



# SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

1949-2024

Volume 75, No. 4  
October - December 2024

## MEETING PROGRAMS

(Please note we will be gathering Oct. 6 in lieu of our monthly meeting.)

### **November 14 – Zoom**

#### **Urban Exploits from an Animal Control Officer – Michael Barnett**

Michael Barnett has been a photographer since 2016. In 2019, he focused on wildlife photography. His primary subjects are owls and pelagic birds. His love of both bird families stems from his Humane/Animal Control Officer career since 2018 in Solano County. Through this, he frequently comes into close contact with injured birds of prey. As an ACO, he began to learn more about birds of prey in urban settings. He further expanded this knowledge through personal study and became a volunteer for the UC Davis Raptor Center. His love of pelagic bird photography was sparked after his first pelagic tour out of Half Moon Bay in 2022 with Alvaro's Adventures. He specializes in raptor identification and finding owl nests in urban environments.



*Michael and Forest, an education Great Horned Owl, February 2023, UC Davis Raptor Center*

### **December 12 – Zoom**

#### **Caring For the Land – Barbara Dye, Coastside Land Trust**

Barbara Dye will speak about monitoring areas preserved by Coastside Land Trust (CLT), show how much land has already been protected, discuss the challenges of each area, and share the results of the 2024 monitoring of birds, plants, and other wildlife.

The Coastside Land Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting the urban open space of the San Mateo County coast. Barbara Dye is a member of the CLT Stewardship Committee and leads the effort to monitor all of CLT's properties.

Before moving to the Coastside, she helped found and was Executive Director of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy. There, she led a community effort to create a multi-species conservation plan focused on the California gnatcatcher, raise 5 million dollars to purchase open space, and develop a 2,000-acre nature preserve in Los Angeles County. She is on the Granada Community Services District board and a docent at Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.



*Barbara Dye surveying wildflowers on CLT property*

## Meet SAS Secretary, Melissa Hero

As part of our continuing “Meet the Sequoia Board Members” series, here’s my interview with Melissa Hero. She’s our Secretary and is working on several exciting projects.

**Q: I understand you have quite a multifaceted background. Could you please tell us a little about yourself?**

**Melissa:** I studied Avian Sciences at UC Davis, focusing on ecology and conservation. I had a Lovebird in college that I adopted from Mickaboo Rescue. I later joined Mickaboo as a volunteer to teach a basic care class for new adoptive owners. I’ve also volunteered with GGRO as a hawk watcher and participated in SAS Christmas Bird Counts. I have an educational background focusing on technology and teach at a local high school. I’m also a docent with Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District and Edgewood Park.

**Q: What brought you to the SAS board?**

I was on the board about six years ago but paused due to work commitments. I missed the activities and birding, so when Chris extended an invitation to me, I rejoined the board as Secretary over a year ago.

**Q: What are some of the current projects you are working on?**

I’m helping organize and transition the SAS website to a non-profit website format. The platform supporting our San Mateo Birding Guide is being phased out, so we need to create a mobile app to maintain the Guide in the future.

**Q: As you consider the work ahead, are there any volunteer opportunities for someone with the right skills?**

We are looking for an experienced App Developer to help us transfer our data over to a new App that could be linked from the SAS website and downloaded onto Android and Apple tablets and phones. If you’re not aware, the San Mateo Birding Guide was the brainchild of Jennifer Rycenga. It lists the county hot spots and other birding locations, provides details on the birds at each location, when to see them, accessibility, parking info, rare bird info, photos, and more!

**Q: Could you provide a bit more detail about the available roles and desired experience level for volunteers to participate in the San Mateo Birding Guide project?**

Yes! We are looking to fill the following roles: 1) Developers to create a new App. 2) Volunteers to manage the content that will be included in the Guide. For example, updates to hotspot/location data, or new bird sightings!

**Q: Is there anything else you would like to share?**

You can enjoy birds every day, even at work! Bring your binoculars to work and during a break take a walk outside and observe birds!

In closing, I’d like to thank Melissa for a great conversation! Remember to get out, enjoy nature, and look up!

*Joyce Courtney*

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## Conservation Update

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**Redwood Life** (Redwood Shores) is holding a community open house on Sept 5. They got much pushback at their first meeting in May from residents and environmental groups and it will be important to learn their current plans and tactics. Our environmental concerns should continue to be expressed and kept in the forefront of the plans and discussion.

<https://www.planredwoodlife.org/events-2-1/workshop-2>

SAS co-signed a letter with Sierra Club, Green Foothills, and Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge (CCCR) in July to East Palo Alto officials, commenting on the **Ravenswood Business District/4 Corners Specific Plan** update.

