



Madrone LEAVES

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

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Number 2

Back Yard Habitats

by Denise Kelly

Want to attract more birds and other wildlife into your garden? Plant California natives this fall or next spring, and you will be rewarded with more birds in your own back yard. Bring nature to your own home by growing a variety of native species—truly if you plant it they will come.

Because the soil is still relatively warm, but days are shorter and rain is (one hopes!) on the way, fall is an ideal time to plant natives. One way to support both wildlife and native plant growers is to buy locally native plants at one of the fall plant sales. Before you go, be sure you know what your soil is like (sandy, heavy clay, loamy) and what the exposure is (does the planting area receive full sun? shade? filtered light? is it windy?). Although you may find a knowledgeable volunteer to assist you, plants sales can be hectic and chaotic, which can be infectious and quite fun unless you are trying to get specific planting information. Keep in mind the adage to “plant the right plant in the right place.”

You should have an idea of what you are looking for by looking at books, searching online, talking with friends, consulting an expert, visiting private or public gardens, or knowing what native plants occur in your area. Several of our fine local nurseries carry native plants and are

good places to buy from year-round, and most also help supply some of the sale plants for organizations like CNPS (California Native Plant Society). Local native plant nurseries include: Cal Flora, Sommers & D Streets, Fulton; Mostly Natives, 27235 Highway One, Tomales; and North Coast Native Nursery, 2710 Chileno Valley Road, Petaluma. All three of these nurseries have websites with availability lists.

A few notes of caution: deer have evolved with native plants and enjoy browsing them, so protection will be required if



Wilson's Warbler on Native Willow
Photo courtesy of Tom Reynolds

plants are exposed. Also, all container-grown plants, including natives, require thorough and regular watering until they are established. This could be anywhere from two years to four years depending on the initial planting size, soil type,

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OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

Monday October 15, 7:30 PM
First United Methodist Church
1551 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa

“Bringing Back the Beaver”: A joint presentation by Brock Dolman and Heidi Perryman

Brock Dolman is director of the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center's Water Institute and Permaculture Program, in Occidental. He co-founded the California Beaver Working Group to bring awareness and support for re-establishing beaver colonies to enhance watershed restoration and salmon recovery efforts. Brock is a specialist in wildlife biology, native California botany, and watershed ecology; he recently received the Golden Pipe award from the Salmonid Restoration Federation for his role in promoting beaver habitat recovery. Brock will share new discoveries about beavers in Sonoma County.

Heidi Perryman, Ph.D., president of Worth a Dam, the Martinez beavers' nationally recognized nonprofit, will share the story of the return of beavers to the Bay Area and implications for healthy new habitat for birds and wildlife. Says naturalist John Muir Laws of Dr. Perryman, “Heidi shows us how we can build a bridge that connects humans and nature. She has helped her community make a place for a bit of wildness in the middle of an urban area and thereby given the city a heart.”

COMING NOVEMBER 19: Richard Kuehn will present on the birds and culture of Ethiopia. A retired obstetrician/gynecologist living at Sea Ranch, Richard has a penchant for travel and a love of birds. He will present a program on an adventurous trip he undertook this past January to Ethiopia in the ‘Horn of Africa’ at our November 19th General Meeting. Ethiopia has more than 800 species of birds, 16 of which are endemic.

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BACK YARD HABITATS

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exposure, planting time, and so forth. There are many variables to watering intervals and plant establishment. Don't let this discourage you, just keep in mind that new plants need tending in order to thrive. And remember that plants that are in containers dry out especially quickly; rainfall alone won't keep the root ball sufficiently moist.

Habitat favorites for birds include several local species: oaks (*Quercus* spp.), willows (*Salix* spp.), big-leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), blue elderberry (*Sambucus caerulea*), huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovatum*), native blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*), coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*), currants (*Ribes sanguineum* and others), gooseberries (*Ribes speciosum* and others), manzanitas (*Arctostaphylos* spp.), and California lilac (*Ceanothus* spp.).

In addition to the larger woody plants listed above, good habitat plantings include native perennials such as California fuchsias, buckwheats (*Eriogonum* spp.), seaside daisy (*Eriogonum glaucus*), woolly sunflower (*Eriophyllum lanatum*), asters (*Aster* spp.), sages (*Salvia* spp.), and goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.). Bunchgrasses are also very popular as garden plants and plants sales often have quite a number of them. Our native grasses are especially beautiful, and finches and other seedeaters enjoy the seed during summer months. Look for California fescue (*Festuca californica*), and melics (*Melica* spp.), and grass-like natives such as rushes (*Juncus* spp.), and sedges (*Carex* spp.).

