



SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

*Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society, San Mateo County
Founded 1949*

*Volume 70, No. 1
January - March 2019*

Commit to the Future! by *Jennifer Rycenga*

As we launch our year-long celebration of Sequoia Audubon's Seventieth Anniversary (1949-2019), consider: what sort of place do we want San Mateo County to be in seventy years? What can we do now to ensure that our home will be the habitat-rich bird magnet that we've helped build and preserve?

We can't stop climate change, but we can reduce its impact, and/or prepare for it. We can most certainly record the alterations in bird life and population that we are seeing. We can protect our hard-won parklands, and help them expand into interconnected open space networks. Sequoia will continue our outreach to other prominent conservation and nature-based organizations in the Bay Area, and encourage our members to do the same and support a wide range of efforts.

It is important not to let the enormity of the challenges swamp our enthusiasm and love of nature. So here are a few simple ideas of things we can each do to make Sequoia's next seventy years as accomplished as the first seventy:

1. Tell a child the name of a local bird, and something about it, to spark their curiosity
2. Invite a friend to come with you to a Sequoia meeting or field trip
3. Raise your voice for conservation with the elected officials of your town
4. Participate in eBird, iNaturalist, and other community science projects
5. Garden with native plants – our birds love 'em!
6. Join Sequoia's Conservation Committee
7. Explore under-visited parks, and suggest new location for the online birding guide
8. Write a paragraph or two for this newsletter on your inspiration for birding
9. Join Sequoia's Education Committee and make school visits
10. Life-long ornithology students make the strongest defenders of science!

Who's awake? ME TOO! 'Cause there's a Party Going On!

Let's party like it's 1949!



Monthly Meetings

2nd Thursdays 7:00 pm
San Mateo Garden Center
605 Parkside Way, San Mateo

January 10

Habitat & Birding Tactics
Josiah Clark

February 14

Sequoia Audubon @70
Jennifer Rycenga

March 14

San Mateo Conservation Roundtable

Upcoming Field Trips

January

Wed. 2nd Pillar Point
Sat. 12th Bedwell Bayfront
Sun. 20th Burleigh Murray
Sat. 26th San Benito Raptors
Sun. 27th Foster City

February

Sat. 2nd Central Valley
Wed. 6th Las Gallinas
Sat. 9th Bedwell Bayfront
Sun. 17th Burleigh Murray

March

Wed. 6th Nob Hill
Sat. 9th Bedwell Bayfront
Sun. 17th Burleigh Murray

Putting our Cards on the Table *by Chris MacIntosh*

SAS has been active in outreach and having a lot of fun doing this. Besides recruiting new members, we are increasing awareness of who we are and what we do. Often the much larger Audubon groups in Santa Clara and San Francisco are better known, even within San Mateo county.

Some recent highlights include:

*Tabling at the Monterey Bay Birding Festival in Watsonville. We were the only Audubon group there. It was great fun to meet visitors, especially families, as well as people from other enviro orgs (and not least to see the wild bird demo, especially the leucistic Red-tailed Hawk). People really liked our logo and we sold several logo items.

*Tabling in the parking lot at Pescadero during the Big Sit. We chatted with visitors, mentioned what birds to look out for – Rita fascinated visitors by explaining the different feeding strategies of the two pelican species – and explained the Big Sit, even eliciting a few donations. A CHP officer stopped by to chat and told us of a humpback feeding experience he had.

*Tabling at Fair Oaks (Menlo Park) FOBA Fall Funday. Not only did we get kids involved in the “match the bird to its food” quiz but told everyone about the Beginning Bird Walks at Bedwell Bayfront Park.

Huge thanks to our volunteers: Patti Berryhill, Doug Brown, Davena Gentry and Rita Jennings.

If you'd like to help at a future event, or know of a local event you'd be willing to host a table with SAS info, please contact Doug Brown or Chris MacIntosh.



