

# SEQUOIA NEEDLES

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

*Volume 59, No. 4  
April-May 2009*

## BIRDING IN THE USA

BY JAKE HILL

My name is Jake Hill (photo at right). I am 13 years old and live in Nottingham, England. As well as enjoying playing football (soccer to you guys) I spend my spare time bird watching with my Dad. We are members of the Nottinghamshire Bird Watchers group and following one of their bird trips in January 2008 I was asked to write an article for the group's monthly newsletter. I have contributed to the newsletter each month since.

In August 2008 I was lucky enough to visit the San Francisco area on holiday with my family. We planned to stay a few days with my Mum's relatives in Pacifica, visiting my great granddad who lives in San Mateo, and then spend a week or so travelling over to Las Vegas and then back via the Santa Barbara area. This gave me an ideal opportunity to see some American birds for the first time. The following is an edited version of my report that originally appeared in the September NBW newsletter.

On the first full day of the holiday we went to a pond near the South Bayside Water Treatment facility in San Francisco Bay. We picked up my Great-granddad on the way. I'm sure some of you will know him and his wife, John and Nena Padley. When we arrived the pond was full of birds: Willet, Marbled Godwit, Long-billed Dowitcher, Black Skimmer and Black-crowned Night Heron. We have seen a Night Heron before at the Gibraltar Point reserve on the east coast of England but that was a blob in the distance; here we had fantastic close up views! We also saw lots of Snowy Egrets and American Avocets, a few Forster's Terns, White Pelicans (which are quite rare in the SF Bay area), Black-necked Stilt and many more.

We saw some really nice birds at the house in Pacifica, like Californian Tow-



hee, Dark-eyed Junco, House Finch and Lesser Goldfinch. Also we saw Anna's Hummingbird, which was really nice. We went to a place just down the coast called Half Moon Bay and there we saw Brown Pelicans, a Common Loon, and a small flock of Surf Scoters.

My dad had booked a whale-watching trip for the two of us (my Mum and brother aren't keen on boats!) and we had a whale of a time! We set off from Monterey Bay harbour at 9:00 and for the first hour or two we did not see any whales because we were not out far enough but we did see a Sea Otter and a lot of California Sea Lions. When we had got out far enough we heard a report of Humpbacked Whales so the skipper headed towards where they were. When we got there we had absolutely great views of them and as they dived we saw great views of their tails. In between watching the whales we had great views of lots of birds including Red-necked Phalarope, Pink-footed and Sooty Shearwaters and best of all a Black-footed Albatross! We also saw two different kinds of dolphin, Risso's and Pacific White-sided. Before we had to go back we saw the whales again and a small flock of Sabine's Gulls and an Elegant Tern. When we got off the boat we got something to eat and sat down by the harbour and were rewarded with close views of a Western Scrub Jay and a few Brewer's Blackbirds and Heerman's Gulls.

The next couple of days were quiet birding

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Monthly Meetings

San Mateo Garden Center  
*(See program details on page 2)*

### April

**Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM**

**Program:** A Peep into the Lives of Shorebirds

### May

**Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM**

**Program:** Galapagos Islands and Machu Picchu

### June

**Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM**

**Program:** Birding Class

## Upcoming Field Trips

*(See trip details on page 3)*

### April

**Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup>** Peep at Shorebirds Field Trip

**Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup>** Pescadero Marsh\*

**Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup>** Audubon Canyon Ranch

**Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup>** Aquatic Park

**Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup>** Filoli Estate

**Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup>** Edgewood Park

**Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup>** Mines Road

### May

**Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup>** Filoli Estate

**Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup>** Mines Road

**Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup>** Pescadero Marsh\*

**Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup>** Filoli Estate

**Saturday & Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>**

Int'l Migratory Bird Days\*

**Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup>** Pescadero Marsh\*

**Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup>** Pillar Point Harbor

*\*Beginner/Family Trip*

*(Continued on page 3)*

# Sequoia Audubon Society

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## MEETING PROGRAMS

BY SUE COSSINS AND PAULA MILLER

### A Peep into the Lives of Shorebirds

By Gina Barton

Thursday, April 9, 7:00 PM

Why is San Francisco Bay so important for shorebirds? What influences breeding, molt, and migration? We will take a "peep" into the lives of resident and migratory species of the San Francisco Bay. The field trip will focus on shorebird identification, paying special attention to the small, similar-looking shorebirds commonly referred to as "peeps".

