



SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society, San Mateo County
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The Camp Colorado Experience of August 2019 by Dominik von Briel

The Sequoia Audubon Scholarship Committee recently awarded grants to 4 youths in our county: Dominik and Cedrik von Briel, Aeon Lem, and Abigail Nix, who all attended the ABA's Camp Colorado in August. Below is the story of their trip as written by Dominik.

Our week started off with a van ride to The YMCA of the Rockies at Estes Park, during which we saw Prairie Falcon and both species of Eagle and Kingbird, among others. After orientation and dinner, we listened to a presentation about the different habitats of Colorado, before hitting the hay.

Our first full day of birding began with a 5:00 wake-up time and breakfast to head out by 6. Our destination was to Wild Basin in Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP). Here, we would see wonderful montane birds such as Red Crossbill, Townsend's Solitaire, Northern Goshawk, and a juvenile Western Tanager begging for food from its obliging parent. Some of the group even had two flyover Black Swifts to boast about, but unfortunately, none of the SAS four were able to pick up on them before they darted out of view towards their nesting sites up the trail. Luckily, San Mateo County has its own breeding population at Año Nuevo, so there's always a chance to try for them again in our home county. The best part of the morning, however, was when a fellow camper spotted a Dusky Grouse from the van. After stopping to let everyone get out, we all had fantastic views as it checked us out, standing at attention with two chicks by her side. After returning to the Y, we immediately set out to join resident bander Scott Rashid for a little bird banding. The rest of the day was filled with workshops, dinner, and an evening program about The Internet of Wildlife and how researchers use it to figure out bird behavior.



Dusky Grouse by Dominik von Briel

The next day, we returned to the park to do some montane riparian birding. Our first stop produced familiar birds like Western Wood-Pewee, MacGillivray's Warbler, and Western Tanager, but also Cassin's Finch, more Red Crossbills, a heard only Plumbeous Vireo, and our only American Three-toed Woodpecker of the trip. After a short hike to Alluvial Falls (a waterfall and nearby disturbance area created by a burst dam in the 80's), we headed to a nearby campground for what was supposed to be a quick stop, but ended up as a 3-hour birding marathon after deciding the place "looked good." The best birds here included an American Dipper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and a large feeding flock consisting of MacGillivray's Warbler, Red-naped Sapsucker, and most notably, Virginia's Warbler.

We headed on to Beaver Meadows and split up to search the forest for Williamson's Sapsucker and the meadow itself for Lark and Vesper Sparrows, with Abby and Aeon going with the former and the brothers going with the latter. Birds seen on the meadows included Lincoln's, Vesper and Lark Sparrows, while the forest group saw Vesper Sparrow, Green-tailed Towhee, and Williamson's Sapsucker. This was followed up by the group rejoining to find a very cooperative group of parking lot gravel-feeding Red Crossbills, with whom we spent a quarter-hour photographing. Our fantastic birding day ended with lunch, a game of tennis during free time, round 2 of workshops, dinner, and a presentation about alpine birds and their adaptations, in preparation for the next day's outing...

To the alpine tundra! Here, we were joined by Ted Floyd after breakfast and made our way up to RMNP's Medicine Bow Curve in the hunt for a White-tailed Ptarmigan. On our way along the trail, we saw many ptarmigan-shaped rocks, but

(continued on page 7)

Migrations on the Board: Two in, Two out by Chris O'Connell

There was no coup, no dramatics, just the comings and goings of norm. Ginnie Marshall and Kriti Diwan have moved on from the Board, but they have not left in spirit and have still been chipping in. Barbara Kossy and Julie Dull have been recruited as new members of the Board of Directors.

Barbara grew up in Evanston, Illinois, a northern suburb of Chicago. She was in the first grade when her teacher showed the class a nesting killdeer. Barbara was an art and education major at Antioch College in Ohio and earned an MFA from the Art Institute of Chicago. When she realized that even if she drove in any direction (except east) for one hour, and she would *still* be in Chicago she relocated to California. Barbara has worked as a tech writer and editor, art reviewer, museum staff, puppet maker, and photographer. She organized sea kayaking trips in Italy for 20 years.



Barbara Kossy

Barbara currently serves on the board of the San Mateo Resource Conservation District, is the Administrator of the Facebook California Invasive Plants page, volunteers in the costume shop at Theatreworks, and hikes, kayaks and birds as much as possible. Birds landed in her life as she had the pleasure of seeing so many cool birds while kayaking and traveling. Barbara lives with her husband John Dixon in Moss Beach, and has a native plant garden.