Doug Brown

40 years ago... from the Archives Jan. 1979, *Cliff Richer, Editor*

Another environmentally important area of the county requiring protection is Sweeney Ridge between Pacifica and San Bruno, the site of Portola's discovery of the Bay and good coastal scrub habitat which harbors three endangered species. Though it is only a half mile from the San Andreas fault and much of it has over a 50% slope, the owner, an Oklahoma land development firm, is proposing 3550 housing units on the 260 acres that are less than 35% slope. These will mainly be in 3-story apartments and condominiums. Congressman Ryan had started a National Park Service feasibility study for acquisition of the Ridge as a National Historical Park, which could take two years to complete. The developer's zoning application to the Pacifica Council has only a year before it is approved or denied. Help is needed, particularly from North County residents, for the group in Pacifica, People United to Save Our Hill, who are pushing the National Park acquisition.



Big Day and Big Sit Results



The Global Big Day on October 6, 2018 was a smashing success. Cornell Lab's eBird spearheaded the event and is the repository of all the data. And data there is! Over 17,000 birders from 146 countries reported 6,136 species of birds. Photographs of 2,356 species were uploaded to eBirds' Macaulay Library.

Sequoia Audubon chipped in, leading multiple field trips and many people had a great day. Since we're counting, San Mateo had the most species of any county in California. And we found Tropical Kingbirds on 2 different outings: one at the productive Half Moon Bay Water Treatment plant, and one at the formerly productive Radio Road area.

The Big Sit happened the following weekend and for Sequoia, it marked 8 consecutive years from our perch in Pescadero. We didn't see as many birds as in some years, tallying 86 different species. Bird Watchers Digest collates the data and we had the 5th most species of all the count circles in the country. Not that this is a competition, but... Top honors went to Milford, CT. (Where?) Rounding out the top 5 in order were Los Osos, CA; Hennepin, IL; and Weslaco, TX.

Next year, we are considering a Bayside Big Sit. The SASsy Baywatch crew might even come out in bathing suits! But seriously, the pumpkin situation on the coast is definitely to be avoided and several sites on the Bay are very productive.

MEETING PROGRAMS

605 Parkside Way, San Mateo

January 10, 7 pm

Habitat Potential Birding Tactics *with Josiah Clark*

When it comes to making every moment count in birding, how one looks (not in the fashion sense) is at least as important as where one looks. Drawing on strategies developed for birding Big Days and Christmas Bird Counts, this presentation aims to reveal tactics that will help birders and naturalists improve their methods of coverage and ultimately find more species. We will explore the anatomy of a route, comparing and contrasting different birding methods and styles including skimming vs. digging, and how to allocate time in various habitats when trying to maximize ones species count.

This presentation will also note dozens of bird and plant species, focusing on important resources that provide for local birds and wildlife. Josiah will share conservation related information on the limiting factors of vulnerable and declining groups, including cup-nesting songbirds, precocial young and birds of open habitats. Naturalists can learn how to both find more species and become more informed conservation advocates.

Josiah Clark grew up steeped in the natural history of the Bay Area, where he has been birding for more than 20 years. Along with efforts by Mark Kudrav and Rob Furrow, he has helped make green bicycle birding a thing in the Bay Area. Josiah owns Natures Acres Nursery and Habitat Potential Consulting. Both are dedicated to interpreting, preserving, and creating productive wildlife habitats in the human landscape.



February 14, 7 pm

Why We LOVE Sequoia: Our History, Accomplishments, and Future *with Jennifer Rycenga*



For our 70th anniversary, we will launch a history project to record, in pamphlet form, our accomplishments and adventures as one of the best little Audubon chapters in the country. In this presentation, Jennifer Rycenga will survey what we know from our archives, from stories, from bird data, and from our conservation record. She will also elicit tidbits of personal Sequoia Audubon history from any members present and willing. Valentine's Day cheer, chocolate, and romance will also be invoked!