**Accompanying Field Trip:** Saturday, April 11. Field Trip TBD. The field trip will be led by Gina Barton and Stephanie Ellis. Stephanie is the Outreach and Programs Coordinator for the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory. Gina Barton is the Landbird Program Supervisor for the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory. She has been studying birds since 2000 and manages the SFBBO Coyote Creek Bird Banding Field Station.

### A Journey to the Galapagos Islands and Machu Picchu

By Bob and Sue Cossins

Thursday, May 14, 2009, 7:00 PM

Join Bob and Sue in reliving their June 2008 tour of the Galapagos Islands with a

five-day extension into Peru including the sacred valley of the Incas and Machu Picchu. In the Galapagos, they lived aboard a 16-passenger motor yacht for 11 days, traveling to nine islands in total. Activities included daily nature hikes

## Monthly Meetings

San Mateo Garden Center

605 Parkside Way, San Mateo

*Parkside Way is west of Alameda de las*

*Pulgas, between 26<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> Avenues.*

around the islands, usually with close encounters with endemic species -- making for good close up photography. Machu Picchu and the Inca civilization provided for fascinating study as well.

### Birding Class: Topic to be announced in the next Needles

By Matthew Dodder

Thursday, June 11, 2009, 7:00 PM

We are lucky to have Matthew take time out of his busy schedule teaching a birding class for the Palo Alto Adult Ed program to teach a class for SAS. More info in June-August *Needles*.

**Accompanying Field Trip:** Saturday, June 13. Field trip TBD, dependent on recent bird sightings



**12<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Backyard Bird Count Feb/09** — SAS members George Chrisman and Sonny Mencher recently assisted 4<sup>th</sup> grade students from Nueva School, Hillsborough and their chaperones in identifying and counting birds in the school vicinity.



## FIELD TRIPS

BY CAROL MASTERSON

**Saturday, April 11**

**Follow-up field trip for April 9 Birding Class**

**Location and time TBD, dependent on recent bird sightings**

**Instructor:** Stephanie Ellis

Open to everyone with a \$5.00 fee paid to the instructor

**Pescadero Marsh – State Park Docent Nature Walk**

**Sunday, April 19, 1:00 - 3:00 PM**

Come and discover Pescadero Marsh. The California State Park Docents will lead a field trip to learn about the marsh. This beautiful park has a mile-long shoreline, rocky cliffs, and of course a world-famous marsh. The birding at the marsh is great at this time of year. The docents will point out the plants and animals that inhabit this San Mateo County treasure. If it is not raining, meet in the parking lot just over the bridge at Pescadero State Beach. Wear clothing in layers for cold and windy to sunny weather. Heavy rain cancels. For information contact Ranger Dave Augustine 650-879-2170 or Rita Jennings 650-728-2254. [http://www.greenfoothills.org/news/2001/08-2001\\_PescaderoButano.html](http://www.greenfoothills.org/news/2001/08-2001_PescaderoButano.html)

**Directions:** Go south from Half Moon Bay on Hwy 1, about 12 miles. Just past the bridge over Pescadero Creek, look for the south parking lot. If you get to the intersection of Pescadero Road and Hwy 1, you have gone too far.

**Beginner/Family Nature Hike**

**Audubon Canyon Ranch - Herons and Egrets**

**Sunday, April 19, 8:00 AM**

For those of you who have always wanted to visit ACR, but have put it off because of the drive, here is your chance to visit with an experienced Ranch Guide and long time member of the ACR board of directors. Audubon Canyon Ranch is located on Bolinas Lagoon, a 1,000-acre tidal estuary in Marin County that is part of the Gulf of the Farallons National Marine Sanctuary and is a Ramsar Convention Wetlands site of international importance. Bolinas Lagoon is on the Pacific Flyway and is an important stopping off area for migrating shorebirds

and ducks. Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets return to nest each year at Audubon Canyon Ranch. We will carpool from the mid-Peninsula, leaving at 8:00 AM. We will bird along Bolinas Lagoon, looking for ducks and shorebirds on our way to Audubon Canyon Ranch. At ACR we will hike to the overlook to observe nesting herons and egrets (1/2 mile hike) and if desired, we will hike the 3-mile loop, which will give us a good sampling of the other birds found at ACR. Plan to picnic at the Ranch. Dress in layers. Bring binoculars, a scope if you have one, fluids, lunch, and snacks. Heavy rain cancels. Note: ACR while free, requests a donation of \$10-\$20. Contact Leslie for carpooling arrangements, meeting place, directions, and to reserve a space. The drive is about 1.25 hours each way. This is an all-day trip.

