



# The Black Oystercatcher

Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Newsletter- January 2024

## FORT BRAGG CBC 2023 PRELIMINARY REPORT

*By Tim Bray*



*Lucy's Warbler by Tim Bray*

We had unusually good weather for the Fort Bragg Christmas Bird Count on Saturday December 30 - it only rained on us a few times, and there was hardly any wind. Compared to the last few years it was quite nice!

A lot of birders took advantage of that and spent a productive day counting birds all over the Circle. We had teams walking, bicycling, driving, and kayaking. I had hoped to get a boat out for seabirds, but the 16-foot swell made that idea seem less appealing. A few of us started the day early, going out in the predawn darkness to survey for owls. We were treated to rainbows in the morning and a beautiful sunset as well. The birding was generally good and the teams were happy with their day.

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Recent rains made for beautiful rainbows over the ocean.  
*Photo by Catherine Keegan*

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Forty people showed up for the Tally Dinner at the Caspar Community Center and enjoyed hot lasagna fresh from the oven, with salad and garlic bread, which was a real treat after a long day of birding. BIG thanks to Mary Rogers, Pam Huntley, and Peter Steele, for managing the hall and feeding us all. That really made the event a success and put everyone in a great mood for the tally-up. It was wonderful to once again see the hall filled with happy birders laughing and sharing their experiences.

Led by Sue Coulter, we took a few moments to remember and celebrate those who were such key parts of past Counts but are no longer with us: Matt Coleman, Ron LeValley, Warren Wade, and Art Morley. As David Jensen observed, such remembrance makes us appreciate these gatherings more keenly.

Our preliminary total is 142 species, though I am still getting some reports and we could add one or two more (anyone see a Pileated Woodpecker?).

### **Notable finds included:**

**Lucy's Warbler** - found on the Noyo Headlands trail near the Alder Street entrance, well seen and photographed. If accepted this will be the third Mendocino County record for this species.

**Marbled Murrelets** - two found by Sean MacAllister off Ward Avenue

**Blue-winged Teal** - drake and hen on the Ocean Shores pond

**Burrowing Owl** - just south of Johnson Rock on the Noyo Headlands trail

**Bullock's Oriole and (2) Nashville Warblers** - Rose Memorial cemetery

**Black-headed Grosbeak** - reported from a feeder watch on Benson Lane

For a more complete list, see the eBird Trip Report: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/173997>



*Blue-winged Teal photo by Roger Adamson*

**RECENT SIGHTINGS - JANUARY 2024****By Roger Adamson**

We had relatively few unexpected sightings this month. On 12/08 a Nashville Warbler was found along with an unidentified oriole in the Rose Memorial Cemetery in Fort Bragg (CL). Also on 12/08, a Black-throated Gray Warbler made an appearance at the Hopland Research and Extension Center, HREC (CV). The oriole in the cemetery in Fort Bragg was identified as a Bullock's Oriole on 12/15 (MF). Another oriole initially confounded identification at a home near Albion and eventually yielded definitive identification as a Baltimore Oriole on 12/18 (TB & CK). This was an excellent find and is the only third county record. Another Black-throated Gray Warbler was found at a home in Ukiah (CV). Again, at the HREC, a very late Western Flycatcher was found on 12/28 (CV). Three Rock Sandpipers were reported from Glass Beach in Fort Bragg on 12/28 (LWR). Clearly the most unexpected bird of the month, a Lucy's Warbler turned up on the Noyo Headlands, just west of the Alder Street entrance, during the Fort Bragg Christmas Bird Count on 12/30 (TB & CK).

The Lucy's Warbler breeds in the Sonoran Desert and uses the driest habitat of any southwestern warbler; it is thought to be largely dependent on mesquite habitat. This species winter range is along the west coast of Mexico, far from Mendocino. Neither threatened nor endangered, Lucy's Warbler is considered a species of Least Concern. This third county record is the second of 2023; the other record this year was during January in Fort Bragg (AS).

Thanks to the following for reports: Chris Lamoureux (CL), Chuck Vaughn (CV), Matt Franks (MF), Tim Bray (TB), Catherine Keegan (CK), Lisa Walker-Roseman (LWR).



*Baltimore Oriole photo by Tim Bray*

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS: Notes from MCAS Scholarship Recipients By Jenevie Chan

**Editor's Note:** In May, Jenevie Chan graduated from Mendocino College. She received a \$2,920 Mendocino Coast Audubon scholarship awarded in memory of College of the Redwoods Marine Science Technology Professor Greg Grantham. Ms. Chan started classes at Fresno State University in the fall of 2023. When the MCAS Scholarship Committee reached out to her, she wrote us this note. For our own education, XRD and XRF machines allow scientists to identify structure and composition of various organic and inorganic materials, including minerals. - Becky Bowen, Member, MCAS Scholarship Committee

My experience as a new student at Fresno State has been amazing, with hands-on learning such as testing mineral samples using a XRD and XRF machine. I have made close connections with classmates due to group projects and assignments where we all work on it together.

