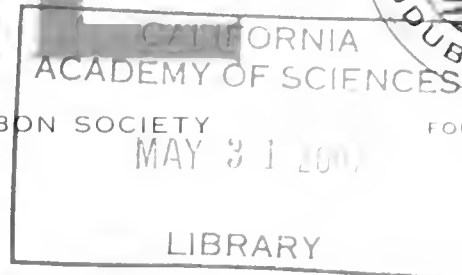


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THE GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY



Bob Lewis

Black Oystercatchers are found along the North Richmond shoreline. With restoration of the area's native oyster beds, the species will gain an additional food source.

New Project Helps Richmond Community Protect Shoreline

The North Richmond shoreline—seven miles along southern San Pablo Bay between Pt. San Pablo and Pt. Pinole in western Contra Costa County—is a place of contradictions. It has been designated by National Audubon and BirdLife International as an Important Bird Area, but, at the same time, it is one of the bay's most threatened habitats.

For the past half year, Golden Gate Audubon has been working with the Richmond community and various organizations to explore ways to protect the shoreline not only for wildlife but for local residents. Now Golden Gate Audubon and the Natural Heritage Institute, in partnership with other organizations, are launching a new project, the North Richmond Shoreline Academy, that will involve the local community in the conservation of this important resource.

The North Richmond shoreline's 500 acres of tidal marshes and 800 acres of mudflats provide critical habitat for thousands of migrating birds every year and for resident threatened and endangered species. Among the migrants are Red Knots, designated by the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan as "Species of High Concern." The shoreline also supports one of San Francisco Bay's few nesting pairs of Osprey.

The shoreline's wetlands perform a critical function by filtering stormwater runoff

SHORELINE continued on page 12

Birds Turn Out for Birdiest City Count

More than 75 birders converged on San Francisco over the weekend of April 13-16 to take part in Golden Gate Audubon's first entry in the national America's Birdiest City contest. The goal was to locate as many species as possible over 72 hours within a specific city or county, and our group far surpassed expectations with a total of 178 different species observed. Aside from a brief rainstorm on Saturday morning, the weather was generally cooperative, and a good variety of migrants was seen on land, over the hilltops, and heading north over the ocean.

Birders visited the four corners of San Francisco, covering Candlestick Point, Bayview Hill, Heron's Head Park, the Embarcadero, the Presidio, Land's End, the Cliff House, Sutro Heights Park, Ocean Beach, Fort Funston, Lake Merced, Mt. Davidson, Glen Canyon Park, and, of course, Golden Gate Park. Interesting species popped up all over, including many that had remained over the winter. Three Black-and-white Warblers were seen, including a lingering downtown bird, a Common Merganser in Golden Gate Park was observed by several parties; and the stunning male Harlequin Duck stayed around the bayside long enough to be added to the list. Raptors were well represented, with such locally rare species as Merlin and White-tailed Kite, and a surprising three owl species: Great Horned, Barn, and Short-eared. We swept the expected gulls, with

BIRDIEST COUNT continued on page 11



INSIDE

- 4 New GGA Conservation Director
- 5 Fall Birding Classes
- 6 Canoe Palo Alto Baylands

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 15, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Society Supporting Membership is \$25 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets the last Monday of every month (except August and December) at 7:30 p.m. in the chapter office in Berkeley.

The Gull is published nine times per year by the Golden Gate Audubon Society. The deadline for submissions is five weeks prior to the month of publication. Special third-class postage paid in Oakland, CA. Send address changes to office promptly. The post office does not forward *The Gull*.

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GGA's 90th Anniversary— A Community Celebration



GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON

This year, Golden Gate Audubon marks its 90th anniversary. This auspicious birthday makes us one of the oldest conservation organizations on the West Coast and underscores our long, proud tradition of action to protect birds and other wildlife. Today, we continue to be one of the most effective wildlife conservation organizations in the Bay Area.

A 90-year history is impressive for any organization, and Golden Gate Audubon's longevity is a testament to the importance of our mission and the dedication of our members. Golden Gate Audubon's leadership has been critical to the conservation and restoration of places as diverse as the Farallon Islands; San Francisco's Heron's Head Park, Crissy Field wetlands, Pier 94 wetlands, and Golden Gate National Recreation Area; and the East Bay's Martin Luther King, Jr. Shoreline, Gateway Valley, Whittell Marsh, Eastshore State Park, Alameda Wildlife Refuge, and Lake Merritt Channel. We also have played a leadership role in protecting wildlife habitats beyond the bay, including Mono Lake and Klamath Basin.

Conservation education is an equally significant part of our history. Through field trips to destinations near and far, classes for birders of all levels, and environmental education programs for underserved students and their families, Golden Gate Audubon has connected thousands of people with nature.

Throughout our history and continuing into the present, people are the heart of what we do. Our accomplishments flow directly from the dedication of thousands of individuals who, since 1917, have lent their skills and passion to our common vision: to protect Bay Area wildlife and wild places and inspire our community to join us.

You—our talented members and volunteers—are critical to Golden Gate Audubon's successes, past and present, and you are the ones who inspire your friends, families, and neighbors to take part in our conservation and education efforts. We invite you and all of our friends and supporters in the community to attend Golden Gate Audubon's 90th anniversary gala on October 11 to celebrate nine decades of conservation victories and everyone who has made these victories possible.

The Bay Area community is already stepping forward to help us celebrate Golden Gate Audubon in style. Our honorary host committee includes leaders whose efforts have been vital to Bay Area conservation, as well as such notable public officials as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom. We are also honored to have Pacific Gas and Electric Company serving as the lead corporate sponsor for this event. PG&E has been an important partner over the years, from its financial support of Eco-Oakland and other programs to its collaboration with us on a variety of Bay Area conservation initiatives.

A committee of talented volunteers is pulling out all the stops to ensure that our October celebration is a tremendous success. Please join us for this important event as we acknowledge 90 years of conservation accomplishments and set the stage for our next 90 years of conservation achievements.

by Elizabeth Murdock, Executive Director

Golden Gate Audubon 90th Anniversary Celebration

Thursday, October 11, 2007, 5:30–8:30 p.m.

