)) and bad ones ([HERE](#)). Think the high price you've been paying at the pump must mean it's costing oil companies more too? Think again. Their profits are bigger than ever (watch [HERE](#)), and perversely, the stock market continues to incentivize money flowing into fossil fuels ([HERE](#)). This is absolutely, obscenely, wrong. Get your money out of fossil fuels ([HERE](#)) and make your voice known to government leaders, neighbors, businesses, and the world, that the fossil fuel companies must truly pay for their huge part in the climate catastrophe.

5) The Most Interesting Birds Are in Huge Trouble. New research ([HERE](#) and [HERE](#)) shows that the physically distinct birds of the world, the ones of extreme shape, size, behavior, and evolutionary uniqueness, are those most likely to go extinct in our world's current biodiversity

catastrophe. The man-made threats of habitat destruction, hunting, climate change, and others mean that those birds that remain will be more and more alike (“Get ready for a world that ‘is really simple and brown and boring’) and that not just species, but major life strategies and functions of the bird tree of life will be lost. Though to be fair, even our common Anna’s hummingbird is under increasing threat ([HERE](#)). Do you want to have huge flightless parrots, super migrants, specialized feeders, and extreme birds in your future? Then help protect and restore their habitats, get laws to protect them, and look above and online to mobilize your community to fight climate change.

WANTED: Field Trip Leaders!

Matt Tarlach, *MDAS Field Trip Chair*

Past participants in our trips know they're fun and very low-key. You can choose to share a favorite local spot we might not know about, or take a turn leading one of our regular outings and give it your own spin. If you notice that a trip you've enjoyed in the past is missing from this year's schedule, it's probably because we're waiting for you to lead it!

If you're available to lead a trip please contact our new Field Trip Coordinator, Matt Tarlach: mtar925@gmail.com.

MDAS Field Trips

Matt Tarlach, *MDAS Field Trip Chair*

The Mt. Diablo Audubon Society is once again mounting a full schedule of field trips for the 2022-2023 season. We'll be revisiting many of our traditional destinations, as well as exploring a few new ones!

Note that we are continuing the requirement to sign up online via Eventbrite for all field trips. No drop-ins, please. **If you click to "Follow" MDAS-Fieldtrips on Eventbrite**, you can be notified of our trips as soon as they open for registration.

We are continuing a policy made necessary by the Covid pandemic, to neither require nor organize carpooling for any of our events. Participants who desire to carpool will need to make their own arrangements. The reduced use of carpooling will continue to limit the capacity of those trips where parking is limited, so be aware of the need to sign up early to make sure you get a spot! And if you discover that you won't be able to attend a trip you've signed up for, **please cancel via Eventbrite** to open that spot up for someone else.

As usual, the field trips will be ranked according to difficulty:

Category 1: Easy, little or no walking, smooth paths.

Category 2: Moderate, 1 mile or more, possibly rough terrain.

Category 3: Difficult, extensive walking on rough terrain.

MDAS Field Trips

You can view and print a complete list of planned MDAS field trips for the 2022 season [HERE](#).

Upcoming field trips include:

Jewell Lake, Tilden Nature Area

Thursday, September 1: 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

A short walk along Wildcat Creek and around Jewel Lake in Tilden Park. Possible highlights include fall warblers, Red-breasted and Pygmy Nuthatch, Pacific Wren, and maybe an early Varied Thrush.

Rating: Category 1 — Easy 1-mile walk

Elevation change: Slight

Leader: Matt Tarlach, (925) 482 - 6129

Meet: Parking lot at Tilden Nature Area.

GPS: 37.908534, -122.264268

Directions: Highway 24 to Fish Ranch Road. Go up the hill 0.7 miles and turn Right on Grizzly Peak Blvd. Follow Grizzly Peak for 4.1 miles; turn right on Muir

in 100 yards turn Left on Park Hills. Watch for signs to "Little Farm" which is near the meeting point. Continue 0.3 miles, then turn Left on Central Park Rd. Continue about 1 mile to the meeting point.

This hike is limited to 20 participants. Register for this event [HERE](#). Participants must acknowledge the [MDAS Liability Waiver](#) (available during registration).

Antioch Dunes National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, September 10: 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Antioch Dunes is the only unit of the National Wildlife Refuge system in Contra Costa County. It was set aside to protect two plants and a butterfly; Contra Costa Wallflower, Antioch Dunes Evening Primrose, and Lang's Metalmark Butterfly. On the second Saturday of every month, a docent leads the public around the Stamm Unit. We will join this public event to learn about the history of the refuge, see some of the biology and walk on access roads around the dunes. A one-hour walk, sometimes a little longer.

Rating: Category 2 — Walking on dirt/sandy roads in warm weather, no shade

Elevation change: N/A

Meet: Antioch Dunes gate, Fulton Shipyard Road

Leader: This tour will be led by a NWR docent. The MDAS lead is Hugh Harvey, (925) 935 - 2979

Directions: From CA 4 exit at A Street in Antioch, drive north about a mile to Wilbur Avenue, then turn right. Drive about 1/2 mile and turn left onto Fulton Shipyard Road. Cross the railroad tracks and look for the gate on the right. Bring water, as it can get hot.