My favorite course this school year is mineralogy as I have seen many types of minerals through lab. I am able to compare and contrast each mineral from each other, and it's very enjoyable because it gives me motivation to keep learning about what I love. In 10 years, I see myself graduating from the Masters Program at Fresno State. Then using my degree for the local or state government, I would have a role in



*Jenevie Chan at Yosemite Falls, July, 2023*

planning or managing major water resources in California. The studies I have been passionate about would be understanding the impact of human disturbance on aquatic ecosystems and being involved in managing water resources such as stream restoration or dam removal.

I'm so grateful to have the opportunity to be here at Fresno State. It feels like a dream because the end goal gets closer everyday. I have made friends who have the same mindset and passion to pursue geology or environmental science. As a science student, the challenges of understanding chemistry and STEM courses the first time can be overwhelming. It will all be worth it in the end.

*Mendocino Coast Audubon Society supports funding for annual science scholarships at Mendocino College. Recipients are selected by science faculty staff based on academic achievement and financial need, and have participated in laboratory research at the college Field Station near Point Arena:*

<https://www.mendocino.edu/about/mlccd/our-campus/mendocino-college-coastal-field-station>

*Financial support comes from the society's scholarship program and donations from Audubon and community members. We welcome donations which can be made to the MCAS Brandon Pill Memorial Scholarship Fund and/or the MCAS Greg Grantham Memorial Scholarship Fund. Please contact MCAS Scholarship Chair Judy Steele for more information [judys@mcn.org](mailto:judys@mcn.org)*

## JANUARY PRESENTATION

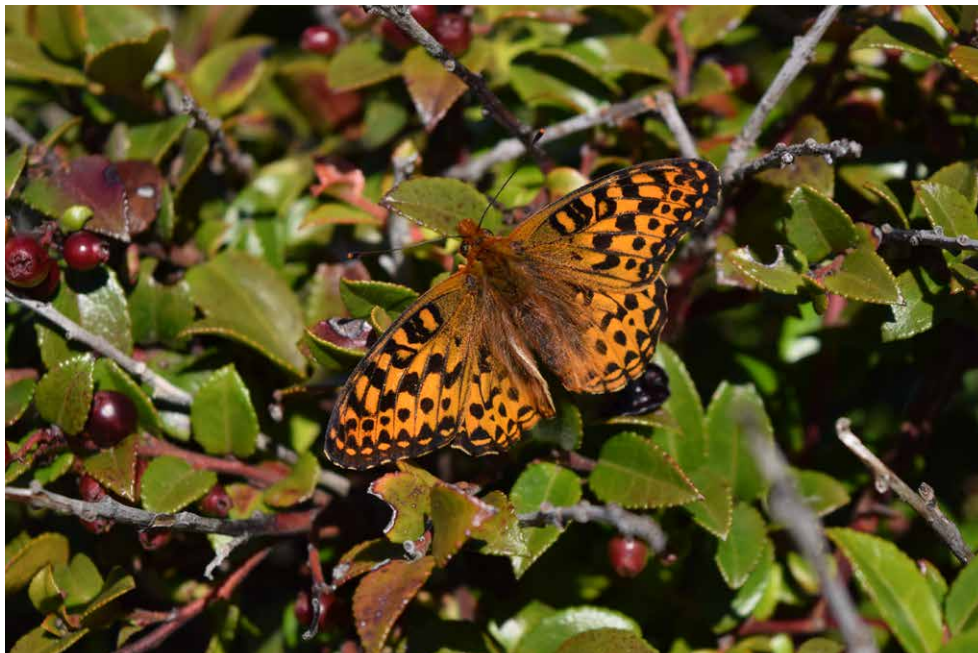
*Chris Damiani Presents:*

### **“CAN CAPTIVE REARING CATERPILLARS SAVE THE BEHREN’S SILVERSPOT?”**

**Sunday, January 21 at 3:00 PM - Ohlson Ranch House**  
**Monday, January 22 at 7:00 PM - Caspar Community Center**

The Behren’s Silverspot is an endangered Mendocino butterfly on the edge of extinction. Most of its habitat has either been developed or degraded, and official surveys in 2020 recorded zero butterflies with only one confirmed incidental sighting. This talk will describe how Sequoia Park Zoo plays a role in the conservation of this local species by captive rearing caterpillars to increase the butterfly’s population while its habitat is being restored.

Christine Damiani received her B.S. in Biological Sciences from U.C. Davis and her PhD. In Zoology from Duke University. She has previously worked for the U.S. Forest Service Redwood Sciences Lab and the Institute for Wildlife Studies, and currently leads the Butterfly Conservation Program at Sequoia Park Zoo.