Julie Dull joined our Board in June as Treasurer. Julie has lived in Northern California for 20 years and is originally from Las Vegas and went to school at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. Julie is a CPA and lives and works full time in South San Francisco. She hopes to follow in Kriti's footsteps by bringing timely and accurate financial reporting to Sequoia Audubon, see a lot of new birds and new birding spots, and make a whole lot of new friends along the way.



Sequoia is re-selling Duck Stamps in alliance with the American Birding Association program. Get yours at our monthly meetings.



The Sequoia Board held its annual Summer Planning Meeting at the Half Moon Bay Library in August.

MEETING PROGRAMS

October 11, 2019, 7 pm – Special Day (Friday) and Location

Belmont Sports Complex, 550 Island Pkwy, Belmont, CA 94002

It's Too Late to Stop Now: Sharing the Gospel of Birding in the 21st Century with Jeffrey Gordon



The American Birding Association, founded in 1969, is celebrating its 50th Anniversary in 2019. Join ABA President Jeffrey Gordon for a celebration of the power of birding to heal and transform, not only our own lives but even our world. Jeff will share some of the highlights of the ABA's first half century and from his own 40+ years as a birder. But most of all, he will talk about the path to 2069 and how we advance boldly toward making the world a better place for the birds and birders who will follow us.

Join us for a humorous, heartfelt, and opinionated look at the joys, virtues and occasional frustrations of a life spent birding, the road we've traveled together, and what lies ahead.



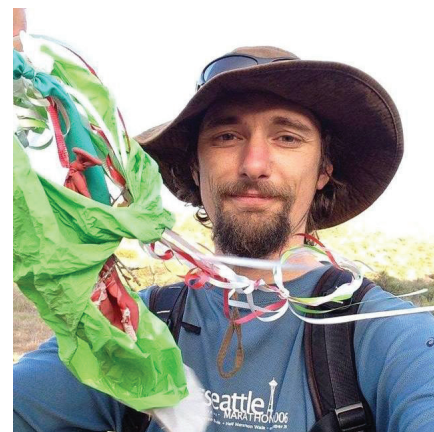
November 14, 2019, 7 pm (Usual day and location – 605 Parkside Way)

The California Center for Natural History with Damon Tighe

The California Center for Natural History strives to foster a shared admiration of the natural world and improved access to natural history for all people. They are building a vast network of experienced naturalists to visit K-12 classrooms and inspire the next generations with a passion for the outdoors. Damon Tighe, one of the co-directors of the California Center for Natural History, is a graduate of St. Mary's College in Moraga with a degree in Biology and Chemistry, and since working on the Human Genome project, has continued to pursue interests in biotechnology. He is happiest when engaging in citizen-science and outreach.



Damon will speak with us tonight on the history and aspirations of the California Center for Natural History, and how their mission can dovetail with the interests of a birding organization like Sequoia Audubon.



December 12, 2019, 7 pm (Usual day and location – 605 Parkside Way)

Shorebird Habitat Management with Monica Iglecia of Manomet



Raised and educated in the Bay Area, Monica Iglecia now coordinates hemispheric efforts to assist migrating shorebirds, building coalitions and cooperation between many organizations. Her coalition efforts aim to combine science with site-based conservation and habitat management. She will report to us on the health of the Pacific Flyway for shorebirds, and suggest what we can do, as an Audubon chapter, to care and advocate for our bay and ocean habitats.



Sequoia Field Trips

Hayward Regional Shoreline

Wednesday, October 2, 8:30 am – 12:00 pm

Hayward Regional Shoreline is an excellent location for ducks, shorebirds, raptors, and songbirds. The eucalyptus, fennel, and coyote bush at the end of Winton Road often yield interesting land birds and the shoreline is home to many species of wintering ducks and shorebirds. Bring a scope if you have one. Easy, level trails. **Directions:** Take Hwy 92 east across the San Mateo Bridge; take the first exit -- Clawiter / Eden Landing -- and go north to Winton. Turn left. Follow Winton past the old park office to where the road ends at the last parking lot inside the gates. **Leader:** Donna Pomeroy. **Contact:** dpom@comcast.net.

The BIG SIT and the BIG Easy RIDE

Sunday, October 13, All Day

See page 6 for details.

Edgewood County Preserve from Education Center

Sunday, October 13, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Explore this gem of a park while hiking 3-6 miles through oak woodlands, some hills and natural meadows. Look for California Thrasher, Wrentit, Oak Titmouse & Western Bluebird year-round. **Directions:** Take 280 to Edgewood Rd. in Woodside. Go east down Edgewood to the park entrance on the right. Meet at the Education Center. **Leader:** Susie Hons. **Contact:** susieturtlewings@mac.com.