**Directions:** Audubon Canyon Ranch on Bolinas Lagoon approximately 3½ miles north of Stinson Beach.

[http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/PK/Main/mcosd/os\\_park\\_05.asp](http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/PK/Main/mcosd/os_park_05.asp)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bolinas\\_Lagoon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bolinas_Lagoon)

<http://www.bolinaslagoon.org/>

[http://www.cgret.org/bolinas\\_lagoon.html](http://www.cgret.org/bolinas_lagoon.html)

**Leader: Leslie Flint 650-573-6279,**

**lf Flint@earthlink.net**

**Beginner/Family trip**

**Secrets of the Birds – Aquatic Park, San Francisco**

**Sunday, April 19, 9:30-11:30 AM**

The lives of birds can seem secretive until we observe their behavior closely. On this beginners walk along Aquatic Park, join National Park Service Ranger Carol Kiser to identify land and water birds and enter their unique world. Meet at the entrance to the Hyde Street Pier Historic Ships at Hyde and Jefferson Streets for this two-hour walk. Use sun block and dress in layers. Bring binoculars and bird books if you have them.

**Directions:** Bus numbers 10, F, 30, 47, 49, and the cable car stop nearby. Call (415) 673-MUNI for details. As meter parking lasts only for one hour, parking is best at garages nearby for about \$2.50 per ½ hour at the Anchorage Shopping Center or at Ghirardelli Square.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Upcoming Field Trips

*(Continued from page 1)*

Check the field trip descriptions for any special information or requirements. Late comers may be disappointed. For all field trips, bring your binoculars, water, sun block, and a hat; wear sturdy walking shoes or boots, and always dress in layers for hot, sunny weather to cool, windy conditions. While we will attempt to stay on schedule, circumstances may dictate changes to field trip leaders, dates, or times. For the latest schedule and updates always go to the Sequoia Audubon website; contact the trip leader, or call Carol at 650-347-1769.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

### SAS Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is accepting names of people who are interested in serving on the Board of Directors for the coming term (June 2009 - June 2010). The election to the board will be held at the June 2009 potluck dinner meeting.

If you know of someone (including yourself) who is willing to dedicate time to help chart the course of Sequoia Audubon for the protection of birds and their habitats in San Mateo County, please call Sue Cossins 650-347-9358 or email [sue@sue@earthlink.net](mailto:sue@sue@earthlink.net).



*(Field Trips, continued from page 3)*

**Leader:** Ranger Carol Kiser (415) 561-7100

**Beginner/Family Trip – Wheelchair Accessible**

### **Filoli Estate – Spring Bird Walk**

**Saturday, April 25, 8:30 AM - Noon**

Filoli Estate is a property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. We have been invited for a morning of birding at this beautiful site on the edge of the San Francisco watershed land. In addition to birds, the wildflowers should be very plentiful at this time of year, especially in the shadier areas on the back roads. The grounds of Filoli have a fine planted garden surrounded by large oaks and trails leading to riparian, redwood, and farm habitats. Over 96 species of birds have been found here. **Reservations required** because this trip is limited to 20 people maximum (sorry, no children under 14). Call Sue James (650) 348-0315 to reserve your spot. No food or picnicking is allowed but all are welcome after the walk to buy light food and beverages at the Café and visit the gift shop.

**Directions:** Take Hwy 280 to the Edgewood Road exit; go west. Turn right/north on Canada Road and drive approx one mile to the entrance of Filoli. We will meet in front of the Visitors Center. If you want to remain after the field trip to walk through the house and /or formal gardens, there is a \$12.00 entrance fee. Heavy rain cancels.