Hummingbirds are quite fond of California fuchsia, any of the species or named varieties, but especially the dark-flowered ones. They are also

fond of bee plant (*Scrophularia californica*) flowers and those of manzanita, gooseberry, and currant. Finches love the buckwheats, asters, and goldenrod. California quail seem to prefer nearby cover (especially layered tree, shrub, and bunchgrass cover) when foraging, often near coyote brush, manzanita, ceanothus, and poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*).



Anna's Hummingbird on Native Coyote Brush
Photo courtesy of Tom Reynolds

Ah, poison oak. I recall hearing of a study conducted by the National Park Service many years ago where they determined poison oak to be utilized by more species of wildlife than any other plant. I doubt you will find it at a native plant sale, but it is pretty—from a distance. So why not try some of our beautiful and more people-friendly natives in your garden from one of the native plant sales or nurseries this fall—bring your own boxes and flats and head out—both our wildlife and you will be glad you did.

For a list of native plants and birds that are attracted to them, visit: www.marin.edu/cnps/birds

Local Plant Sales:

Milo Baker Chapter CNPS

Second Saturday in October, 9-1 at Santa Rosa Vets Building

Tilden Regional Park

Third Saturday in April from 10-3, and weekly on Thursday mornings 9-11

Merritt College

Oakland, CA

First weekend in May, and first weekend in October

Saturday 9-3, Sunday Noon-3

SRJC

Lark Greenhouse & Bech Lot Nursery

Tuesday, October 16, 2012, Noon-5

Jail Industries

Ordinance Road, Santa Rosa

Spring sales, usually mid-April and early May

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AUDUBON ADVENTURES

Madrone's Gift to 3rd-5th Grade Schools in Sonoma County

National Audubon's "Audubon Adventures" is again being offered **free** to all 3rd-5th grade teachers in Sonoma County. The new 2012-13 Resource Kit is titled "*Sharing Our Earth*." This kit can be used across the curriculum and offers correlations to national language arts and science standards, *plus* student assessment material. Four separate magazines, 32 total per set, will inspire students with vibrant photos and lively illustrations. Also included are four stand-alone Educator's Guides.

With education budgets cut drastically, funds for environmental education programs are extremely limited. We can help fill some of that need. Teachers of 3rd-5th grade students may contact Marcia Johnson at owlsnesttwo@att.net or 829-3808 before December 1 to receive an "Audubon Adventures" resource kit for their class.

Contributions to support this project would be greatly welcomed. The cost of a kit for use in a classroom is \$45. Please contact Marcia for more information.



Madrone Seeks New Membership Chair

Following two years of stellar service to our chapter, Membership Chair Lisa Shiffrin will soon be departing. Madrone wonders – is there a dedicated volunteer interested in helping with this important role? Activities include:

- Keeping our Madrone membership database up to date
- Updating our National Audubon/Sonoma County member list
- Maintaining the mailing list for letters and the *Leaves*
- Sending welcome letters to new members

It's a great opportunity for a computer-savvy person who enjoys membership support and helping our chapter to function smoothly.

Interested or know someone who might be? Please contact Diane Hichwa at dhichwa@earthlink.net or Susan Kirks at susankirks@sbcglobal.net.

We'll be happy to share more about the role and what it involves.

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Enrich Your Life – Become a Petaluma Wetlands Docent

by Gerald Moore

The Petaluma Wetlands Alliance Committee has a very active wetlands docent program that serves not only the community but offers its docents many rewarding experiences.

The program is so popular with grade school teachers that we are booked up for the year within 30 days of opening our schedule in the fall. Our major focus is a third grade hands-on program with both classroom visits and wetlands exploration. We also do nature discovery walks

for second grades, and bird and nature walks for higher grades and adults. In addition, our docents have the opportunity to participate in educational workshops, field trips, and stewardship activities at the wetlands.

Meet and work with some great, enthusiastic amateur naturalists in our community. Our annual new-docent training will start on Thursday, January 10, and run for eight consecutive Thursdays from 8:30 to noon. Training sessions are held either at Lucchesi Community Center or Shollenberger Park.

Please join us in this rewarding, fun, educational adventure. We ask docents to make a minimum two-year, 20-hours-per-year commitment spread out in any way among the many activities we support. Because of the economy, the Education Committee asks that applicants pay \$20 toward the cost of materials. For more details contact Bob at 763-2934, Gerald at 763-3577, or visit www.petalumawetlands.org.

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Federal and State 2012 Duck Stamps Are Here

by Mary Edith Moore

Everyone who enjoys birds and wants to protect their habitat can purchase a federal and/or state duck stamp.