No registration necessary, and no limit on participants.

Hayward Regional Shoreline — Frank's Dump

Saturday, September 17: 2:30 PM - 5:30 PM

We will meet at the very end of Winton Ave, walk out to the Bay Trail, and head north. We should arrive at Frank's Dump — a major high tide roost for shorebirds — when the tide has been coming in for about 4 hours, and with the afternoon sun at our backs for good viewing. We'll walk about 3 miles on flat,

unpaved trails.

Birders of all levels are welcome!

Rating: Category 2 — Easy paths, with 3 miles round trip distance

Elevation change: N/A

Leader: Maureen Lahiff, (510) 484 - 6529

Meet: **Hayward Regional Shoreline**, parking lot at end of Winton Ave.

Directions: From I-880, take exit 28 for Winton Avenue and drive west all the way to the end of Winton and into the Hayward Shoreline area. At the EB Parks sign at the end of the road, turn to the right to the parking area near the restroom and the gate across the trail. (If that lot is full, drive back to park along the road.)

Bring water and snacks. There is no shade on the trail, so bring appropriate clothing and sunscreen. There is a pit toilet at the Winton Ave lot.

This hike is limited to 25 participants. Register for this event [HERE](#). Participants must acknowledge the [MDAS Liability Waiver](#) (available during registration).

Birding by Bike at Clifton Court Forebay

Saturday, September 24: 7:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Have a bicycle, e-bike, or scooter, and like to bird? Join MDAS at Clifton Court Reservoir in eastern Contra Costa County, where we will do an out-and-back biking/birding trip of approximately 10 miles on a flat, paved levee road to see a myriad of bird species. Those who are equipped for it can also navigate a series of well-maintained gravel levee roads to avoid taking the same route back.

Clifton Court Forebay is an enormous reservoir that collects Delta water and sends it south through the California Aqueduct. The reservoir itself can hold staggering numbers of waterfowl and gulls, and the surrounding habitat of slough, marshland, grassland, scrub, and riparian woods is very productive. It is not uncommon to record 60-80 species of birds in a single outing, and the place is a magnet for rarities, especially in fall. There are also excellent chances to see river otters, coyotes, resident sea lions, and even a beaver if we're lucky.

The trip is approximately 5 hours, although participants can turn back at any

time. There is plenty of free parking at the Forebay, but no restroom facilities or potable water. Participants must be able to transport their own bike/scooter to the site. It can be windy out there but is pleasant most of the time. We will monitor the forecast; gale-force winds will cancel. Bring layers, sunscreen, water, and a snack or lunch for when we get back to the cars.

Hike Rating: N/A — Bicycle/scooter trip

Elevation change: N/A

Leader: Jerry Britten

Meet: Parking lot at the end of Clifton Court Road

GPS: 37.8378308046695, -121.5932220716693

Directions: From highway J4 approximately 2 miles southeast of Byron, turn left on Clifton Court road and drive out to the end.

This hike is limited to 20 participants. Register for this event [HERE](#). Participants must acknowledge the [MDAS Liability Waiver](#) (available during registration).

Outer Point Reyes, Marin Coast

Saturday, October 1: 8:30 AM - 1:30 PM

The Outer Point Reyes area is a wonderful place to find fall migrants, many of them Eastern passerine vagrants. Warblers spotted here have included Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Chestnut-sided, Connecticut, Black-and-white, Magnolia, Prothonotary, Yellow-throated, and Black-throated Blue. We have seen Yellow-green, Red-eyed and White-eyed Vireos, Orchard Orioles, Ovenbirds, American Redstarts, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Peregrine Falcons, and Broad-winged Hawks. In the water, we usually have Common Murres, Pigeon Guillemots, Cormorants, and Loons. The chance to see migrants is very much dependent on the weather; the absence of winds from the northwest and an overcast night sky will help trap these land birds at the Outer Point.

Hike Rating: Category 2 — Moderate

Elevation change: Minor

Leader: Matt Tarlach (925) 482 - 6129, Tracy Farrington

Meet: Bear Valley Visitor Center, Olema

GPS: 38.04015134873366, -122.79957253617275

Directions: After crossing the San Rafael Bridge, go north on 101 to Lucas Valley Road. Drive toward Nicasio. After passing the town, turn left on Point

Reyes-Petaluma Road for 3 miles to another stop sign. Turn right across the bridge, go 3 miles to SR 1. Turn left into Point Reyes Station. Some enjoy stopping at the Bovine Bakery for coffee and pastries. Continue out of town towards Olema, then turn right onto Bear Valley Road. The Visitor Center is off Bear Valley.

Meet at 8:30 am at Bear Valley Visitor Center in Olema. Weather is unpredictable, bring layers and be prepared for damp wind. Gale cancels. Bring lunch and liquids.

This hike is limited to 15 participants. Register for this event [HERE](#). Participants must acknowledge the [MDAS Liability Waiver](#) (available during registration).

Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary, Alameda

Wednesday, October 5: 9 AM - 1 PM

A visit to the Alameda shoreline as the tide rises should produce good views of shorebirds. A viewing platform and trails will give us excellent opportunities to study these birds at close range. We may drive to other nearby locations for additional birding.

Hike Rating: Category 1 — Easy

Elevation change: N/A

Leader: Hugh Harvey, (925) 935-2979

Meet: Elsie Roemer Bird Sanctuary, Broadway and Shoreline, Alameda, CA 94501

GPS: 37.753096130035445, -122.24728246225817

Directions: From Hwy 880 take exit 39A. After exiting, turn right on Fruitvale Ave. Take Fruitvale over the bridge into Alameda Turn left on Broadway, and continue through Alameda to Shore Line Drive. Consider parking along Broadway just before the intersection. Meet at the observation deck off of Shore Line Drive.

This hike is limited to 15 participants. Register for this event [HERE](#). Participants must acknowledge the [MDAS Liability Waiver](#) (available during registration).

MDAS/SMD Field Trip — Curry Canyon

Saturday, October 8: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Mount Diablo Audubon Society and Save Mount Diablo are partnering up for a hike on Save Mount Diablo's gorgeous Curry Canyon Ranch. This portion of Curry Canyon Ranch showcases beautiful rangeland ecosystems and valley oak and riparian habitat. We'll be looking for fall migrants, arriving wintering birds, and raptors. You might even see a golden eagle or two! This is a chance to get to know the east side of Mount Diablo, a side that's not normally open to the public. You'll pass a beautiful valley with rolling hills as you walk along the creek, then transition into riparian habitat, where the sun hardly breaks through the canopy of the trees.

Land: Save Mount Diablo

Rating: Moderate

Distance: 4-5 miles

Elevation change: 200'

Leader: Jerry Britten, Save Mount Diablo Hike Leader

Meet: Address Provided After Registration

Be sure to dress in layers and wear sturdy boots or shoes; bring a mask, plenty of water, binoculars (if you have them) sunscreen, and a snack.

This field trip is limited to 20 participants. Register for this field trip [HERE](#), beginning August 8th at 10 AM.

Events

Be sure to check the [MDAS website](#) for the most up-to-date listing of events.

Field Journaling and Birds - How, Why, and Where to Start

September 8, 2022

Have you ever looked at a field journal and thought, "Wow, I wish I could do that!" Although some field journals may look like a piece of art, you don't have to be an artist, scientist or even a seasoned birder to be a journaler. Anyone can do it, and, in the process, you will discover so many wonderful things!

Journaling will elevate your connection to birds and nature to a new level as you pay more attention to details, learn to focus, and enjoy yourself

outdoors. Join us as Alex Cho guides us on field journaling birds with confidence and how to have fun in the process.

Date: Thursday, September 8, 2022
Time: 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Location: Zoom online meeting
Presenter: Alex Cho
Sponsor: **San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory**
Cost: Free
Registration: **[Click here to register online](#)**

Tall Forest Bird Survey

September 17, 2022

The Tall Forest is a substantial block of valley oak-dominated woodland strongly resembling the pre-Anglo Central Valley riparian forests, a habitat now almost obliterated from California. The big trees overtop a varied, dense understory, and California grape and poison oak climb into the canopy in many places. The complex vegetative structure permits a rich variety of birds to reside permanently or seasonally there.

Come join John Trochet, leader of this survey for more than two decades now, as we follow the birdlife of the preserve's plum parcel through the seasons and across the years.

This is a survey on foot lasting 5 - 6 hours, sometimes longer when the birding is exceptional.

Date: Saturday, September 17
Time: 6:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Location: Cosumnes River Preserve
Presentor: John Trochet
Sponsor: **Cosumnes River Preserve**
Cost: Free
Registration: **[Click here to register online](#)**

Nature Walk: Birds, Butterflies, and Blooms

September 21, 2022

Join naturalist Dan Fitzgerald for a nature walk in the Mitchell Canyon area. We will be looking for birds, butterflies, and some late Summer blooms. Bring water, snacks, and binoculars if you have them. The walk is about 3 miles with some elevation gain. We ask participants who are not vaccinated against COVID-19 to please wear a mask. Limited to 10 participants.

Date:	Wednesday, September 21, 2022
Time:	8:30 PM - 12:30 PM
Location:	Mitchell Canyon Visitor Center
Presenter:	Dan Fitzgerald
Sponsor:	Mount Diablo Interpretive Association
Cost:	Free (\$6 parking fee)
Registration:	Click here to register online

Birds and Ohlone's Past, Present, and Future

September 22, 2022

Gregg Castro and Beverly R. Ortiz will share with you the significance of birds in the cultural, material, and spiritual lives of Ohlone's past, present, and future. They'll also describe how Ohlone land management practices increased the numbers and health of the birds on which Ohlones relied.

Date:	Thursday, September 22
Time:	7:00 PM
Location:	Zoom online Meeting
Presenter:	Gregg Castro and Beverly R. Ortiz
Sponsor:	Golden Gate Audubon Society
Cost:	Free
Registration:	Click here to register online

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Mt. Diablo Audubon Society Leadership

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