**Leaders:** Sue James and Donna Petersen

### **Edgewood Park – Spring Birds and Wildflowers**

**Sunday, April 26, 8:00 - 11:00 AM**

Edgewood Park has spectacular wildflowers and spring birding at its best. Over 60 species of birds have been identified here. Twenty seven species families can be found here. Beautiful wildflowers and more than 300 species of plants as well as rare plants are found in this rich area. The walk is over moderately strenuous terrain. Heavy rain cancels. Ask Marilyn about how you can volunteer to help the wildlife at Edgewood Park.

**Directions:** Meet the leader in the paved parking lot at the main gate. The Edgewood Park entrance is east of Hwy 280 on Edgewood Road in Redwood City.

**Leader: Marilyn Travis. 650) 592-7733**

### **Bird Walk at Filoli, led by SAS volunteers**

**Saturday, May 2, 9:00 AM – Noon, with Jennifer Rycenga**

Enter the world of flycatchers, grosbeaks, swallows, warblers, and Red-shouldered Hawks on a Filoli bird walk. Hundreds of migrating birds visit Filoli each year on their way between Central and South America and their breeding grounds farther north. Many birds decide to stay in these woodlands and nest. Don't forget your binoculars and a bird field guide, if you have them. Please leave your cell phone in the car. Children 14 years and older only.

Fee: \$20 for members of Filoli, \$25 for non-members of Filoli  
**Advanced Reservations Required** 650-364-8300,  
tours@filoli.org

### **Mines Road – The Ultimate Spring Bird Trip**

**Scouting Trip midweek on Thursday April 30, 8:00 AM**

**Field Trip on Sunday, May 3, 8:00 AM**

A variety of habitats provides a fascinating variety of birds not found elsewhere in the Bay Area. This will be an all-day trip to this area in the Coast Range Mountains between Livermore and the Central Valley and Hwy 5. We will look for Phainopepla, Prairie Falcon, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Lewis' Woodpecker, and Golden Eagles, along with sparrows and hummingbirds. If we are very lucky we may even see a Wild Turkey or Roadrunner. Have a full tank of gas, water, and food since facilities are scarce. There are only two reliable restroom facilities, one at the lunch time stop and another at mid-afternoon at a county park. Weather is unpredictable from cold and windy to hot and dry. Heavy rain cancels. **Please call to reserve a space.**

**Directions:** Cross the San Mateo bridge and follow the signs to Hwy I-580. Stay on 580 for about 25 miles to Vasco Road; exit right. Follow Vasco to Tesla Road and turn right. Turn left on Mines Road. Follow it for about 1/4 mile to the Murieta Wells Winery turnoff, on the right. We will meet in the small parking area alongside Mines Road. (Don't cross the bridge into the winery.) Carpooling encouraged.

**Leader:** Leslie Flint 650-573-6279, email: lflint@earthlink.net

### **Pescadero Marsh – State Park Docent Nature Walk**

**Sunday May 3, 10:00 AM - Noon**

Come and discover Pescadero Marsh. The California State Park Docents will lead a field trip to learn about the marsh. This beautiful park has a mile-long shoreline, rocky cliffs, and of course a world-famous marsh. The birding at the Marsh is great at this time of year. The docents will point out the plants and animals that inhabit this San Mateo County treasure. If it is not raining, meet in the parking lot just over the bridge at Pescadero State Beach. Wear clothing in layers for cold and windy to sunny weather. Heavy rain cancels. For more information contact: Ranger Dave Augustine 650-879-2170 or Rita Jennings 650-728-2254.

**Directions:** Go south from Half Moon Bay on Hwy 1, about 12 miles. Just past the bridge over Pescadero Creek, look for the south parking lot. If you get to the intersection of Pescadero Road and Hwy 1 you have gone too far. [http://www.greenfoothills.org/news/2001/08-2001\\_PescaderoButano.html](http://www.greenfoothills.org/news/2001/08-2001_PescaderoButano.html)

**Beginner/Family Nature Hike**

### **Bird Walks at Filoli led by SAS volunteers**

**Date: May 16, 9:00 AM -Noon, with Jennifer Rycenga and George Chrisman**

For details, please see May 2 listing.

### **Pescadero Marsh – State Park Docent Nature Walk**

**Sunday May 17, 1:00 - 3:00 PM**

For details, please see April 19 listing.