Be My Valentine, says the lonely
Sora! *Photo by Jennifer Rycenga*

March 14, 7 pm

Species Worth Watching: Bird Conservation in San Mateo

Join a Conservation Roundtable led by Sequoia's Conservation Committee chair Marshall Dinowitz with special Bay Area guests (tba). What are the most vulnerable birds in San Mateo county? What species deserve extra attention as climate change proceeds apace? What can concerned humans do to protect birds and their habitats? This roundtable of local conservationists will address these issues and tell us how best to direct our energies to make a real difference locally. Keep an eye on our website for details as the date approaches.



Ashy Storm-Petrel is one of the most range-restricted breeding birds in North America. *Photo by Donna Pomeroy*



Sequoia Field Trips

Pillar Point Harbor, Princeton

Wednesday, January 2, 9:00am - Noon

Pillar Point is a hot spot for birding year-round. We should find a variety of resident birds and wintering shorebirds. Most of the walking will be on fairly level dirt trails; but if time permits, we may hike up onto the bluff top for a better view out to sea. Scopes will be useful here, so if you have one, bring it along. A primitive restroom is available at the parking lot. **Heavy rain cancels.** **Directions:** The harbor is located just west of Coast Hwy One, 18 miles south of San Francisco and 4 miles north of Half Moon Bay. From Hwy One, turn west at the stoplight at Capistrano Road and continue along the north side of the harbor to Prospect Way. Turn left onto Prospect, then a brief jog right on Broadway, to an immediate left on Harvard Avenue. Proceed through the boat yards to the end of Harvard Avenue, then turn right onto West Point Avenue, which curves around a marshy area and heads uphill to an Air Force Radar Facility. Meet at the "West Shoreline Access", popularly known as the parking lot to Mavericks, just below the radar station. **Leader:** Donna Pomeroy. **Contact:** dpom@comcast.net.

Beginner / Refresher Bird Walk, Bedwell Bayfront Park

Saturday, January 12, 10:00 am - Noon

All are welcome to join Friends of Bedwell Bayfront Park and Sequoia Audubon Society for a 1 to 2-hour beginner/refresher bird walk. We should see wintering ducks and shorebirds, perhaps egrets, a raptor or two, and some LBBs (little brown birds). Bring binoculars if you have them; if not, we'll share ours with you. If you are an educator who is bringing your class - or sending students on their own - we're very happy to have you! We do ask that you let us know in advance, so we can ensure that we have adequate leadership to enrich your students' experience. **Directions:** Meet at the parking lot by restrooms at Bedwell Bayfront Park, 1600 Marsh Road, Menlo Park. **Heavy rain or Air Quality Index over 100 cancels.** **Contact:** Chris MacIntosh. **Contact:** chrismac@alumni.upenn.edu or phone 650-839-1523.

Burleigh Murray Ranch State Park

Sunday, January 20, 8:00 am - Noon

Join us for a leisurely 3-4 hour walk in this bird-rich gem on our coast. The trail is a one-mile former ranch road leading to a historic barn. Plan layers for cool temps, morning fog and sunshine. Heavy rain cancels. **Directions:** We will meet at the lower parking lot to the Johnston House, located on Higgins-Purisima Road in Half Moon Bay. Higgins-Purisima Road begins just off of SR1, going east where Main Street ends. The Johnston House is the big white 1850s farmhouse on the hill. We will caravan to Burleigh Murray, which is 1½ miles up Higgins-Purisima Road from here. **Leader:** Ginny Marshall. **Contact:** ginnybirder@gmail.com.