California Quail at Pillar Point Bluff,
September 2019 by Donna Pomeroy

Burleigh Murray Ranch State Park

Sunday, October 20, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm

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 Canyon 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.

Arrowhead Marsh, MLK Regional Shoreline in Oakland

Wednesday, November 6, 8:30 am - 11:30 am

This is a slow-paced trip along a level trail, 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. We should see a variety of water birds with a chance at Ridgway's Rail. **Directions:** The entrance to this park is off of Swan Way, just east of Doolittle Drive and the Oakland Airport. Meet in the furthest parking lot. **Heavy rain cancels.** **Leader:** Donna Pomeroy. **Contact:** dpom@comcast.net.



Elegant Terns at Pillar Pt. Harbor,
September 2019 by Donna Pomeroy

La Honda Creek OSP (Lower) – Rarely Birded Spots in San Mateo County

Wednesday, November 6, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve (lower section) is one of the newest preserves in San Mateo County, but it has quickly become established as a favorite among the birders who go there regularly. Join leader Joshua Stacy for this leisurely 4-mile round-trip hike. We will be searching the skies for migrating raptors, the grasslands for returning winter visitors, and the woodland along the hiking trail for migrating passerines. Bring your camera for extraordinary views, too! We will meet at the parking lot at the end of Sears Ranch Road in La Honda. Visit the park map if you are unfamiliar with this area, at https://www.openspace.org/sites/default/files/map_LH.pdf. **Leader:** Joshua Stacy. **Contact:** Joshua.g.stacy@gmail.com.

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

Edgewood County Preserve from Education Center

Sunday, November 10, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm

See October 13 for details.

Burleigh Murray Ranch State Park

Sunday, November 17, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm

See October 20 entry for details.

Pillar Point Bluff

Wednesday, December 4, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

This small County Park has only been open since 2011. It has sweeping views of both the agricultural land and the ocean, with an uncrowded trail system. There is a nice mix of birds here including breeding California Thrashers. Dress in layers and bring sunscreen and water. There is a restroom in the parking lot. The trail is moderately easy with a short, but steep descent at the end of the loop. **Directions:** Meet at the Pillar Point Bluff parking lot on Airport Street, across from the Half Moon Bay airport on the west side. **Heavy rain cancels. Leader:** Donna Pomeroy. **Contact:** dpom@comcast.net.

Burleigh Murray Ranch State Park

Sunday, December 15, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm

See October 20 entry for details.



Red-breasted Nuthatch at Pillar Pt. Harbor,
September 2019 by Donna Pomeroy

SAVE THE DATE!

Do you want to be involved in something BIG?

Join us for the 120th Annual Christmas Bird Count
on either or both of San Mateo County's CBCs.

For information and questions, contact Leslie Flint at lflint@earthlink.net.

Saturday, December 14, 2019 – Crystal Springs Count

Saturday, January 4, 2020 – Año Nuevo Count



Spotted Sandpiper at Pillar Pt. Harbor,
September 2019 by Donna Pomeroy

THE BIG SIT & BIG Easy RIDE

Sunday, October 13, 2019 – Pescadero or Bust



SIT AND COUNT:

The Ninth Annual BIG SIT!™

... & ...

The Fifth Annual BIG Easy RIDE

The most Fun Fund-Raising event: birds, food & friends

The BIG SIT: All-Day Event • 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Pescadero State Beach & Marsh Natural

Preserve on the hill overlooking North Pond.

Come When You Can, Leave If You Must!

Birders of all skill levels encouraged!

The BIG Easy RIDE: Sunday, October 13, 2019

Meet at Gazos Creek State Beach at 7:30am

Cruise along Gazos Creek and Cloverdale Rds.

to Pescadero State Beach – 11 miles in 8 hours!

Contact chrisoco@yahoo.com for details or questions.

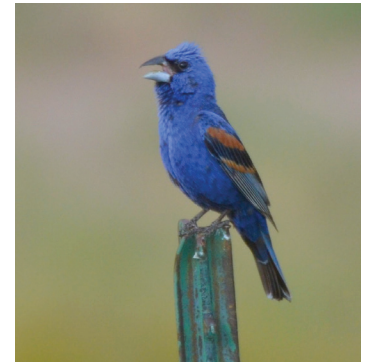
Help further the mission of the Sequoia Audubon Society with your pledge. You can pledge per bird species seen by the team, or pledge a flat amount. Visit www.sequoia-audubon.org to donate.