Federal Duck Stamp

The Federal Duck Stamp is vital for wetland conservation. "Approximately 98 cents of every duck stamp dollar goes directly into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund to purchase wetlands and wildlife habitat for inclusion into the National Wildlife Refuge System---a fact that ensures this land will be protected and available for all generations to come." Since 1934, the Fund has generated greater than half-a-billion dollars to purchase or lease more than 5 million acres of habitat.

The Duck Stamp Office also administers the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Contest, a conservation educational program where children K-12 draw or paint waterfowl and compete to win scholarship funds at the national contest. The first-place art entry goes on to become the next Federal Junior Duck Stamp. All of the proceeds from the sale of the Federal Junior Duck Stamps are used for conservation education.



The Federal Duck Stamp Program has been called one of the most successful conservation programs ever initiated. The purchase of a Federal Duck Stamp provides an opportunity for every United States citizen to take a stand in the preservation of our natural heritage. We can make a difference. Buy your stamp at a post office, over the internet, outdoor sporting store, or a National Wildlife Refuge. For questions about Federal (\$15) and Junior (\$5) Duck Stamps, please visit www.fws.gov/duckstamps/stamps.

State Duck Stamp

The money generated from California Duck Stamps can only be spent on waterfowl-related conservation projects. Since the program began in 1971, the duck stamp program has raised more than \$22 million. It is also the first, and oldest, state duck stamp program in the country.

California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) sells about 70,000 duck

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DUCK STAMPS

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stamps annually, which includes sales to collectors who value them for their artistic depiction of native ducks and geese. In addition to duck stamps, DFG typically issues signed, limited-edition prints that are valued by art collectors.

Art submission for the stamp is very competitive. The species which will appear on the 2012/2013 California Duck Stamp is the Aleutian Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis leucopareia*). Contest results can be found at www.dfg.ca.gov/duck-stamp.

Because California Duck Stamp prices are tied to the cost-of-living index, the cost changes slightly each year. This year's stamp is \$19.44. It can be purchased online, any DFG office, or license agent which includes major retailers such as Walmart, Big 5, K-Mart, and Sports Authority. Statewide, there are more than 1,200 license agents. To find a license agent in your area, visit: www.dfginternal5.dfg.ca.gov/lasweb.

I encourage all bird lovers to purchase both the federal and the state duck stamps to benefit our wetlands and waterfowl.

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BIRD NOTE

Merlin: a 150-Mile-per-Hour Bullet with Claws

by Rich Stallcup, PRBO Conservation Science

Suddenly the mudflat explodes and shorebirds rocket into flight going every which way. Huge flocks of sandpipers are wheeling and winding, flashing white then dark. Willets, godwits, and curlews are screaming, terns lose their graceful composure, and herons and egrets cock an eye to the sky, close their necks, and freeze. A Scrub Jay in the border thicket goes still as stone.

An attack is in the works, and the target is known only to the Merlin.

From somewhere a 150-mile-per-hour bullet with claws is on the way, focused on a single soul amongst the chaos. The victim will be a sandpiper. The Merlin easily catches the flock and cuts a wake through it, emerging this time with a meal. The crease in the flock rounds out.

A couple of feathers drift and rock slowly back to earth and before they land, the Merlin is feasting two miles away, perched with its kill on an open Douglas-fir branch. Waders settle back to nervous feeding and quiet roost. The Merlin will be back on the next low tide.

Merlins don't hover. There isn't time. Unlike kestrels, it isn't part of their style. The world of the Merlin is quick and intense. In flight, kestrels often hover and flow around like overgrown swallows, but Merlins beat at the air like they are always late and trying to catch up.

Series '74 Harley Davidson motorcycles had an option called the suicide clutch that did not engage gradually. You were either at idle, or ripping along; nothing in between. That, too, is the way of the Merlin...they do not engage gradually. In the Sicily Isles, where hundreds of British birders go in October to look for rarities, this standard dialogue has evolved. If the question is, "Was that a Merlin?" the answer is "Yes, because if it were a kestrel, it would still be here."

Here in California, the Merlin is a winter bird (though a pair or two may nest in Siskiyou or Modoc counties), but it will be a good day if you see even one. On the winter range Merlin needs a lot of space: other species of raptors, and especially other Merlins, are physically excluded.

Merlins aren't much for following rules or staying within the cage of definition. From mid-September through mid-April, one of them might be found anywhere, in any habitat. Although some individuals maintain distinct foraging territories

at coastal, valley, or Great Basin localities, others are nomads and follow food sources---crossbills moving with the conenut crop, thrushes at berry outbreaks, or waxwings and solitaires ranging through juniper forests. Merlins have been seen chasing Red Phalaropes ten miles offshore, warblers at Furnace Creek in Death Valley, and Rosy Finches at 12,000 feet along the Sierra crest. Merlins are small-bird harvesters and may occur wherever there are any ripe to pick.