Raptors of San Benito County

Saturday, January 26, 8:30 am - 3:00 pm

Let's explore the backroads of San Benito County in search of Golden Eagles, Ferruginous Hawks, Prairie Falcons (and whatever else we might find). Bring lunch, liquids and a scope if you have one. Meet at the Catholic Church in Tres Pinos. **Directions:** From San Mateo, take Hwy 101 south to Hwy 25; follow Hwy 25 through Hollister to the small town of Tres Pinos. The large Catholic Church is on the right side of the road. Park in the section of the lot farthest from the church. Take advantage of bathroom facilities in Hollister before you drive to Tres Pinos. Contact leader for carpooling info. **Heavy rain cancels.** **Leader:** Leslie Flint. **Contact:** lflint@earthlink.net.

Foster City Shell Bar and walk to San Mateo Bridge

Sunday, January 27, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

We will start at the Foster City Shellbar and continue north towards the San Mateo Bridge. We will walk slowly taking in any birds along the way. Carpooling is encouraged. **Light rain ok, but heavy rain cancels.** **Directions:** Park and meet across the street from Sweet Basil Thai Cuisine at 1473 Beach Park Boulevard in Foster City. **Leader:** Casey Girard. **Contact:** casey.girard@gmail.com for more information or clarification or cell for day of: 408-429-5800.

Check our website and Facebook page for updates and new listings.

Winter Birding in the Central Valley - RSVP Required

Saturday, February 2 & Sunday, February 3, 7:00 am - 4:00 pm

We'll visit 2 premier birding areas on this visit to the Central Valley: Gray Lodge Wildlife Area and Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. Together these refuges provide one of the greatest wildlife spectacles still found in California. Most notable are the huge wintering concentrations of ducks and geese - we could see over 20 species of wildfowl during the day. Raptors are equally well represented: more than 20 species of eagle, hawk, falcon, and owl have been seen in the area in winter. We meet for dinner on Saturday evening, and start the birding at dawn on Sunday after breakfast at our hotel. We begin by driving towards Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge through an area good for Tundra Swans and Sandhill Cranes. This reserve is filled with ducks and provides a good opportunity to see Eurasian Wigeon. It also hosts the greatest concentration of Ross's Goose in the US. After the morning exploring the trails and auto tour, we'll head West, caravanning around past Sutter Buttes (the world's smallest complete mountain range), looking for Sandhill Cranes, Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Mountain Bluebird, Rock Wren, Yellow-billed Magpie, and Golden Eagle. We'll end the day birding at Sacramento NWR where at any time there may be huge numbers of wildfowl in the air putting on a spectacular visual and aural show. The trip is suitable for beginner and experienced birders alike. The tour is predominantly by car, with some walking along nature trails (between 0.5 and 1.5 mile in length). There are outstanding opportunities for bird photography. There is a \$4.00 per person charge at Gray Lodge. Since there are limited hotel rooms available, please contact **co-leaders** Adam Dudley and Jane Dixon (Adamandjane@iCloud.com; 650-278-5995) if you would like to join us for this trip and for exact details.



Las Gallinas Ponds, San Rafael, Marin County

Wednesday, February 6, 8:30 am - Noon

The Las Gallinas Ponds include the treatment ponds, tidal marsh and surrounding agricultural fields at LGVSD's Wastewater Treatment Reclamation Project. This is an excellent area to view a wide variety of waterfowl and other wetland birds and maybe even a chance to see one of the resident River Otters. These are level trails along a series of levees. This is a slow-paced trip, excellent for all levels of birding. A scope is useful here, if you have one, but many of the birds are close enough for great photo opportunities. **Directions:** from Hwy 101 take the Smith Ranch Road exit, then go east on Smith Ranch toward the McInnis Park entrance. Turn left immediately after crossing the railroad tracks, staying on Smith Ranch, and go about .5 miles to the end of the road, at the Las Gallinas Ponds parking lot. Meet in the parking lot. **Heavy rain cancels.** **NOTE:** There is ongoing major construction on the levees

Check our website and Facebook page for updates and new listings.

at Las Gallinas. Please RSVP or check Pen-Bird for any last-minute changes to this field trip. **Leader:** Donna Pomeroy. **Contact:** dpom@comcast.net.