### **2009 International Migratory Bird Days – Half Moon Bay**

**Saturday and Sunday, May 16 & 17, starts at 10:00 AM**

**Guided Bird Walk each day at 1:00 PM**

Join the nation in celebrating and learning about migratory birds. A day of fun and learning for the whole family. Learn about bird migrations between North America and Central and South America. Activities include exhibits, children's arts and crafts, and guided bird walks. Admission to the State Park is \$6 per car.

*(Continued on page 5)*

*(Birding in the USA, continued from page 1)*

wise as we were travelling to Las Vegas. Although at a rest stop we were greeted by two Great-tailed Grackles. They were really nice and when they walked into the sun they turned a green colour like our Magpies do. We also came across a couple of these noisy birds in a tree on the strip in Vegas!

After the madness of Vegas we went to a little Danish town called Solvang and then to a nearby beach. On the way we stopped because we saw a bird on a wire and some birds flitting around between the ground and a bush. We were there for five minutes: the bird on the wire was a Western Bluebird and the birds flitting around the bush were Purple Finches. At the beach there were loads of birds flitting, flying, and soaring. Most of these were new birds for us, Red-winged Blackbirds, Great Blue Heron, Belted Kingfisher, California Gull, White-winged Dove and Turkey Vulture, and one bird we did not expect to see — an Osprey. We realised there was one about when we heard the call and then it came flying over the hill but perched right where we could not see it. Very annoying!

Now it was time to head back up to Pacifica but the new birds kept on coming. We had been travelling for a couple of hours so we decided to have a stop and what a good decision that was. Two different raptors put in an appearance, an American Kestrel and a Cooper's Hawk. My Mum spotted the Cooper's Hawk perched on top of a building, as we watched it dropped down on a small bird and then flew back up and started plucking it right in front of us. My brother spotted the American Kestrel perched on top of a lamppost and we got amazing views of it before it was mobbed by other birds and flew off. Our next stop was at San Simeon Bay where we saw the usual gulls and a Black Phoebe perched on a tap! I managed to get quite a nice photo of it. A couple of Whimbrel flew in and landed on the beach, another new bird for us. A bit further up the coast there was an Elephant Seal viewing point so we stopped for a look. There were plenty of Elephant Seals and, in the car park, hundreds of Ground Squirrels running around. On the beach a couple of seal carcasses had attracted a flock of Turkey Vultures and the smell was awful! When we got close to Pacifica we saw a White-tailed Kite hovering over the top of a field. It was really nice and we knew straight away what it was due to its unmistakable white tail and wings. We also saw a lot of Red-tailed Hawks just sitting on posts at the side of the road and a few soaring over the top of us, much like the Common Buzzards do back home.

Back at Pacifica we had a walk along Sharp Park Beach and climbed up to Mori Point. This walk produced a few new birds, American Coot, Pied-billed Grebe and Black Turnstone. On the beach there was a flock of 22 Elegant Terns, and Ravens and Brown Pelicans were everywhere as usual!

We had one last opportunity to see some new birds when we went on a walk through Purisima Creek Reserve. It was amazing walking through the huge redwoods. Unfortunately we had somehow managed to leave our binoculars behind so bird identification was difficult but we did manage to identify Steller's Jay and Wren-tit.

In total we saw 70 species, just about all of which were new birds for me. It was a great holiday, and without much effort we saw some great birds.

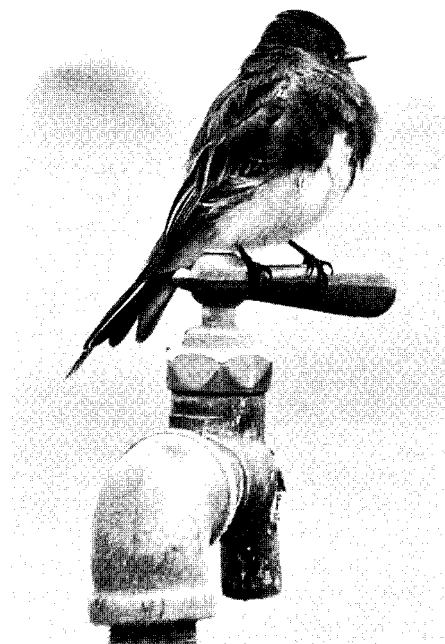


Photo by Jake Hill

Black Phoebe

*(Field Trips, continued from page 4)*

**Directions:** Hwy 92 to Hwy 1. Go south to the first intersection of Kelly Ave., turn right and go west to the Half Moon Bay State Beach entrance. Dress in layers for warm to cool weather; bring a picnic lunch and fluids. Be ready for a fun day.