Compared to the American Kestrel, Merlins (12 inches in length) are bigger-headed with relatively shorter wings that are broader at the base; the tail of Merlin is shorter and clearly squared at the tip. Compared to Peregrine and Prairie Falcons, Merlin are smaller and have shorter wings and a shorter tail. Peregrines have a dramatic facial pattern which is easily seen, and all Prairies have blackish "wing-pits" which contrast with the otherwise white underparts.

Merlins are special. Their scarcity, unpredictability, and mystique make them one of the most striking players in the wilderness of wonder. Be like the sandpiper and, while in the winter field, watch constantly for the imminent, flashing presence of this feathered prince.

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OUT & ABOUT

The Wild Birds of Northern California Lecture Series

Hosted by Bird Rescue Center on Fridays, 7:00 PM, at the Church of the Roses, 2500 Patio Court, Santa Rosa (Patio Court and Hahman Drive in Montgomery Village; parking available across from the Church in Lucky's parking lot). Lectures are free and open to the public (donation requested). Information: call 523-2473.

October 5. "Native Passerines (songbirds) of Sonoma County" with Veronica Bowers, founder and director of Native Songbird Care & Conservation.

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October calendar

All walks and meetings are open to the public. Bird walks are recreational and educational in purpose, and all levels of expertise are welcome. Bring field equipment and wear comfortable shoes and layered clothing for variable weather conditions. Please carpool whenever possible. Forecasted heavy rain cancels. There is no charge for activities unless otherwise specified, but some parks have day-use fees.

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

Weekends, September 8-November 4

OCCIDENTAL ARTS AND ECOLOGY CENTER. Organic nursery open for the sale of perennial plants only; mother plants can be seen during a public tour of the center on October 11. The center is located at 15290 Coleman Valley Road, Occidental. For information call 874-1557, or email oaec@oaec.org.

Wednesday October 3, 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

POINT REYES. Bird walk. We will search for fall migrants, vagrants, and early wintering birds. Meet in the parking lot across from the Bear Valley Visitor Center, which is just west of Olema. Bring lunch. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Wednesday October 3, 7:00 PM

BOARD MEETING. Sonoma County Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa. For agenda information, contact Susan Kirks: susankirks@sbcglobal.net.

Saturday October 6, 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE. Our annual trip to the Point to search for fall migrants. Meet at 7:30 AM at the Petaluma Park-and-Ride (located at Highway 101 and Lakeville Highway just west of Highway 101) for carpooling, or at the Whitehouse Pool parking lot near intersection of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and Bear Valley Road at 8:00 AM. Bring lunch. Rain cancels. Leaders: Gordon Beebe, 829-9017; and Ken Wilson, 665-5127.

Thursday October 11, 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

BODEGA BAY. Bird walk. From the center of the town of Bodega Bay, drive north on Highway 1, turn left at Eastshore Road (the Bodega Head turnoff), then turn right at the stop sign, and continue 0.3 mile to the unpaved parking lot on the right. Bring lunch. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday October 13, 9:00 AM

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

Monday October 15, 7:30 PM

GENERAL MEETING. "Bringing Back the Beaver": A joint presentation by Brock Dolman of the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center and Heidi Perryman Ph.D., President of Worth a Dam, a nationally recognized nonprofit.

Wednesday October 17, 8:30 AM - Noon

SPRING LAKE REGIONAL PARK. Bird walk. Parking fee (\$6) for non-permit holders. From Summerfield Road in Santa Rosa, go east on Hoen Avenue, turn left on Newanga Avenue, then turn right inside the park entrance gate; meet in the parking lot near the restrooms at the top of the hill. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday October 20, 8:00 AM - Noon

SPRING LAKE REGIONAL PARK. Bird walk. Parking fee (\$6) for non-permit holders. From Summerfield Road in Santa Rosa, go east on Hoen Avenue, turn left on Newanga Avenue, turn right inside the park entrance gate. Meet in the parking lot near the restrooms at the top of the hill. Rain cancels. Leader: Gordon Beebe, 829-9017.

Saturday October 20, 10:00 AM

SHOLLENBERGER PARK. Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads two children/family nature walks. One-two hours, depending on the age of the children. Meet at the first kiosk. Rain cancels. For the children/family walk in English, contact Gerald Moore at 763-3577; for the walk in Spanish, contact Connie Peabody at 338-2237.