Pier 1, San Francisco

For tickets, please contact Michael Martin, mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org
or 510.843.7295



Photo: Martin

On Earth Day, April 21, students from Paul Revere Elementary School in San Francisco helped remove invasive plants at Golden Gate Audubon's Pier 94 wetland restoration site. The students were among about 60 volunteers who planted over 500 native species, removed weeds, and cleared away dozens of bags of debris.

GGA VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Fridays throughout the summer

The Eco-Oakland Program holds public restoration days at Arrowhead Marsh and Lion Creek in Oakland. For more information and to sign up, contact Anthony DeCicco, Eco-Oakland program manager, at adecicco@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.635.5533.

Saturday, June 2, and Tuesday, June 5

The Eco-Oakland Program leads field trips to Lion Creek, near Merritt College in Oakland. Help East Oakland elementary school students with mapping activities, habitat restoration, and aquatic invertebrate assessment. To participate, contact Anthony DeCicco, Eco-Oakland program manager, at 510.635.5533 or adecicco@goldengateaudubon.org.

Saturday, June 9

Help lead an Eco-Oakland family field trip to Alcatraz Island. To sign up, contact Anthony DeCicco, Eco-Oakland program manager, at 510.635.5533 or adecicco@goldengateaudubon.org.

Saturdays, June 9, July 14, August 11, and September 8, 9 a.m. – noon

Save the Quail habitat restoration workdays at the Presidio. Meet at the Natural Resources Field Office, 1539 Pershing Dr., San Francisco.

Wednesday, June 20, 7 – 9 p.m.

Volunteer Orientation Night. Meet at the Golden Gate Audubon headquarters, 2530 San Pablo Ave. Suite G, Berkeley.

Saturdays, June 30 and August 18, 1 – 4 p.m.

Habitat restoration and planting at East Wash, Lands End. Meet at the Lands End parking lot at Pt. Lobos Ave. and Merrie Way, just above the Sutro Baths and the Cliff House, San Francisco. Please RSVP to both Caroline Christman (ccristman@parksconservancy.org) and Michael Martin (mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org).

For additional information, or for directions to any of the sites, contact Michael Martin, GGA volunteer and membership development coordinator, at mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.7295.

GOLDMAN FUND SUPPORTS ALTAMONT PASS CAMPAIGN

In January, Golden Gate Audubon settled its lawsuit over illegal bird kills from wind turbines at Altamont Pass. This agreement, however, did not bring our Altamont Pass campaign to an end; we are now initiating the next phase of our campaign to protect the thousands of birds that are killed each year by the deadly turbines.

Golden Gate Audubon has received a grant in amount of \$1,000,000 from the Richard and Lucille Goldman Foundation to support our efforts. This work will include a comprehensive study of the current impact of wind turbines on the avian life and a settlement agreement. Our settlement agreement requires the companies to reduce avian fatalities by half within three years and to work with Golden Gate Audubon to create a comprehensive conservation plan for Altamont Pass—a plan that will rely upon the best available science and technologies to reduce bird kills and will seek to ensure the long-term viability of bird populations in the Altamont region. We are honored to conduct this work with support from the Goldman Fund.

HELP MONITOR NEST BOXES AT THE SAN FRANCISCO ZOO

John Aikin, conservation director at the San Francisco Zoo, and Golden Gate Audubon member Jock Clark recently installed 25 nest boxes around the San Francisco Zoo. The boxes are designed to attract chickadees, vireos, nuthatches, Tree and Vic's tree-green, Swallow, Wood Ducks, American Kestrel, and Barn Owl. Now we need your help to monitor the nest boxes. Volunteers must be reliable and able to work independently. The zoo will provide a map of the nest locations, a tour of the boxes to get volunteers started, and access to the zoo for regular surveys. Golden Gate Audubon volunteers interested in swinging by the zoo on a regular basis to survey boxes for signs of nesting should contact John Aikin at JohnA@sfzoo.org or 415.312.9072.

Eli Saddler—Golden Gate Audubon's New Conservation Director

Eli Saddler joined the staff of Golden Gate Audubon as conservation director on May 1, 2007. Eli comes to GGA with a background in coastal habitat and wetland protection and considerable experience in researching, analyzing, and drafting environmental legislation, lobbying local, state, and federal lawmakers for endangered species protection, and organizing media campaigns on environmental issues.

Previously, he worked on campaigns for Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN), based in Marin County, where, among other activities, he managed the GotMercury.Org campaign and represented TIRN at the United Nations to advocate for international fishing regulations and ocean conservation. He also has worked for Oceana in Washington, DC, where he lobbied Congress for ocean protection.

Eli served as the legislative analyst and lobbyist for the Hawaii Audubon Society in Honolulu. In this capacity, he concentrated on issues that affected Hawaii's



Eli Saddler, Golden Gate Audubon conservation director.

endangered species, especially the impact of habitat destruction.

A resident of Oakland, Eli says, "I'm a city person who loves the outdoors and am

very enthusiastic about Golden Gate Audubon's mission to preserve wetlands and native wildlife species in an urban habitat. I also enjoy working with volunteers and being out in the field whenever possible. I am really looking forward to 'getting my hands dirty' on local, on-the-ground conservation projects."

Eli holds a master's degree in marine science and policy and a law degree, both from Duke University, as well as a bachelor degree in zoology and a master's degree in environmental and occupational health, both from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Eli also studied languages at the National University of Mexico in Mexico City, the Beijing Language and Culture Institute in Beijing, and the Kansai University of Foreign Studies in Osaka, and is proficient in Spanish, Mandarin, and Japanese.

We all welcome Eli to Golden Gate Audubon!

by Marjorie Blackwell, President

Become a GGA Wildlife Guardian!