**Presented by Sequoia Audubon & California State Parks**  
[www.sequoia-audubon.org](http://www.sequoia-audubon.org) or [http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page\\_id=531](http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=531)

**Beginner/Family Event - Wheelchair Accessible**

**Pillar Point Harbor - Birding by Kayak**  
**Saturday, May 30, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM**

Learn how to kayak and enjoy the birds around the Pillar Point Harbor. Get a whole new look at the wildlife from the seat of a kayak. Our friends at California Canoe and Kayak (<http://www.calkayak.com/>) will help experienced kayakers and first-time paddlers have a fun bird tour. We will be on the lookout in the harbor for seals, visiting sea birds, and shoreline peeps. We will paddle out to the kelp beds and might even get an up-close look at the resident sea otter. Our birding leader is the intrepid Barbara Kossy, birder and photographer, who regularly paddles at Pillar Point. Barbara will be joined by a leader from CCK. You will need some basic personal equipment and a pair of binoculars and/or camera. There is a special discount rate of \$49 for SAS members. **Advanced reservations are required.** Sign up online at <http://www.calkayak.com/rsv/dspClnr.cfm?varClassID=28>. For more info contact California Canoe and Kayak at (800) 366-9804. Bad weather or other safety issues may cause a last-minute cancellation.

**Directions:** Meet at California Canoe & Kayak at the Pillar Point harbor, next door to the Half Moon Bay Yacht Club.

**Leader:** Barbara Kossy, 650-728-8720,  
[bkossy@coastsider.net](mailto:bkossy@coastsider.net)

## SAS PROGRAM UPDATES



### Bluebird Recovery

Susan Kritzik, San Mateo County Coordinator

2008 California nestbox reporting results from *Bluebirds Fly* newsletter covers 23 counties. Statewide the percentage of nesting tries to the number of boxes, 99%, was a big improvement over 2007, 69%. The number of chicks fledged compared to the number of eggs, 71%, was consistent with previous years. Due to the consistent care the trail monitors provide, a chick that makes it out of the egg had an 86% chance of fledging. Orange County again led the state with 6,269 Western Bluebirds fledged – almost two times the number of the other 22 counties combined. [sgkritzik@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sgkritzik@sbcglobal.net)

### Conservation Committee

Nancy Arbuckle



### Acorn Woodpeckers at Rossmoor

We have taken an active role in pressuring the US FWS to revoke the depredation permit issued to Rossmoor (near Walnut Creek) to kill up to 50 Acorn Woodpeckers. We have contacted the FWS, been in touch with Congressional representatives, and, like many of you (3000 at last count), have signed CA Audubon Society's petition to rescind the permit. As this newsletter goes to press, we are waiting for a final decision from FWS. FWS sent experts to evaluate the situation, an action we hope will result in the permit's cancellation. Note: Breeding bird survey and Christmas Bird Count data predict future declines of oak woodland birds such as Acorn Woodpeckers due to the spread of sudden oak death. For information on non-lethal woodpecker management, go to [www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74124.html](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74124.html).

### Potential Large-Scale Development in Hillsborough

A 47-acre parcel in Hillsborough, valued at \$25 to \$30 million, overlooking Crystal Springs Canyon, a pristine and magnificent haven for wildlife, and an unparalleled viewshed, stands to be pockmarked with 25 McMansions if we do not remain vigilant. We are following this potential subdivision and will stay involved in what promises to be a long battle.

### Other Actions

We are keeping an eye on the evolving Brisbane wetlands area as well as Sunset's application for alternative uses for their large Menlo Park campus, among other things.

### Redwood City General Plan Update/Cargill Site

RWC staff are proceeding with the Environmental Impact Report for Redwood City's New General Plan. The Draft EIR will evaluate the New General Plan for potential impacts on the environment and analyze proposed land use designations and the environmental consequences of buildout of the General Plan planning area. At the request of DMB, the developer hired by Cargill, the Redwood City Council and the Planning Commission agreed to retain current land use designations at the Cargill site, separating this 1400+ acre site from the rest of the General Plan until the application for development of the property is submitted, expected to be March of this year.