Saturday October 20, 11:20 AM

JUNIOR AUDUBON. Join Scott Campbell and folks from the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory in Marin; meet on Hawk Hill by 11:20 AM to watch a raptor banding and hear a talk about the banding program. Directions are on the GGRO website; park at the base of the hill along Conzelman Road before it becomes one way. Please bring comfortable shoes for about a two-hour period. You can call or text Scott Campbell: 530-828-6115 if you have questions. See page 7 for other information about Junior Audubon.

Thursday October 25, 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

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

Saturday October 27, 9:00 AM

ELLIS CREEK WATER RECYCLING FACILITY, PETALUMA. Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads a walk at the Ellis Creek ponds. Go to the end of Cypress Drive and through the gates. Parking lot is on the left. Rain cancels. Contact Bob Dyer: 763-2934.

Wednesday October 31, 8:30 AM - Noon

RIVERFRONT REGIONAL PARK. Bird walk. Meet at the innermost parking lot of Sonoma County Riverfront Regional Park, 7821 Eastside Road, west of Windsor. The parking lot is 0.4 mile from the park entrance. For those without a Sonoma County Regional Parks Permit, parking is \$7. For information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.



November calendar

Saturday November 3, 8:00 AM - Noon

ELLIS CREEK WATER RECYCLING FACILITY and SHOLLENBERGER PONDS. Meet at Ellis Creek promptly at 8:00; the group may go to Shollenberger first. From Highway 101 in Petaluma, go east on Highway 116 (Lakeville Highway), right on Pine View Way, then left on Cypress Drive. Go to the end of the road and through the gates; we will meet in the parking lot, near the bathroom. Bring a scope if you have one. Rain cancels. Leaders: Bill Doyle, 483-8773; and Gordon Beebe, 829-9017.

Wednesday November 7, 7:00 PM

BOARD MEETING. Sonoma County Environmental Center, 55A Ridgway Avenue, Santa Rosa. For agenda information, contact Susan Kirks: susankirks@sbcglobal.net.

Thursday November 8, 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM

SHOLLENBERGER PARK/ELLIS CREEK. Bird walk. Search for migrating birds at the Shollenberger Park ponds and wetlands in Petaluma. After lunch, we will bird the wetlands of the adjacent Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility. Meet at Shollenberger Park parking lot. From Santa Rosa, take the Highway 116 exit (Lakeville Highway), go left under Highway 101, turn right at the South McDowell traffic light, proceed to the City Park sign and turn right into the parking lot. Bring lunch. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday November 10, 9:00 AM

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

Wednesday November 14, 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

LAKE HENNESSEY IN NAPA COUNTY. Bird walk. From the intersection of Silverado Trail and Highway 128 (which is east of Rutherford), go east on Highway 128 to the parking area at the bottom of the Conn Dam spillway on the left side of the road. Bring lunch. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Saturday November 17, 8:00 AM - Noon

DELTA POND AND ADJACENT WETLAND PRESERVE. A very

“birdy” walk in a wonderful place not normally open to the public. We are grateful to Denise Cadman, Natural Resources Specialist for the City of Santa Rosa, who arranges entry to this and other City properties in the Laguna de Santa Rosa. Meet at the bridge over Santa Rosa Creek on Willowside Road, mid-way between Hall Road and Guerneville Road. Park off the pavement and combine into as few cars as possible to enter the property. Rain cancels. Leaders: Bill Doyle, 483-8773; and Gordon Beebe, 829-9017.

Saturday November 17, 9:00 - 11:00 AM

JUNIOR AUDUBON. Scott Campbell leads a two-hour bird walk at Spring Lake. Meet at the Howarth Park boathouse on Lake Ralphine for a walk to and around Spring Lake. You can call or text Scott Campbell: 530-828-6115 if you have questions. See page 7 for other information about Junior Audubon.

Saturday November 17, 10:00 AM

SHOLLENBERGER PARK. Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads two children/family nature walks. One-two hours, depending on the age of the children. Meet at the first kiosk. Rain cancels. For the children/family walk in English, contact Gerald Moore at 763-3577; for the walk in Spanish, contact Connie Peabody at 338-2237.

Monday November 19, 7:30 PM

GENERAL MEETING. Richard Kuehn will speak about the birds and culture of Ethiopia. He will present a program on an adventurous trip he took this past January to the ‘Horn of Africa’ in Ethiopia.

Saturday November 24, 9:00 AM

ELLIS CREEK WATER RECYCLING FACILITY, PETALUMA. Petaluma Wetlands Alliance leads a walk at the Ellis Creek ponds. Go to the end of Cypress Drive and through the gates. Parking lot is on the left. Rain cancels. Contact Bob Dyer: 763-2934.