With a modest monthly pledge of \$10 or more charged automatically to your credit card, you can join Golden Gate Audubon's Wildlife Guardians and have a major impact on our work to protect Bay Area birds and other wildlife and their habitats. Whether you pledge \$10 or \$50 or \$100 per month, as a Wildlife Guardian you will know that your contributions are giving *direct support* to the protection of our local wildlife resources—each and every month. Plus, as a Wildlife Guardian you'll enjoy all the benefits of Supporting Membership, including a subscription to *The Gull*, discounts at our Nature Store, and priority registration and discounts for field trips and classes.

To become a Wildlife Guardian, fill out the form enclosed with this issue of *The Gull* if you are renewing your Supporting Membership or are joining for the first time. If you are already a Supporting Member, contact Tara Zuardo at the Golden Gate Audubon office at ggas@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.2222. Your monthly contribution is tax deductible and will be used to support our conservation, education, and birding programs. Join the Wildlife Guardians today!

World Premiere to Benefit GGA

Join award-winning playwright and Golden Gate Audubon member Anne Galjour for the world premiere of her latest comedic play, *Bird in the Hand*, on Sunday, June 24. Directed by Ellen Sebastian Chang, Anne's play celebrates what is unique in the natural world in the Bay Area through a cast of local people and birds as they deal with habitat destruction, invasive species, and the struggle to make new nests. *Bird in the Hand* runs through July at the renowned Central Works Theatre Company in the Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Avenue.

Proceeds from the June 24 premiere of *Bird in the Hand* support Golden Gate Audubon's conservation, education, and birding programs, and are fully tax deductible (less benefits received). Tickets are available on a sliding scale from \$20 to \$35. For reservations and information, call 510.558.1381 or visit www.centralworks.org or www.annegaljour.com. Or for more details, contact Michael Martin at Golden Gate Audubon at mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.7295.

We hope to see you there!



BIRDING CLASSES

Summer in the East Bay

Three GGA-sponsored classes are offered through Albany Adult School. Register online at www.albany.k12.ca.us/adult/birding.html or by calling 510.559.6580.

Wild Butterflies in the City and the Sticks

Wednesdays, June 20 and 27, July 11, 7:30 – 9 p.m., plus three field trips on the Saturdays following each class

Exclusive video will reveal rarely seen details of the life cycle of butterflies. The class will also cover identification, butterfly gardening, and caterpillar rearing. On field trips, participants will look for field marks, behavior, and favored plants. For additional information, contact the instructor at sal.levinson@gmail.com or go to www.butterflygardener.com.

Birding Basics

Tuesdays, June 26 – July 24, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus five field trips on the Saturdays following each class

Designed for beginning birders, the class is modeled after David Allen Sibley's *Birding Basics*, which would be useful to own as a textbook. It will cover bird behavior, identification, physiology, and taxonomy, as well as use of equipment and birding hot spots. Contact the instructor at eddie@naturetrip.com or go to www.naturetrip.com/GGASClasses.html for more details.

Birds and Butterflies – Easy Garden Enchantment

Mondays, July 9 – 30, 7 – 9 p.m., plus one field trip, Saturday, July 28, 8:45 – 10:45 a.m.

Set out a welcome for birds, butterflies, and other beneficial critters, and become captivated by the beauty of native California plants as you learn year-round ecological gardening. Gorgeous slide shows, environmental and natural history, and easy garden management lessons will help you create an enchanting wild-life habitat. Materials fee is \$5, payable to instructor. For more details, go to www.thegardenisateacher.com.

Fall Classes in San Francisco

Joe Morlan's classes, endorsed by Golden Gate Audubon, start in early September. All classes meet from 7 to 9:15 p.m. in room 307, Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore at Bay Street. Fees are \$140 for each seven-week course, and \$125 for EA125, which is six weeks. If you preregister a week early, you receive a \$10 discount. You can register online at www.evolve.com/ce.ccsf/. For other registration options and additional details, see the instructor's website at <http://fog.ccsf.edu/~jmorlan/fall07.htm>.

Field Ornithology I

Introduction to birds and birding, combining basic field skills with the study of bird ecology, biology, evolution, and behavior. Meets on Tuesdays. Part A (EA101): September 11 – October 23. Part B (EA105): October 30 – December 11.

Field Ornithology II

North American water birds including shorebirds and gulls. Meets on Wednesdays. Part A (EA110): September 5 – October 17. Part B (EA115): October 24 – December 12.

Field Ornithology III

North American land birds including pipits, waxwings, and warblers. Meets on Thursdays. Part A (EA120): September 6 – October 25. Part B (EA125): November 1 – December 13.

Classes at the Oakland Museum

GGA is excited to announce that we will offer new birding classes at the Oakland Museum. The first two classes, for people with a strong interest in studying birds and bird behavior in depth, will take place in the fall. To register, call the office at 510.843.2222.

Shorebirds

Tuesdays, September 4 – 18, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus three field trips on the Saturdays following each class, 9 – 11:30 a.m.

In fall, as shorebirds migrate from northern breeding grounds to southern wintering areas, many stop in San Francisco Bay to feed. We will discuss shorebird species worldwide, especially local shorebirds, and their annual life cycle, with emphasis on migration and breeding behavior. The class will be richly illustrated with digital slides of shorebirds of the world. Class is limited to 25 participants. Fee: \$60.

North American Owls

Tuesdays, October 9 – 23, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus two field trips, October 20 and 27, 7 – 9:30 p.m.

Learn what makes owls different from other birds and how to identify them by sight and sound, and understand more about their habits and habitats. The class will be illustrated with slides and soundtracks of these birds of the night. Class is limited to 20 participants. Fee: \$50.

Speaker Series

Golden Gate Audubon's Speaker Series resumes in September with Larry Arbanas showing his film *California and Western Birds in Motion* in Berkeley on Thursday, September 20, and in San Francisco on Tuesday, September 25.



FIELD TRIPS

PAM BELCHAMBER, COORDINATOR

\$ Entrance fee

Biking trip

For questions about individual field trips, contact the leaders. If you cannot reach a leader, contact Pam Belchamber at 510.549.2839. Field trips are also listed on the Golden Gate Audubon website at www.goldengateaudubon.org.