### Sharp Park Golf Course, Pacifica

San Francisco is currently reviewing the fate of the City's municipally-owned golf courses. SAS has sent a letter to the Recreation and Parks Dept. of San Francisco to urge them to consider alternatives that involve restoring Sharp Park to its natural state.



### Farallons Plan

Robin Smith

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has released the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Farallons National Wildlife Refuge. Surprisingly, their preferred alternative calls for expanding resource management, increasing public education and outreach, and developing a visitor services plan that evaluates onsite, wildlife-dependent recreation opportunities. Visitors on the Farallons! There is no easy way to get on the islands. One must climb from a small boat into a hoist in order to get ashore. Most of the island is closed to all but researchers; the birds are easily disturbed; walking is hazardous, and the weather is especially fickle, sometimes making it impossible to leave until the wind and seas abate. On those grounds SAS has gone on record as favoring a more restrictive alternative that does not include visitors.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

### **SAS is in need of a Treasurer on our Board of Directors (to begin ASAP)**

To apply, please call Sue Cossins, Program Coordinator  
650-347-9358 or [sas-sue@earthlink.net](mailto:sas-sue@earthlink.net)

#### **Primary responsibilities:**

- ◇ Has custody of SAS funds and securities. Ensures sufficient funds are available for SAS expenses. Working with the Bookkeeper, ensures all invoices are paid in a timely manner.
- ◇ Is a voting member of the Board of SAS and attends monthly board meetings and annual summer planning meeting. Is a member of the investment committee.
- ◇ Ensures proper financial procedures are followed and is responsible that SAS meets all legal requirements as a 501c3 non-profit, including taxes, Federal, State, county and city legal requirements.
- ◇ Prepares a written monthly financial report to the BOD. Prepares an annual budget. Keeps all financial records current. Reconciles expenses. Checks bank and investment statements monthly.

**Secondary responsibilities:** Also invests funds as directed by the Board; is knowledgeable about non-profit accounting procedures; and is able to use Quicken, Excel, and Quick Books.

#### **Field Trip Chairperson**

After many years of doing a wonderful job in this position, Carol Masterson, would like to find a replacement. This position involves planning field trips and sending write-ups to the Program Coordinator for publication in the newsletter and website. For more details call Carol: 650-347-1769 or email: [carol-masterson@sbcbglobal.net](mailto:carol-masterson@sbcbglobal.net)

#### **Audubon Canyon Ranch 2009 Hosting Information**

ACR's public season began on March 14<sup>th</sup> and ends July 12<sup>th</sup>. Soon the Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets will be arriving at the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve and so will many interested and fascinated visitors. ACR is seeking warm, welcoming hosts to greet these public visitors. Will you take time out of your busy schedule to help? Your help is needed from 9:15 AM – 4:30 PM.

Sequoia Audubon hosting dates are the following:

**March 28 & 29**

**April 25 & 26**

**May 23**

**June 20 & 21 (Fathers' Day)**

**July 5**

To learn more about ACR please visit their website:

[www.cgret.org](http://www.cgret.org). Please contact Laurie Graham if you would like to host on any of the above days: 650-589-2133 or email: [fair80@comcast.net](mailto:fair80@comcast.net) Not available on the above dates? Other hosting dates available.

## **OTHER BIRDING ACTIVITIES**

### **Bay Area Bird Photographers (BABP)**

**Wednesdays, April 1, and May 6, 7:30-9:00 PM**

**Lucy Evans Baylands Interpretive Center, East Embarcadero Road, Palo Alto, CA**

BABP is co-sponsored by the Recreation-Open Space & Science Division of the City of Palo Alto and the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. Meetings, which are open to the public, are held on the first Wednesday evening of each month, September-May. Each meeting usually includes a slide presentation by a member or a guest speaker. Contact Pete LaTourrette (650) 961-2741 for information.