We also joined with SCVAS, Ohlone Audubon, and CCCR on a letter to the State Senate Appropriations Committee to **oppose bill AB 990** regarding water quality and water discharge.

**One Shoreline** proposal for Millbrae-Burlingame shoreline: we are still following this closely.

**Citizen M hotel**, Menlo Park: the Planning Commission approved the plan for lighting the mural. The hotel was responsive to input from SAS and CCCR about dimming the light in order to reduce impact on birds and wildlife.

Your conservation rep sacrificed a sunny Sunday and took the **ferry from Redwood City** (RWC) to SF. The ferry was on its best behavior, following all the rules about speed and wake. Shorebirds along the edge of Bair Island did take flight as it passed. It left from the existing Port of RWC, so we will continue to follow the planned development of a separate ferry terminal at the end of Seaport Blvd.





## Sequoia Field Trips



Please note that rain or an Air Quality Index over 150 cancels unless otherwise stated. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, sunscreen, and dress in layers, as the weather can change. We've begun offering approx. hour-long "Mini Pop-Up" outings this summer, popular for those with mobility issues or want to discover new areas. Let us know of some novel places to explore: [fieldtrips@sequoia-audubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@sequoia-audubon.org)

**Wednesday, October 9, Palo Alto Baylands, Palo Alto (8:30 – 11:30)** Join us for a leisurely walk on level gravel trails where we will explore this San Francisco Bay treasure. We should see a variety of shorebirds and waterbirds with migration in full swing. Meet in front of the Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center, 2775 Embarcadero Rd. **Leader:** Donna Pomeroy **Register:** <https://bit.ly/3Mm9nYj>

**Wednesday, October 16, Filoli: Estate Trail, Woodside (9:30 – 12:00)** This is a 2–2.5 mile moderate walk on the Filoli Gardens and Estate trail. Habitats include mixed oak, redwood, madrone woodlands, riparian corridor, and historic horse pastures. Directions: From Hwy 280, exit at Edgewood Rd and head west. At the T intersection, turn right onto Canada Rd. In ½ mile, turn left into the property. Park under the oaks on the left side of the lot to find the leader. Filoli admission fee required. **Leader:** Kimberlie Moutoux **Register:** <https://bit.ly/3XasSIG>

**Saturday, October 19, Bair Island, Redwood City (10:00 – 12:00)** Level dirt trails make this an easy outing for beginners. We should see a variety of ducks, shorebirds, and smaller songbirds. Directions: From US 101, exit Whipple Ave. Going east, it winds for 0.5 mile becoming E. Bayshore Rd, then Bair Island Rd. Meet at the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge Bair Island Trail parking lot. **Leader:** JR Blair **Register:** <https://bit.ly/472qmbE>

**Monday, October 21, Filoli: Spring Creek Trail, Woodside (9:30 – 12:00)** Join us for a 3-mile hike, including the newly opened Spring Creek Trail through the Redwoods on the Filoli Estate. This trail has a 100-foot elevation gain in ¼ mile on a dirt path- not recommended if you have mobility issues. We will spend most of the morning on the California Trail in the oak and madrone forests and the Spring Creek Trail through the redwoods. The California trail is over dirt paths with a slight incline and is one mile long. The Spring Creek trail is ½ mile on a narrow dirt track that has a 100-foot elevation gain. There is a possibility of seeing up to 45 bird species, 33 of which are year-round residents. Filoli admission fee required. **Leader:** Kimberlie Moutoux **Register:** <https://bit.ly/3AEIIoi>

**Sunday, October 27, San Pedro Valley Park, Pacifica (9:00 – 10:30)** This coastal wooded county park features a variety of habitats for migrating and resident birds. Meet in the parking lot to the right of the Visitor Center. \$6.00 Vehicle entry fee. Parks Passes are available through the Library System. 600 Oddstad Blvd. **Leader:** Kimberlie Moutoux **Register:** <https://bit.ly/476fTfj>

**Friday, November 1, Union Cemetery, Redwood City (10:00 – 11:00)** If you've not been to the Historic Union Cemetery, here's an opportunity to learn some of its fascinating history. The hour-long walk will also introduce you to Sequoia's conservation efforts through the cavity nesters recovery program. 316 Woodside Rd. **Leader:** Christin New **Register:** <https://bit.ly/3X2d4rd>

**Sunday, November 3, Wavecrest, Half Moon Bay (8:00 – 12:00)** This is a 2-3 mile level walk through a vital hawk and raptor wintering site ending with an ocean scan for loons and other seabirds. Scopes are useful. We expect to see Northern Harriers, American Kestrels, White-tailed Kites, and others! Directions: Meet at 399 Wavecrest Rd by Smith Field, 1.5 miles south of SR 1 & 92. **Leader:** Ginny Marshall **Register:** <https://bit.ly/3yKUoUZ>