Jewel Lake in Tilden Park

**Fridays, June 1, September 7,
8:30 – 11 a.m.**

Phila Rogers, 510.848.9156,
philajane6@yahoo.com

Meet at parking lot at north end of Central Park Dr. for a walk around this lush riparian corridor to see breeding birds that have arrived and summer visitors. Some—Black-headed Grosbeaks, Wilson's Warblers, Warbling Vireos, Swanson's Thrushes—will be singing. *Note: No trip in July and August.*

San Francisco Botanical Garden

**Saturdays, June 2, July 7, August 4,
10 a.m. – noon**

Angie Geiger and Nancy DeStefanis, SF Nature Education; Darin Dawson, SF Botanical Garden docent, 415.387.9160, www.sfnature.org

Meet at front gate of garden, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. Families welcome. Children

must be accompanied by an adult. Trip is cosponsored by Botanical Garden, SF Nature Education, and GGA.

San Francisco Botanical Garden

Sundays, June 3, August 5, 8 – 10:30 a.m.

Alan Ridley, allanrid@pacbell.net, and Helen McKenna, 415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall, 650.349.3780

Meet at front gate of garden, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. The garden's microhabitats attract an array of resident, migrant, and vagrant birds. This monthly trip is oriented toward helping beginning birders develop their skills in spotting and identifying the garden's birds. *Note: No July field trip.*

Alcatraz Island

**Thursdays, June 14, July 12, August 9,
8:45 – 11:30 a.m.**

Christian Hellwig, christian_hellwig@nps.gov; Pam Belchamber, pbelchamber@earthlink.net

Explore the Palo Alto Baylands by Canoe

Saturday, June 30, 3:30 – 8 p.m.

Nan Steketee, nan@earthshareca.org; Pamela Llewellyn, 510.843.7904, seacreature219@sbcglobal.net

Join Golden Gate Audubon field trip leader Pamela Llewellyn and naturalists from Save the Bay and Baykeeper for a unique wildlife adventure—exploring the Palo Alto Baylands by canoe. With over 90 percent of the bay's wetlands developed or filled, this trip offers a close-up look at rare and threatened habitats. We will spend the evening in canoes, looking at the plants, birds, and other animals that call the Baylands home and learning how we are connected to this valuable ecosystem. Canoe equipment, training, and a light supper are included. Palo Alto Baylands Preserve is just off U.S. 101 at the Embarcadero exit; participants will be provided with directions to the site.

This joint venture among Earth Share of California and Earth Share members Golden Gate Audubon, Save the Bay, and Baykeeper benefits Earth Share's 25th anniversary. The trip is open to people age 10 and older; no previous canoeing experience is required. Space is limited to 24 participants, so sign up early at www.earthshareca.org. Cost is \$60 per person. For more information, contact Nan Steketee.



Common Yellowthroat, which nests at Palo Alto Baylands and other local marshes.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Join National Park Service biologist Christian Hellwig on this trip offered exclusively to GGA Supporting Members. Trips are limited to 10 participants. Reserve by contacting Tara Zuardo, GGA office manager, at 510.843.2222 or ggas@goldengateaudubon.org. Then book your space on the ferry with Alcatraz Cruises at 415.981.7625 or www.alcatrazcruises.com. Buy a ticket (\$21.75) for the 9 a.m. Early Bird Tour. *Note: Boarding time is between 8:30 and 8:50 a.m.* The ferry departs from Pier 33. Trip is timed for return on the 11:15 a.m. boat, arriving Pier 33 at 11:30.

To reach Pier 33 using transit, take the F streetcar, adjacent to the Ferry Building, or the No. 10 Muni bus (fare: \$1.50). If you are arriving on BART, exit at the Embarcadero Station and board the F streetcar. If you are driving, parking is available at the lot across the street from Pier 33 (early bird available) and other area garages.

Corona Heights

San Francisco

**Fridays, June 15, July 20, August 17,
8 – 10 a.m.**

Charles Hibbard; Lewis Ellingham; Margaret Goodale, 415.554.9600, ext. 16, mgoodale@randallmuseum.org

Meet in front of Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, at end of Museum Way off Roosevelt. We'll enjoy views of the city and bay as we circle Corona Heights,

checking east canyon woodland and north forest for residents and migrants, as well as monitoring hilltop scrub and south cliff.

Lassen Volcanic National Park

Friday–Sunday, June 22–24

Dan Murphy, 415.564.0074,
murphsf@comcast.net (email preferred)

Join Dan and Joan Murphy for their annual family camping excursion. In past years we have seen Black Swift, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Townsend's Solitaire, Mountain Bluebird, Calliope Hummingbird, Black-backed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, and many of the flycatchers, warblers, and finches that breed in the mountains.

On Friday, meet at Manzanita Lake Campground store at 6:30 a.m. We'll bird around the lake for 2–3 hours, then return to camp for breakfast. At 10:30 we'll rendezvous at the store and hike 3–5 miles on one of Lassen's beautiful trails, climbing as much as 700 feet. Wear sturdy shoes and bring lunch and liquids. Sunscreen, hat, mosquito repellent, and warm clothing may also be necessary.

On Saturday, we'll meet at the store at 7:30 a.m. and caravan north to Burney Falls, Fall River Valley, and Baum Lake. Those staying at Hat Creek Resort can meet group around 8 a.m. at vista point about 12 miles north of Lassen on Hwy. 44/89. Bring lunch and liquids. This all-day excursion of about 100 miles will include a midday break to swim at Lake Britton, hike the trails, or watch one of California's most spectacular waterfalls. Since this is a long and tiring day, we suggest a picnic dinner at Hat Creek Resort. We'll allow time to make a food and gas run into Burney.

On Sunday, meet at the store at 6:30 a.m. to bird around lake for 2–3 hours, then return to camp for breakfast. At 10:30 we'll rendezvous at the store and drive through the park, making frequent stops for birding and for lunch at Summit Lake Campground. We usually stop birding after lunch at the campground.