### **Lecture: Wild Turkeys in California – Their Brief History & Effects on Sonoma Woodlands**

**Dr. Daniel Gluesencamp**

**Thursday, April 2, 7:30 – 9:00 PM**

California Native Plant Society Program, San Francisco County Fair Bldg, 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. & Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park  
Wild Turkeys are among the most interesting challenges introduced to California. Though native to other parts of North America, they never successfully colonized California. The recent introduction and expansion of turkeys create tantalizing questions and research opportunities. In November 2002, Daniel initiated the first experimental assessment of turkey impacts in California. It evaluates the effect of turkeys on ground dwelling invertebrate populations, acorn removal, and vegetation structure and composition. This presentation will give an overview of the history and biology of introduced turkeys and describe research underway at Audubon Canyon Ranch's Bouverie Preserve. Carpooling encouraged. Call Sue Cossins @ 650-347-9358

### **14<sup>th</sup> Annual Godwit Days, Arcata, CA**

**California's North Coast Spring Bird Migration Festival  
April 16 – 22**

Held at the peak of spring migration, shorebirds abound and special opportunities are planned to see many other species, including Marbled Murrelet, Spotted Owl, and Snowy Plover. Complete information at [www.godwitdays.com](http://www.godwitdays.com).

### **Going Native Garden Tours**

**Sunday, April 19, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM**

**A Free, Self-guided Tour of Native Plant Gardens in Santa Clara Valley and the Peninsula**

The goals of the tour are to demonstrate reduced water use, reduced chemical and pesticide use, improved habitat, and unique aesthetic appeal of gardens designed with California native plants. Go to [www.gngt.org](http://www.gngt.org) to register for this free event. This site also offers on native plant gardening resources.

### **ABA 2009 Annual Convention, Corpus Christi, TX**

**April 27 – May 3**

The American Birding Association is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anni-

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Sequoia Audubon Membership Form

*Yes, please continue to send me  
my copy of Needles!*

- ☐ Individual \$15  
☐ Family \$20  
☐ Student/Senior \$10  
☐ Add'l donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut along the dotted line  
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Sequoia Audubon Society

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*(Other Birding Activities, continued from page 7)*

versary with a big birding bash! They plan on seeing almost half of the breeding birds in the United States during the field trips! Pre and post trips go to the Hill Country, Upper Texas Coast, and the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Join them at the Omni Bayfront Hotel, overlooking the Gulf of Mexico and look for all the migrants that follow its coast. Info at [www.aba.org](http://www.aba.org)

### **15<sup>th</sup> Annual Kern Valley Spring Nature Festival (formerly Bioregions Festival), Weldon, Kern County**

**Festival exhibits: May 2 – 3; Field Trips: April 29 – May 5** (Bob Barnes' Kern River Valley Birding runs the field trips.)  
Speakers: On Friday evening Dr. Jason Saleeby of CalTech will give a presentation on the Geology and Seismicity of the Southern Sierra Nevada. On Saturday evening Bob Barnes will give a presentation on Birds and Butterflies of the Southern Sierra Nevada and Kern County. More information: [www.kern.audubon.org/KRVSNNF.htm](http://www.kern.audubon.org/KRVSNNF.htm)

### **South Bay Bird Fest – Free, family event**

**Saturday, May 2, Noon -3:00 PM**

The event will be held at the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Environmental Education Center at 1751 Grand Blvd, Alviso CA 95002. For directions and more information <http://www.fws.gov/desfbay/> or call (408) 262-5513 ext 102 Lindy Nice, or ext 104 Eric McKee.

### **Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour**

**Sunday, May 3, 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM**

A free, self-guided tour of 60 Alameda and Contra Costa County gardens and native plant nurseries, including a native plant sale May 2 & 3. Info: [www.bringingbackthenatives.net](http://www.bringingbackthenatives.net).

### **Walk on the Wild Side Outdoor Festival – Free, family event, includes parking**

**Saturday, May 9, 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM**

Stones Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, near Freeport, 10 miles from Sacramento, at the Beach Lake Picnic Area. Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day and local conservation successes. Festival includes tours of wetlands and heron rookeries, 30+ conservation exhibitors, children's activities, falconry demonstration, wild animal presentation by Wild Things, Inc, native plant sale, outdoor BBQ, and much more. Info at 916-875-WILD or [www.fws.gov/stonelakes/wow](http://www.fws.gov/stonelakes/wow).

Black-Legged  
 Kittiwake



**THE BIRD BOX  
RARE BIRD ALERT**

**415-681-7422**

## **Mission Statement**

*The mission of Sequoia Audubon Society is to participate in environmental education, and conservation and in the restoration, preservation, protection and enjoyment of our native natural resources with emphasis on birds and their habitats.*