Beginner / Refresher Bird Walk, Bedwell Bayfront Park

Saturday, February 9, 10:00 am - Noon

See January 12 entry for details.

Burleigh Murray Ranch State Park

Sunday, February 17, 8:00 am – Noon

Join us for a leisurely 3-4 hour walk in this bird-rich gem on our coast. The trail is a one-mile former ranch road leading to a historic barn. Plan layers for cool temps, morning fog and sunshine. Heavy rain cancels. **Directions:** We will meet at the lower parking lot to the Johnston House, located on Higgins-Purisima Road in Half Moon Bay. Higgins-Purisima Road begins just off of SR1, going east where Main Street ends. The Johnston House is the big white 1850s farmhouse on the hill. We will caravan to Burleigh Murray, which is 1½ miles up Higgins-Purisima Road from here. **Leader:** Ginny Marshall. **Contact:** ginnybirder@gmail.com.

Bioblitz at Sam McDonald County Park

Saturday, March 2, 2019, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Meet at the main parking lot for Sam McDonald Park (entrance fee waived for blitz participants), 13434 Pescadero Creek Road, Loma Mar. Co-sponsored by San Mateo County Parks, California Lichen Society, and more! Event runs until about 1:00 pm, but you can leave or stay on your own schedule.

Nob Hill Pond and Redwood Shores

Wednesday, March 6, 8:00 am - 11:00 am

This is a very productive area for a variety of ducks and other waterbirds. Time permitting, we may check some other excellent birding sites nearby. Easy walking on mostly level ground. Bring scopes if you have them. Restrooms in the nearby shopping center. **Directions:** Take the Redwood Shores Parkway exit east from Hwy 101, past the Nob Hill shopping plaza, turn right on Bridge Parkway, then almost immediately turn right at Tiller Lane (there is a small city park in front of you, named “Mariner Park”). Follow Tiller Lane to its end point, where you take a left on Spar Lane to its end. There is a small cul-de-sac that has a few parking spaces (you can also park in the residential area if necessary) where we will meet. **Heavy rain cancels.** **Leader:** Donna Pomeroy. **Contact:** dpom@comcast.net.

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Bird Quote - Acrostic #1 Solution by Francis Toldi

- A. Ponds near the airport of this south of the border city could yield you Limpkin, Thick-billed Kingbird and Streak-backed Oriole
MANZANILLO
 37 19 115 151 87 64 47 4 56 93
- B. Like a heraldic knot (trust me, you'll have to look this one up, now!)
 -ed) NOWED
 104 38 8 51 16
- C. No ego here
ID
 63 100
- D. Bob Marley-loving Gruiformes, apparently no longer valid in Florida (2 words)
CARIBBEANCOOT
 33 123 76 134 101 128 14 110 44 50 30 130 66
- E. Nail smoothing board
EMERY
 162 125 107 96 26
- F. Light, porous volcanic rock
TUFF
 120 79 62 94
- G. Old name for Noio (2 words)
HAWAIIANNOBODY
 161 9 22 137 72 119 114 39 99 74 153 116 129
- H. Sometimes bad bacteria (Latin, abbreviation plus word)
ECOLI
 34 91 159 68 150
- I. Phoenopygia pusilla is my favorite one of these (hyphenated word)
WRENBABBLER
 142 49 61 138 52 43 133 154 108 132 163
- J. What the biologist did to the Canada Goose egg to reduce breeding success ("it")
ADDED
 141 32 113 122 57 11
- K. Traditional Sioux dwelling
TEPEE
 54 152 88 3 102
- L. Sleeve end
CUFF
 121 118 83 13
- M. Bank and barn family (Latin)
HIRUNDINIDAE
 2 89 35 98 73 136 65 20 103 18 27 149
- N. "Go ____, Young Man" advice to the young William O. Douglas, and a memoirs title
EAST
 41 70 148 55
- O. Was one, now two is it nine, species of Fringillid (two words)
REACROSSBILL
 106 158 45 77 135 97 10 71 25 40 146 84
- P. Gloomy anxiety, such as what the birder mentioned in clue T is feeling
ANGST
 85 6 105 42 160
- Q. Berries much beloved by Northern Mockingbirds, American Robins Cedar Waxwings and California Thrashers
TOYON
 81 23 155 78 131
- R. Owl or pipit or eagle or piculet or frogmouth
TAWNY
 1 58 86 15 147
- S. Followed (as in advice)
HEEDED
 157 48 29 139 67 21
- T. Nervously irritable, like a birder still trying to find the stakeout seen by everyone who got there first
EDGY
 126 60 95 69
- U. Teased, what the unkind birders mentioned in the previous clue did to the birder who hadn't seen the stakeout yet
NEGLED
 24 109 90 127 140 36 7