Thursday night preview: Join us at 7 p.m. to watch wildlife at the Hat Lake beaver pond. From Manzanita Lake, drive south into park for about 12 miles. Park in

FIELD TRIPS continued on page 8

Bicycle Trips

Kathy Jarrett, 510.547.1233 (no calls after 9 p.m.), Kathy_Jarrett@yahoo.com
Bicycle helmet required. Bring bicycle lock, lunch, and liquids. Dress for variable weather. Rain cancels.

Transit information: Email leader or go to www.transit510.org

Hayward Shoreline Regional Park

Saturday, July 7

Meet at San Leandro BART station following 7:55 a.m. arrival of train from Richmond (ride 3 miles to trailhead via bike lanes on Williams St.) or meet at 8:30 a.m. at San Leandro Marina Park. We will bicycle along San Francisco Bay Trail to Hayward Shoreline Regional Park and Hayward Shoreline Interpretive Center, making a 14-mile round-trip excursion. First portion of trail is paved, remaining part is easily negotiable. Reservations not necessary, but an email or phone call is appreciated. From I-880 in San Leandro, take Marina Blvd. exit (west) for 1.4 miles. Turn left onto March, Bay Dr. Go to end to last parking lot at San Leandro Marina Park.

Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, July 28

Meet at Santa Clara/Great America Capitol Corridor Train Station at 8:30 a.m. or at 9:15 a.m. at trailhead at Alviso County Park. Ride from station to Alviso County Park follows a trail where birds are usually seen. From Alviso we will ride on streets to NWR visitor center, make a circuit of the unpaved trail around the marsh, and return to Alviso County Park. Approximate total distance is 15 miles. Trip ends at noon. Reservations not necessary, but an email or phone call is appreciated.

Take I-880 south toward San Jose, then Hwy. 237 west. Go 2.2 miles and take North First St. exit. Turn right on North First. In about 1 mile, North First becomes Taylor St. In one block turn right on Gold St. then left on Elizabeth St. and right on Hope St. Continue to Alviso County Park and trailhead parking for Don Edwards SF Bay NWR in Alviso.

Quarry Lakes, Alameda Creek, Coyote Hills

Saturday, August 4,

Meet at 8:20 a.m. on east side of Fremont BART Station at Tule Pond, adjacent to parking lot. This is one of our most popular trips, with 50 to 60 species seen in riparian, marsh, and bayside habitats. On this trip we hope to see breeding swallows. Total distance is about 24 miles mostly on paved bike trails, with very little uphill. Trip ends at 3 p.m. Reservations not necessary, but an email or phone call is appreciated.

Take I-880 to Fremont and exit on Mowry Ave. Go east on Mowry for 2.3 miles toward central Fremont. Fremont BART parking lot is on east side of station past Civic Center Dr.

Eastshore State Park

Sunday, September 2

Meet at 8:40 a.m. at El Cerrito Del Norte BART Station or at 9 a.m. at end of South 51st St. in Richmond. There is a spur from San Francisco Bay Trail to this point. We will bird along SF Bay Trail from Richmond to Emeryville and end at Aquatic Park in Berkeley. Bring lunch or purchase at Seabreeze Market on University Ave. in Berkeley. Reservations not necessary, but an email or phone call is appreciated.

Take Bayview exit from I-580 north and turn left to cross west over freeway. Go left on Seaport and immediately left on South 51st St. Continue to end and park on street. Entrance to short spur to Bay Trail starts here. If concerned about security, park at Point Isabel and ride north on trail about .75 mile to meet group.

FIELD TRIPS from page 7

lot to left just beyond hairpin turn at Hat Lake. Please don't slam car doors or make excessive noise that can scare the wildlife. Bring mosquito repellent, warm jacket, and flashlight.

Stop at our campsite for further information. We will have a campfire every evening beginning between 8 and 9. Bring your own chair and a cup. We will provide hot water for tea or coffee. Check the campground bulletin boards or the office at Hat Creek Resort for our poster, campsite number, and any last-minute changes in the schedule.

From Bay Area, drive north on I-5 to junction with Hwy. 44 in Redding. Go east on Hwy. 44 to northwest entrance of Lassen. Camping facilities are available at Manzanita Lake Campground—loops A and C by reservation only, loops B and D on a first-come, first-served basis. **Reservations:** www.recreation.gov or 877.444.6777. Lodging is available about 15 mi. north of park at Hat Creek Resort, 530.335.7121.

Merrie Way

Eastern Sierra Nevada

Sunday, June 24, July 22, August 26,
8 a.m.

Harry Fuller, 415.344.2363,
anzatowhee@yahoo.com

Meet at Merrie Way, the unpaved parking lot at west end of Pt. Lobos above Cliff House at Lands End. We will see Brown Pelicans, Elegant Terns, and Heermann's Gulls. We will track the progress of Red-tailed Hawks that breed at Sutro Heights, and the Pigeon Guillemots that breed on Lands End cliffs. Email leader for transit information.

Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park

Eastern Sierra Nevada

Wednesdays, June 27, July 25,
August 22, 9:30 a.m. – noon

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066,
hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey,
510.528.2093, ruthtobey@earthlink.net

Meet at large spherical cage near Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue Sts. We will bird area near center, then go down to lake toward Embarcadero, or up path to Children's Fairyland. We will watch resident species as they nest and raise their young. We hope to watch the young fledge and take their first flights.

Take 12, N, or NL bus to Grand and Perkins, and walk into park on Perkins. Best parking is in boathouse lot near Nature Center. Entry (via Bellevue near Children's Fairyland) is free on weekdays.