The Big Sit!™ is hosted by *Bird Watcher's Digest* and New Haven Bird Club and is sponsored by SWAROVSKI OPTIK. The Big Sit! is a registered trademark of the New Haven Bird Club, Inc.

The Camp Colorado Experience of August 2019 by Dominik von Briel (*contin. from page 1*)

unfortunately no rock-shaped ptarmigans. After missing a Pine Grosbeak that a birder trio behind us had seen, an instructor spotted a ptarmigan perched on a rock, which we soon found out had two chicks with it in tow. Many were able to see the bird either through the scope or by hiking down to where it was seen, although this honor was given only to those who had missed it the first time.

We then hopped back into the vans and drove over to the visitor center, where we were given a few minutes to visit the gift shop or scan for more ptarmigans. While the latter group didn't get any ptarmigans, they did have a fly-by Baird's Sandpiper, representing by far the biggest surprise of the day. Next it was on to Lava Cliffs Overlook, where we were on the lookout for the Brown-capped Rosy-Finch, and eventually found two after scoping icefields for about an hour or so. After a few more quick stops for lunch, Clark's Nutcracker, and Pika, we headed back down into Estes Park, where we enjoyed an hour-long talk from Ted Floyd (A "Ted Talk," if you will) about writing for Birding magazine and how we can become more involved in the ABA and its publications. Free-time, dinner, and a presentation about grassland birds and conservation ended our day, as we got ready for "the big one" the next day to Pawnee National Grassland.



Blue Grosbeak
by Dominik von Briel

After an early start (4:30!), we drove to Crow Valley Campground in "The Pawnee" (as it's affectionately known) to start the 5th annual Camp Colorado Big Day with some migrating passerines and cereal. It certainly delivered with Olive-sided and Least Flycatchers, Chimney Swift, Blue Jay, Orchard Orioles, and our vagrant of the day, a Black-and-white Warbler. Going further into the wonderland, we spotted a couple of lark-named birds: Lark Bunting, Western Meadowlark, Lark Sparrow and Horned Lark, plus Swainson's Hawk, Burrowing Owl, Mountain Plover, and small numbers of Chestnut-collared and McCown's Longspurs. Our celebration of the morning's birds took place at a gas station in the form of snack-buying time, and then we were off to the western portion of The Pawnee to find Brewer's Sparrow, Eastern Kingbird, Ferruginous Hawk, and most notably, a fly-by Upland Sandpiper, a lifer for many.

Our last stop leaving the reserve was a small playa which produced not only even more McCown's and Chestnut-collareds, but also, 6 Baird's and 2 Solitary Sandpipers. Our final stop of the day brought us to Fossil Creek Reservoir, where both Clark's and Western Grebes, exposing American White Pelican, and a couple of Orchard Orioles and Yellow Warblers. The way back consisted of an amazingly fun game of bird trivia between the two vans, and spotting a Bighorn Sheep and two adult dipper fly-bys as we got closer to Estes Park. After compiling the day's sightings, we came to a total of 84 species- the exact number that Cedrik predicted! Prize awarding and an early bedtime closed out this amazing day.

On our last full birding day, we visited Rabbit Mountain on the hunt for Blue Grosbeaks and Lazuli Buntings, both of which we found, along with many Lark Sparrows, a Yellow-breasted Chat, and even a few prairie dogs. After that, we birded Old St. Vrain road, seeing Great Horned Owl, Plumbeous Vireo, Gray Catbird, and Black-capped Chickadee. Our final birding spot of the week saw us go to a private residence to get Broad-tailed, Black-chinned, Rufous, and Calliope Hummingbirds, along with Pine Siskin and Golden Eagle. After that, it was back to the Y for lunch, followed by a presentation about Rosy-Finch banding, and a question-asking session with all the instructors. Finally, we closed out our day with an amazing memory-sharing session, where we each shared our favorite memories, pictures, and moments, before going to bed.

The final day was the saddest, and consisted of a quick breakfast, many goodbyes, and airport departures to close out what was, for almost all participants, "the trip of a lifetime." We want to highly thank Sequoia Audubon Society for sending us there, as well as the many donors who made our amazing trip possible. We sincerely hope that SAS can continue this fund so that many other young birders can continue to have this amazing experience for years to come.



Red Crossbill
by Dominik von Briel

OFFICERS

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Vice President: Open
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Open

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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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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>.

amazonsmile

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 _____

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or

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www.birding.sequoia-audubon.org

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