Wednesday November 28, 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM

BOLINAS LAGOON IN MARIN COUNTY. Bird walk. Note 9:00 AM starting time. Meet at the first large turnout south of the Bolinas turnoff on Highway 1. Bring lunch. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

December calendar

Wednesday and Thursday, December 5 & 6

SACRAMENTO VALLEY WILDLIFE REFUGES. Automobile birding tours (with stops at designated observation points) at Sacramento Valley wildlife refuges. Meet at the Sacramento NWR headquarters at 9:30 AM on Wednesday. Bring lunch. Directions: Exit from Interstate 5 at Princeton (approximately 17 miles north of Williams), turn north on the county service road and proceed to the NWR headquarters on the right. Driving time from Santa Rosa is about 2.5 hours. Many of us will stay in Yuba City (Bonanza Inn Magnuson, 530-674-8824, formerly Best Western Bonanza Inn) on Wednesday night and bird at Gray Lodge State WMA on Thursday. Information: Tom McCuller, sisyphus@sonic.net, 546-1812.

Mayacamas Mountains Sanctuary Field Trips

There are no Audubon Canyon Ranch-sponsored field trips until next spring.

Observations

Bird observations since the previous *Leaves* will be in the next (November/December) issue.

Saturday December 8, 9:30 AM to dusk

CENTRAL VALLEY - GRAY LODGE and SACRAMENTO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Join our annual winter trip to the Central Valley to enjoy the enormous concentration of waterfowl, raptors, cranes, geese, and other interesting birds seldom seen in Sonoma County. Directions to Gray Lodge from Interstate 5 & Highway 99: From the junction of Interstate 5 and Highway 99, take Highway 99 north to Live Oak. Turn west on Pennington (North Butte) Road, right on Almond Orchard Avenue, and continue to the entrance. The distance from Live Oak is about eight miles. After birding Gray Lodge, we will go to Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge for the afternoon, hopefully enjoying good views of the fly-out at dusk. Some of our group will stay overnight in Willows on Friday and/or Saturday to visit additional parts of the nearby Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. Call one of the leaders for more information: Bill Doyle, 483-8773; Ken Wilson, 665-5127.

**OUT & ABOUT**

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October 12. “Raptors Up Close” with the Raptor Ambassadors of The Bird Rescue Center.

Junior Audubon

Scott Campbell is planning field trips on October 20 and November 17. Please bring comfortable shoes and layers of clothing for about a two-hour period for each program. You can call or text Scott Campbell: 530-828-6115 if you have questions.

The October outing will meet up with folks from the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory in Marin. Scott would like anyone who wants to watch a raptor banding and hear a talk about the banding program to be on Hawk Hill by 11:20 AM on Saturday, October 20. Directions are on the GGRO website; park at the base of the hill along Conzelman Road before it becomes one way.

The November 17 field trip will be at Spring Lake from 9:00 to 11:00 AM. Scott will meet at the Howarth Park boathouse on Lake Ralphine for a walk to and around Spring Lake.

Regatta on the Petaluma River
Sunday October 7, 8:30 AM

The North Bay Rowing Club (NBRC) and Sonoma State University (SSU) will host the 7th Annual Wine Country Rowing Classic on the Petaluma River. This rowing regatta brings over 500 competitive rowers to Petaluma. In the Sheraton Petaluma parking lot, spectators and crews enjoy the products of vendors of food, jewelry and athletic apparel. For more information, contact Maggie Hohle: maggiertext@comcast.net.

CAL-IPC’S 21ST Annual Symposium – Rohnert Park*Thursday-Saturday, October 11-13*

“Bay to Basin: Coordinating Response to Invasive Plants Across California”; Wine Country Doubletree, 1 Doubletree Drive, Rohnert Park. For full information and registration, contact: www.cal-ipc.org/symposia/register1.php.

Raptor Counts at Jenner Headlands Overlook

Raptor counts will be held throughout September and into October. They will take place 4-6 times on weekends and 4-6 times on weekdays from 10 AM to either 2 or 4 PM.

Scheduled counts will proceed regardless of weather. Larry Broderick will provide on-the-spot training for participants. Spotters, counters and identification specialists are needed. To volunteer or get further information, contact Larry Broderick by email at northcoastraptor@gmail.com or by phone at West County Hawk Watch: 975-7047.

California Native Plant Sale*Saturday, October 13, 9AM- 1 PM*

The Milo Baker Chapter of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) holds its 41st annual native plant sale at the Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building across from the Fairground. The sale will include trees, shrubs, perennials, bulbs, seeds, note cards, native plant books, posters, and t-shirts. Expert gardeners will be on hand to answer questions. For more information: www.milobaker.cnps.org.