Snag Lake Backpack Trip

Eastern Sierra Nevada

Friday – Monday, July 27 – 30

Robin Pulich; David Rice, 510.527.7210,
drice2@comcast.net

We'll backpack 3 miles to Snag Lake and spend 3 nights in primitive camping by a stream near a large meadow. We should see flocks of mixed warblers and other songbirds, plus resident birds of the mountains, Bald Eagles, and migrating shorebirds. We'll be above 6,000 feet. To avoid impact on fragile habitat, trip is limited to 12 people. Each participant is responsible for his or her own gear and food; some shared meals may be arranged. Contact leader to reserve a space.

Farallon Islands

Sunday, August 5

Alan Hopkins, 415.664.0983, ash@sfo.com
We will depart from Sausalito at 7:30 a.m. for an 8-hour pelagic trip to the Faral-

lones and beyond. Cost of the trip is \$100 for Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Members and \$125 for nonmembers. The trip sells out early, and spaces may still be available. For registration and other information, see the field trip listings on the GGA website or contact leader.

Mono Lake

Eastern Sierra Nevada

Friday, August 24

Rusty Scalf, rfscalf@sbcglobal.net; Emilie Strauss, desertpeach@earthlink.net

Meet at 8 a.m. at Mono Lake County Park, north of Lee Vining. We plan to cover diverse habitats: riparian woodland, pine forest, and high desert. Trip is limited to 15 people. Contact Rusty Scalf to sign up, and Emilie or Rusty for trip details. Emilie is a professional biologist who has done a lot of field work in the Mono Basin. Lee Vining Canyon and Lundy Canyon have U.S. Forest Service campgrounds. First-come, first-served camping is available at Lundy Lake Resort (which has showers). Lee Vining has a small RV park. For lodging info, go to www.leevining.com.

Big Trip to San Blas, Mexico

Did you know that the scenic town of San Blas, Mexico, is in the heart of one of Mexico's richest birding areas? Golden Gate Audubon will offer a nine-day natural history and birding trip to San Blas and the surrounding highlands, February 27 to March 6, 2008. Over 330 species, including 25 Mexican endemics, are possibilities for this trip.

We will visit tropical deciduous forest, pine-oak woodland of the Sierra Madre, tropical rivers, mangrove forests, beaches, and a shade-grown coffee plantation, looking for Military Macaw, Tufted and San Blas Jays, Red Warbler, Red-headed Tanager, Russet-crowned Motmot, up to four species of Trogon, Golden Vireo, Bumblebee Hummingbird, green and spiny-tailed iguanas, and many tropical butterflies. We will stay in only two hotels on the entire trip; both are known for their warm hospitality and excellent food.

Trip leader is naturalist and bird guide Mark Pretti, who has made over 50 trips to Mexico and has been leading birding and natural history trips south of the border since 1997.

The trip is limited to nine participants. Cost is \$1,875 per person, double occupancy, and includes all lodging, meals, excursions, admissions, and transportation from Mazatlán. For further information, contact Ruth Tobey, at ruthtobey@earthlink or 510.528.2093. GGA offers two to four big trips each year. Contact Ruth Tobey to receive email notification of big trips.



OBSERVATIONS

BRUCE MAST

APRIL 1 - 30, 2007

With the advent of spring, migrants were on the move wherever birders looked. The email lists were full of first-of-spring sightings, undoubtedly pumped up by Big Day birders, participants in the SCVAS Spring Birdathon, and local partisans staking claim to the America's Birdiest City County designation.

LOONS TO DUCKS

On Apr. 26, a visiting NY birder spied a Little Blue Heron in flight over the Dow Wetlands in Antioch/Pittsburg, CC (GFS). Nine White-faced Ibises were foraging in the Rush Cr. ponds in Novato, MRN, on the 9th (RS), and another probed the mud at the SCL Valley Water District wetland/riparian mitigation site, SCL, on the 13th (SR). The Heron's Head (SF) Harlequin Duck was last reported on the 13th (mob), and a lone female Long-tailed Duck showed up at China Camp SP, MRN, on the 21st (HK).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

Shorebird movement picked up in mid-month with single Pacific Golden-Plovers noted on the 9th at Hayward Shoreline, ALA (BR), and on the 13th at SON Baylands, SON (RS). At least 5 Pacific Golden-plovers remained at Shollenberger Park, SON, through the 13th (RS). Beginning on the 15th, scattered Solitary Sandpiper sightings were reported from Coyote Pt. Marina, SM (RT; LG); Stevens Cr. at Crittenden Lane bridge, SCL (MR); Angwin ballfields, NAP (FH, WT, MW); and Las Gallinas Sewage Treatment Plant in San Rafael, MRN (MS). A flock of 170 Red Knots in various plumages made a stopover at the Radio Rd. waterbird ponds in Redwood Shores, SM, on the 15th (RT). Red-necked Phalaropes were observed on Apr. 15 at Ocean Beach, SF (PS).

A Franklin's Gull was buffeted by high winds on Apr. 14 at Porto Bodego, Bodega Bay, SON (RS; mob). Several Glaucous Gulls lingered in the region, with the latest report coming on Apr. 21 from Salt Pond A16 in Alviso, SCL (mob). Black-legged



Black and white Warbler, seen at Ferry Park, SF during the Americas Birdiest City contest

Kittiwakes came near shore on the 14th at Spud Pt., Bodega Bay, SON (RS), and on the 16th at Pigeon Pt., SM (RT).

DOVES TO THRASHERS

Observers at Mt. Davidson were startled to find a Short-eared Owl cruising over McLaren Park, SF, on the 16th (JC, KC, ASH, PS). At least 1 Short-eared Owl remained at Byron Hot Springs Rd., CC, through the 21st (mob). Common Poor-wills were heard along Summit Rd., SCL, on the 14 and at Sweeney Ridge, SM, on the 27th (FT, PM, JR). A lone Black Swift was reported overhead at CCFS, SCL, on the 13th (RC). Vaux's Swifts were widely reported beginning Apr. 11. By the 22nd, Black-chinned Hummingbirds returned to the Guadalupe River in San Jose, SCL (MR; KP). Beginning mid-month, Calliope Hummingbirds migrated through in remarkable

number—compared to recent years—with sightings from 7 locations and multiple birds at Ed Levin Park, SCL (mob), and at Coyote Pt. Marina, SM (RT).