**Monday, November 4, Filoli: Estate Trail, Woodside (9:30 – 12:00)** See October 16 field trip. **Register:** <https://bit.ly/3AISqVG>

**Sunday, November 10, San Bruno Mountain, Brisbane (8:30 – 11:30)** San Bruno Mountain Park is a landmark of local and regional significance, a unique open-space island in the midst of the peninsula's urbanization, on the border of San Mateo and San Francisco counties. It is home to a wealth of wildlife, hidden pockets of woodland, and sheltered canyons. We'll walk about 1 mile on most flat dirt and asphalt trails. \$6.00 Vehicle entry fee (See note about passes on 10/27 outing.) Meet in the parking lot, 555 Guadalupe Canyon Parkway. **Leader:** Doug Brown **Register:** <https://bit.ly/4dF2duq>

**Wednesday, November 20, Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, Woodside (8:00 – 11:30)** Walk through the habitats of Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, including riparian, chaparral, lake, and oak woodland areas. It encompasses remarkable geologic, topographic, and biotic diversity within its 1,193 acres and provides a natural laboratory for researchers worldwide and educational experiences for students and docent-led visitors. We will cover ~ 4 miles on packed earth trails and roads, with mild to moderate elevation gain. This docent-led field trip is limited to 15 participants ages 14+. Participants must stay with the docent-led group for the entire trip. Stanford University access requirements include signing Stanford's waiver of liability. Directions will be emailed to participants. **Leader:** Emily Kim and **Co-leader:** Sonny Mencher. **Register:** email [fieldtrips@sequoia-audubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@sequoia-audubon.org)

**Thursday, November 21, Nob Hill Pond, Redwood Shores (9:00 – 11:00)** This area is very productive for various ducks and other waterbirds. Easy walking on mostly level ground. Bring scopes if you have them. Restrooms in the nearby shopping center. Directions: Take the Redwood Shores Pkwy exit east from Hwy 101, turn right on Bridge Pkwy, right at Tiller Ln. Follow Tiller Ln to Spar Ln and park in the cul-de-sac. Heavy rain cancels. **Leader:** Donna Pomeroy **Register:** <https://bit.ly/3Z2Y7HT>

**Saturday, November 23, Palo Alto Baylands, Palo Alto (10:00 – 12:00)** See October 9 field trip. **Leader:** JR Blair **Register:** <https://bit.ly/3MoGg6U>

**Monday, November 25, Filoli: Spring Creek Trail Woodside (9:30 – 12:00)** See October 21 field trip. **Register:** <https://bit.ly/4e0JoBz>

**Wednesday, December 4, Pillar Pt Bluff, Half Moon Bay (9:00 – 12:00)** This small County Park 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. 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 St, across from the Half Moon Bay airport on the west side. Heavy rain cancels. **Leader:** Donna Pomeroy **Register:** <https://bit.ly/4cI1vv2>

**Wednesday, December 11, Filoli: Estate Trail Woodside (9:30 – 12:00)** See October 16 field trip **Register:** <https://bit.ly/3AAIQE4>

**Saturday, December 21, Bedwell Bayfront Park, Menlo Park (10:00 – 12:00)** Beginner and family-friendly bird walk on fairly level trails exploring the upland and wetland areas of the park. Raptors, egrets, and LBBs (little brown birds) can be seen. Loaner binoculars are available. Meet in the parking lot with the restrooms. **Leader:** JR Blair **Register:** <https://bit.ly/4dDIJpP>

## OFFICERS

**Acting President:** John Epperson  
**Vice President:** Open  
**Secretary:** Melissa Hero  
**Treasurer:** Julie Dull

**At Large:** Doug Brown, Joyce Courtney, Beverly Cronin, Marshall Dinowitz, Nelle Lyons, Chris MacIntosh

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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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# Christmas Bird Count Dates

Add these dates to your calendar for this year's Christmas Bird Counts:

**Crystal Springs CBC – Saturday, December 14**

**Ano Nuevo CBC – Saturday, December 28.**

If you've counted before, we hope you'll join us again.

If you'd like to learn more, see:

<https://www.sequoia-audubon.org/CBC.html>

## Sequoia Audubon Society Membership

|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| 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 \_\_\_\_\_

**4 SAS Newsletter October - December 2024**

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

Contact us: [office@sequoia-audubon.org](mailto:office@sequoia-audubon.org)

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