Fall Flower Show “Fabric, Fiber, and Flowers”*Friday and Saturday, October 12 & 13*

The Graton Community Club will be hosting its annual fall flower show and plant sale on Friday and Saturday, October 12 & 13, from 9-4 each day. The theme this year is “Fabric, Fiber, and Flowers,” and the floral exhibits will feature any or all of these categories. The show will be held at the historic clubhouse in downtown Graton at 8996 Graton Road, about 3 miles north of Sebastopol. A fabulous lunch will be offered for \$10, including beverage and dessert, but admission to the show is free. A great plant sale is planned in addition to sales of handcrafted items, unique collectibles, and a raffle. Proceeds benefit the local college scholarship program and the building fund.

16th Annual Sandhill Crane Festival*November 2-4*

The festival takes place at Hutchins Street Square in Lodi and celebrates the return of the Greater and Lesser Sandhill Cranes to the rich delta wetlands of the Lodi area. The festivities begin November 2 with a wine & hors d’oeuvres reception and art show from 6:00 to 9:00 PM. Family activities, workshops, wildlife demonstrations, and nature tours are featured. General admission to the festival is free. There is no charge for most of the events at Hutchins Street Square, including the reception, art show, workshops, presentations, and exhibit hall. There is a charge for field trips (includes busing), which varies per tour. For a schedule of activities/registration, visit www.cranefestival.com/ or www.LodiChamber.com/cranefestival or call 800-581-6150.

Continued on page 8



OUT & ABOUT

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Tours of the Monarch Butterfly Grove

Saturdays & Sundays, 11:00 AM & 2:00 PM, mid-October through February 1

Natural Bridges State Beach, Santa Cruz, CA

One of the amazing monarch butterflies' favorite winter homes is a magical beach, lagoon, and forest on the northern edge of Santa Cruz. Natural Bridges State Beach has a Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary, with a fine boardwalk trail into the grove. It is a special place that has become a great source of local pride. There is a Milkweed Demonstration Garden in the fenced enclosure.

Join a docent to learn the natural history and see thousands of monarch butterflies wintering in Santa Cruz. Call 831-423-4609.

Thanksgiving Day Bird Count

Counters are needed for the annual Thanksgiving Bird Count, one hour on Thanksgiving Day. The counter chooses the time that best fits his or her schedule. The count is made in a circle, measuring only 15 feet in diameter. The counter determines the location, usually a favorite area frequented by the birds, such as feeders, baths, covers, and/or wetlands. Individual birds are counted only once during the hour, even if the birds continue to pay visits. Flocks should be estimated or counted, and only the highest number at any one time used.

Dr. Ernest Edwards and the Lynchburg Bird Club in Virginia began Thanksgiving Bird Counts in 1966. Counts slowly spread to the West, but there are still many areas in need of more counters and better count distribution. This bird

count can be done in comfort, indoors near a window, and be a welcome respite from the Thanksgiving dinner. Count results (even if you see no birds at all) should be sent to Dr. John G. Hewston, Count Compiler, Natural Resources Building, Humboldt State University, Arcata, California 95521. Instructions and bird count form are available at: www.palouseaudubon.org/Checklists/Thanksgiving.pdf.

Save the date!
Western Sonoma County
Christmas Bird Count is
Sunday, December 30, 2012.
This is your official invitation
to count!

Do something special "for the birds" this holiday season. For over a century, volunteers have been collecting information on the birds in their communities. The CBC database now contains more than a century of data on early-winter bird populations across the Americas. This one-day annual event is an opportunity to meet other local volunteers, hone your birding skills, and take part in a seasonal tradition.

Madrone Audubon's annual Western Sonoma County Christmas Bird Count will be held from dawn to dusk on Sunday, December 30th this year. The count is centered in western Sonoma County, in the Salmon Creek watershed, from west of Sebastopol to the coast and from just north of the Russian River to the Estero Americano.

In addition to counting in the field, volunteers are also needed for various pre- and post-count tasks, such as organizing teams, contacting area leaders, and compiling data. We also need volunteers to help with set up and clean up of the catered post-count dinner (Yes, dinner will be catered!) If you are interested in helping with any of these tasks, please contact Veronica Bowers, CBC

committee chair for Madrone Audubon. You can contact her at 484-6502 or vlbowers@gmail.com.