A Gray Flycatcher on Apr. 6 was an early visitor to Regents Park in Benicia, SOL (JS). A couple Dusky Flycatchers arrived at Smiths Cr. line station, SCL, on the 14th (MR) and in Mitchell Cyn., Mt. Diablo SP, CC, on the 16th (TR). Purple Martins started moving through on the 13th and for the first time in 10 years, a flock of 6 was reported overhead at Año Nuevo State Preserve, SM, Apr. 22-25 (GC, GS). Bank Swallows were noted at scattered coastal locations starting the 8th, including their usual nesting colony site at Fort Funston, SF. A Townsend's Solitaire stopped over at Mt. Davidson, SF, on the 26th to fill up on ivy berries (BF).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

On the Apr. 26th, a migrant Tennessee Warbler was found along the Vista Grande Canal, S. I., Merced, SF (BF). A few Palm and Black-and-white Warblers appeared to be winter hold-overs. Yellow-breasted Chats started moving into the area on the 27th, with sightings at Hayward RS, ALA (BR), and in Gilroy, SCL (SR). A Clay-colored Sparrow was a rare spring migrant at Corona Heights Park, SF, on the 20th (LL, BF). A Rose-breasted Grosbeak remained in Moss Beach, SM, through the 13th (BK). On the 15th, Blue Grosbeaks returned to nesting areas on Patterson Pass Rd., ALA (RC, AE), and at Ed Levin Park, SCL (MD, EG).

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers; "obb" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions. Special thanks to Brent Plater for assistance in compiling data.

Abbreviations for Observers: AE, Art Edwards; ASH, Alan Hopkins; BF, Brian Fitch; B, Barbara Bossy; BN, But Hansen; BR, Bob Richmond; EG, Eric Goodill; FH, Floyd Hayes; FO, Frances Oliver; FT, Francis Toldi; GC, George Chrisman; GS, Gary Strachan; GTS, Greg T. Scyphers; HK, Harrison Karr; JC, Josiah Clark; JL, John Luther; JP, Jennifer Pycenga; JS, John Sterling; JT, Jim Thomas; C, Hugh Cotter; KP, Kathy Parker; LE, Lew Elingham; LG, Laurie Graham; MD, Matthew Dodder; MM, Mike Mammoser; MR, Mike Rogers; MS, Michael Stevenson; MW, Myron Widmer; PM, Peggy Macres; PS, Paul Saraceni; PC, Richard Cimino; RC, Roy Churchwell; RJ, Richard Jeffers; RS, Rich Stallcup; RT, Ron Thorn; SG, Steve Glover; SF, Steve Rottenborn; TP, Ted P.; WT, Wayne Tilley.

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; CCFS, Coyote Creek Field Station; CP, County Park; Cr, Creek; Cyn., Canyon; EEC, Environmental Education Center; GGP, Golden Gate Park; L, Lake; MRN, Marin; Mt., Mount; N, North; NAP, Napa; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; OSP, Open Space Preserve; PRNS, Pt. Reyes National Seashore; Pt., Point; Rd., Road; Res., Reservoir; RP, Regional Park; RS, Regional Shoreline; S, South; SB, State Beach; SCL, Santa Clara; SCVAS, Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve; WPCP, Water Pollution Control Plant.



It's time for the changing of the guard! Wintering birds in my East Bay yard have traded places with summering birds. Since the Bay Area has so many microclimates, my yard birds may be different from yours. I said farewell to my beloved Fox Sparrow pair, one of whom had to grow a new set of tail feathers after being pounced upon by my neighbor's cat. I miss the Hermit Thrushes' soft murmurs, and I envy those who hear his gorgeous song on his northern breeding grounds. I also miss seeing the perky Ruby-crowned Kinglets as they bounce through tree branches gleaning insects. This year we feasted our eyes upon a plethora of Varied Thrushes mixed in with the American Robins. That might hold me until the next irruption of these beauties.

Among the new arrivals is my favorite spring songster, the gorgeous Black-headed Grosbeak, whose rollicking song is the major chord version of the robins' minor key lilt. The grosbeaks arrive in mid-April and stay only until early August, never long enough for me. The juvenile grosbeaks hang around awhile before following their parents south for the winter. Swallows return when insects appear. Barn, Northern Rough-winged, and Cliff join the overwintering Tree and Violet-

green Swallows. Flycatcher species arrive to help out in the insect-control business. Depending on your habitat, you might see Western, Ash-throated, or Olive-sided or even a Western Wood-Pewee or Kingbird. Our winter warblers, Townsend's, Hermit, and Yellow-rumped are replaced by the Orange-crowned, Wilson's, and Yellow. The year-round resident Anna's Hummingbirds are joined by the Allen's and maybe the Black-chinned hummers. They are very competitive at feeders during summer.

The beautiful Western Tanager hang out near the coast. Here in the East Bay you might catch a glimpse of them as they move up to the mountains to breed. We used to have many more Bullock's Orioles—seeing one now is like spotting a celebrity. A gorgeous Hooded Oriole dropped by for a dip in my bird bath one year. My yard may no longer cater to the orioles' appetite for insects and fruit, as they rarely whip through, unless when I'm not looking.

My cousin in Alaska sends me articles on local birds. Alaskans are thrilled when the Canada Geese return in spring. Sadly, the geese here have decided there's no need to migrate. Too many green golf courses, I guess. But the far north gets all of our shorebirds at the beginning of May, when

they arrive paired up and ready to get right down to the business of raising a family. Their timing coincides with hatches of gobs of insects so their young can grow in time for the fall (August on) migration back down our way. When we visited Alaska mid-August, even the Tundra Swans had already flown south with the shorebirds.

Plenty of year-round residents continue to amuse us. Who could tire of watching our nearly tame clowns, the Chestnut-backed Chickadees? Or watching the tender ministrations of a male Nuttall's Woodpecker showing a youngster how to deal with a swinging suet feeder. And the White-breasted Nuthatches are in constant voice contact with their families.