- V. Raptor that is bigger than a buteo
EAGLE
 12 53 28 145 112
- W. Majestic tree or venerable Audubon chapter
SEQUOIA
 111 92 117 75 82 124 5
- X. Pig Treasures
TRUFFLES
 156 80 144 46 143 31 17 59

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OFFICERS

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Vice President: Open
Secretary: Susan Stratton
Treasurer: Kriti Diwan

At Large: Doug Brown, Marshall Dinowitz, Adam Dudley, John Epperson, Nelle Lyons, Chris MacIntosh, Ginny Marshall, Doug Pomeroy

Consulting Biologist

Alvaro Jaramillo

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MISSION STATEMENT

Sequoia Audubon Society protects native birds and other wildlife and their ecosystems in San Mateo County by engaging people of all ages in conservation, education, advocacy and enjoyment.

Sequoia Audubon Society

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Woodside, CA
94062-0292

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Support our Chapter's Work - Donate

Please consider an extra donation to your chapter in support of the work we do to provide birding trips, monthly programs, monitoring conservation concerns around the county, education and outreach. Thank you!

Give a Gift Membership or in Recognition

Has someone inspired you, or just done something kind for the world or for the birds? A donation in recognition gives toward supporting our Chapter's work.

Support SAS through Amazon Smile when you shop online

A percentage of your purchase can be donated to support the work of SAS whenever you shop on Amazon. You get the same products, prices and service and support our work to protect native birds and other wildlife and their ecosystems. The only difference is that, to support SAS through Amazon Smile, you must access the site: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/94-60929053>.



We're looking for Volunteers! Get Involved! Take Action!

You can make a difference! How can you help? Join our team! For more information, email: office@sequoia-audubon.org

Make Sure Your Coffee Supports Birds – Buy Bird Friendly SMBC Certified Coffee

Does your daily coffee support bird habitat or contribute to the demise of Neotropical landscapes? If it doesn't have the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center (SMBC) Bird Friendly certification seal your money does not support farming practices that support resident and migratory birds. During our monthly public meetings Sequoia proudly serves Certified Bird Friendly coffee, 100% organic and shade grown from *Birds and Beans, The Good Coffee* (<https://www.birdsandbeans.com>) and generously donated for each monthly meeting by Susan Rowinski.



Sequoia Audubon Society Membership Form

Senior or Student membership	\$15.00
Individual membership	\$20.00
Family membership	\$25.00
Supporter	\$100.00
Donation to SAS	\$
	\$
Total	\$

Yes, I am interested in volunteering _____

Newsletter Preference:

_____ Mail and / or _____ E-mail

E-mail address _____

P.O. Box 620292, Woodside, CA 94062-0292

Contact us: 650.529.1454

or

office@sequoia-audubon.org

Visit our website: www.sequoia-audubon.org

Check out our Online Birding Guide:

www.birding.sequoia-audubon.org

Join our Yahoo Discussion Group:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SequoiaAudubon>

Like us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SequoiaAudubon>