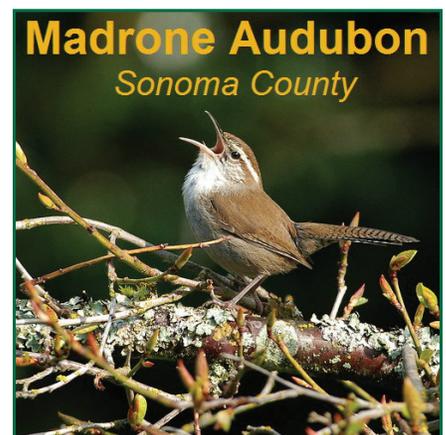
To sign up for a team, please register online by visiting Madrone's website at <http://audubon.sonoma.net/>. Click on the Christmas Bird Count link and follow the instructions. You will receive a confirmation within one week of registering. Information packets and team assignments will be issued in December.

Watch for more details on this CBC and the catered post-count dinner in the November/December issue of *Leaves*.

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Newsletter Submissions

Madrone Audubon's newsletter, *Madrone Leaves*, is published six times per year: February/March, April/May, Summer, September, October/November, and December/January. Deadline for input into *Madrone Leaves* is the 5th of the month for publication the following month. Maximum length of articles is 600 words, unless you have received an exception from the editor.



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



Victory on the Horizon for Teshekpuk Lake

On August 13, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced the “preferred alternative” for management of one of Audubon’s long-standing priority landscapes, the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (Reserve). The first-ever comprehensive management plan for the nearly 23-million acre Reserve on Alaska’s North Slope would help safeguard key areas that Audubon has been working to protect for more than twenty years.

Under the preferred alternative, commonly referred to as “B2,” nearly half of the Reserve would be designated as unavailable for oil and gas leasing to protect key habitats for migratory birds, caribou, grizzly bear, wolves, wolverine, polar bear, walrus, and other wildlife. The preferred alternative protects 11 million acres, an area roughly the size of Massachusetts and Connecticut combined. Lands surrounding Teshekpuk Lake—a globally significant Important Bird Area (IBA) that has been a special focus

of Audubon for many years—would be protected and off-limits to oil leasing, drilling, and industry infrastructure development. Teshekpuk Lake provides a unique and internationally-important molting area where geese retreat annually to lose and regrow their feathers, leaving them temporarily flightless and extremely vulnerable to disturbance.



Pacific Loons are among millions of birds that nest in the Reserve.

Secretary Salazar’s announcement is a major milestone in Audubon’s decades-long effort to protect the migratory birds and other iconic Arctic wildlife in the Reserve. The B-2 alternative alternative would protect 96% of the priority areas Audubon has identified in our recommendations to the BLM. However, there is still important work ahead, especially in the next several months. The final plan for the Reserve will not be released until mid-November. Now is a critical time to tell the Obama Administration you support B2 as a balanced way to protect critical wildlife habitat while allowing responsible energy development in the Reserve. Your voice can help make this a solid victory for the birds, caribou, and other wildlife of America’s Arctic. Read more about this special area in Audubon Magazine.

Reprinted from Audubon Action, online

Department of Corrections

In the September 2012 issue of the *Leaves*, we erred in the Madrone Audubon Society’s Funds Statement. The annual statement should have been for the twelve months ending 30 June 2012, not the one month of June 2012. The annual statement will be published in a later issue of the *Leaves*.

Greener power planning is now possible.

Through Audubon’s efforts, avoidance planning for Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and other sensitive areas will be more feasible than ever in the eastern United States. At Audubon’s urging, an unprecedented GIS-based tool for the electric power sector has been developed by Argonne National Lab and others. Audubon led the advisory committee addressing environmental screening issues in a major collaborative process to plan transmission development. Covering a 39-state area that includes both the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways, the Energy Zones Mapper compiles information on infrastructure, energy resources, and ecological sensitivities—including IBAs—into one consolidated data resource, enabling better siting decisions that are safer for birds and wildlife.



Pectoral Sandpiper, September 13, Ellis Creek
Photo courtesy of Tom Reynolds

Welcome New Friends of Madrone Audubon Society

Glen Ellen
Kira Tiedgens

Petaluma
Deborah Brandon
Jim Roat & Kathleen Bollow

Santa Rosa
Mike & Audrey Kapitan
Gwendolyn Toney





Madrone Audubon Society

Post Office Box 1911
Santa Rosa, California 95402

October/November 2012

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



MADRONE LEAVES



Madrone Audubon Society meets on the third Monday of each month, except in June, July, August, and December. Meetings start at 7:30 PM at First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa. All meetings and walks are open to the public. Information: telephone answering service - 546-7492, e-mail - madroneaudubon@um.att.com.

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

Join Madrone Audubon – Support Your Local Chapter

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

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

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

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ Email _____

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