Higher in the sky, Red-shouldered Hawks are doing a lot of screaming as they search for nesting sites. Later, the juvenile Red-tailed Hawks chime in, screaming incessantly as they are about to leave the nest for the first time. White-tailed Kites are slowly moving into our area to add to the variety of neighborhood raptors.

One of my all-time favorite bird sightings was of a Pygmy Nuthatch family in Oregon. The perfect small nest hole, near the top of a tall, slim aspen, was the site of constant activity, with parents flying in and out feeding the young. One morning, it was fledging time. With the parents' encouragement, at least eight youngsters popped out, one by one. Each paused before taking a short, lilted flight from tree to tree. Apparently, if pygmy pairs are assisted by other family members, they raise larger broods. Several days later, the whole large clan was back gleaning insects from the shake roof of the house. We were thrilled to have seen this rarely observed rite of passage.

Slow down this late spring and summer, and take the time to enjoy the antics of the bird world in your yard or neighborhood. Let a hummingbird dash through your sprinkler or your hose spray. Work in your garden quietly until the chickadees almost land on your head. Watch the athleticism of those rascals, the squirrels—as you chase them off your feeders. Hooray for nature!



Cliff swallow in nest

a Ilyby Glaucous as a bonus, and only one Heermann's reported. A Rhinoceros Auklet off the Cliff House was a pleasant surprise, as this species is rarely seen from shore in San Francisco.

On the passerine front, the most unusual migrant was a well described Hammond's Flycatcher. Most of the expected western migrants were found, including Cassin's and Warbling Vireos, Western Kingbird, Pacific slope Flycatcher, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Bullock's Oriole. A very early Lazuli Bunting was an unexpected treat. Locally rare to nearly extirpated species such as Wren-tit, Spotted Towhee, and Hutton's Vireo were all observed as well.

The timing for the event proved to be very good, since we were able to find both new spring arrivals and overwintering birds before their departure to more northerly climes. This category included such locally common to uncommon species as White-throated Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Varied Thrush. The only bad miss for the event was Red-breasted Merganser, which eluded everyone despite multiple trips to the appropriate locations.

Because the national event is held over the months of April and May, we won't know the full results for some time yet. An update will be published in *The Gull* once the final tallies are released.

A hearty thank-you goes to all who volunteered to lead groups and cover the different areas—in some cases with multiple visits—and to all who joined us for an enjoyable weekend of urban birding in San Francisco.

by David Armstrong, Birdiest City Compiler

Top: Cackling Goose at Elk Glen Lake in Golden Gate Park, photographed on April 14, during the America's Birdiest City contest. Bottom: Common Merganser at Lloyd Lake in Golden Gate Park, photographed on April 14, during the America's Birdiest City contest.



photos by Dave Kelly

Donations

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation, education, and member activities!

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Tripod: Charlotte Nolan

Food for Pier 94 Workday: Hanson Aggregates

Picnic Area Rental Costs for Volunteer Party: East Bay Regional Park District

Refreshments for Volunteer Party: Trader Joe's

Museum Passes for Volunteer Party: Jacqui Smalley

Magazine Subscriptions: *Birder's World* Magazine

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TIDES Foundation & Potrero Nuevo Fund: *Birds of Heron's Head Park* publication

from the heavily urbanized East Bay before it reaches San Pablo Bay and its sensitive mudflat and eelgrass habitats. This eelgrass bed is the largest in San Francisco Bay. Two-thirds of all of the bay's eelgrass, important habitat for salmon and Pacific herring, are located just off the North Richmond shoreline. The shoreline is also home to a diverse mix of people and cultures with a unique history.

The North Richmond shoreline has faced several threats. Nearby industry pollutes the waters and tidal areas. Many community members have few opportunities to enjoy the shoreline and its wildlife or to help conserve its natural treasures—despite being the primary advocates for the shoreline's protection. Commercial development proposals now threaten the eelgrass beds and wildlife habitat.

The North Richmond Shoreline Academy, continuing through 2009, aims to counter these threats by providing environmental education and wildlife experiences for local residents of all ages: engaging local citizens in a year-long bird census and the restoration of native oysters; completing a

watershed assessment of the shoreline; and documenting the community's vision for the shoreline's future.

To gain support for the Shoreline Academy, Golden Gate Audubon took part in a series of workshops in Richmond last year. This spring we led bird walks and presented programs on how trash moves through watersheds for more than 50 elementary school students and community members at Wildcat Creek. We also teamed with the Parchester Village Community Center and the Community Development Housing Corporation of North Richmond to provide residents with a display of photographs of local bird species taken by Golden Gate Audubon members Eddie Bartley, Bob Lewis, and Noreen Weeden.

This summer, the Shoreline Academy will provide opportunities for people to enjoy and learn about the North Richmond shoreline through a series of walks and hikes along the Bay Trail, monthly volunteer opportunities to help restore and monitor native oysters at Pt. Pinole Regional Shoreline, and the world premiere of the documentary *Rheem Creek and Breuner Marsh: A Promised Land*. The film, by Casey

Fenton, follows the efforts of community activists along the shoreline to protect open space and restore their watershed. We'll also begin bird census trainings and related activities in August and September.

We invite you to join us and experience this wildlife-rich area—and get involved in conserving it.

by Michael Martin, Volunteer and Membership Development Coordinator, and Rich Walking, senior restoration planner, Natural Heritage Institute

Partners in the North Richmond Shoreline Academy include Golden Gate Audubon, the Natural Heritage Institute, the Community Health Initiative, the Parchester Village Neighborhood Council, the Urban Creeks Council, and the West County Toxics Coalition. The North Richmond Shoreline Academy is generously funded by the CALFED Watershed Program.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

To get involved in the North Richmond Shoreline Academy bird census and other academy activities, please contact Michael Martin at 510.843.7295 or mmartin@goldengateaudubon.org. You can also learn more about the academy's projects at www.shorelineacademy.org.

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