## UPCOMING EVENTS



*California Gull photo by  
Ron LeValley*

### January Field Trip - Ward Ave. Meet at 9:00AM

January is a challenging time to schedule a field trip. In winter many birds roam from place to place in response to environmental conditions and food availability. On Saturday, January 13, we will meet at the end of Ward Avenue at 9:00. Some of us will scout the coast earlier to assess where we can pursue the best birding opportunities. Our focus will be wintering waterfowl, gulls and passerines. If the birds and weather cooperate, this should be a rewarding and educational experience. Loaner binoculars will be available, heavy rain cancels. Call Dave Jensen at 707.326.8815 for more information.

### LAST CALL FOR MCAS SHIRT ORDER!

I need 36 orders before my printer will take on the job. All shirts are men's sizes, cotton, and black. **The last date to order is the end of January.**

To order: email keegan@mcn.org with your name and your item(s). Please put each item on a separate line and don't abbreviate. **Example: 1 - long sleeve - XL**



Prices listed are for sizes S-XL, add \$2 for XXL, add \$3 for 3X-4X  
Short sleeve \$19.95, Long sleeve \$22.95, Pullover Hoody \$29.95, Full Zip Hoody \$31.95

If there's enough interest, I'll contact you via email about payment. ALL shirts must be picked up, preferably at a meeting, field trip, or early bird walk.

Our programs are brought to you with the support of The Wharf, offering discount lodging for Mendocino Coast Audubon Society guest presenters.

[www.TheWharfFortBragg.com](http://www.TheWharfFortBragg.com)

**The Wharf**  
RESTAURANT, LOUNGE & LODGING

## CALENDAR

The Beginner's Birdwalk and the Early Birdwalk at the Gardens are continuing on the regular schedule. As always, check our website for the most up-to-date information, and keep up with the postings on our Facebook page.

### JANUARY 2024

**Friday 5 - Christmas Bird Count, Manchester circle** (contact David Jensen for details)

**Saturday 6 - Beginner's Bird Walk 9:00 AM - Noon**

Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, 18220 Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA 95437

**Saturday 13 - Ward Ave. Field Trip 9:00 AM - Noon**

Meet at the end of Ward Ave, north of Fort Bragg. See page 6 for more.

**Wednesday 17 - Early Bird Walk 8:30 AM - Noon**

Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, 18220 Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA 95437

**Sunday 21 - Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Presentation 3:00 PM**

Ohlson Ranch House at 37600 CA-1, Sea Ranch, CA 95497

**Monday 22 - Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Chapter Meeting 7:00 PM**

Caspar Community Center at 15051 Caspar Rd, Caspar, CA 95420

Join us for Christine Damiani's presentation on the Behren's Silverspot butterfly.

### FEBRUARY 2024

**Saturday 3 - Beginner's Bird Walk 9:00 AM - Noon**

Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, 18220 Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA 95437

**Monday 12 - Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Chapter Meeting 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

Join us for Tim Bray's presentation on Seabirds and the Marine Food Web

**Tuesday 13 - Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Board Meeting 6:30 PM via Zoom**

**Wednesday 21 - Early Bird Walk 8:30 AM - Noon**

Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, 18220 Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA 95437

For complete and current calendar, updates, and useful links, visit:

[www.mendocinocoastaudubon.org](http://www.mendocinocoastaudubon.org)

[www.facebook.com/mendocinocoastaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/mendocinocoastaudubon)

## MCAS BOARD MEMBERS AND PROGRAM CHAIRS 2023-2024

President	Tim Bray	tbray@mcn.org	(707) 734-0791
Vice President	David Jensen	djensen@mcn.org	(707) 964-8163
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Education	Pam Huntley	pjhuntley@hotmail.com	
Membership	Adam Hutchins	raptorous@me.com	(707) 734-3470
Zoom Czar	Nicolet Houtz	nicolethoutz@gmail.com	
Programs	Mary Glanville	rxdoc@cal.berkeley.edu	
Newsletter/Website	Megan Smithyman	mendobirding@gmail.com	
Off-Board Chairs:			
Scholarship Chair	Judy Steele	judys@mcn.org	
Social Media	Catherine Keegan	keegan@mcn.org	
Programs	Terra Fuller	terrafuller74@gmail.com	(707) 964-4675
Programs	Hayley Ross	hayleyhross@gmail.com	

Mendocino Coast Audubon Society e-mail address: [audubon@mcn.org](mailto:audubon@mcn.org)

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mendocino Coast Audubon Society is to help people appreciate and enjoy native birds, and to conserve and restore local ecosystems for the benefit of native birds and other wildlife.

MENDOCINO COAST AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 2297

FORT BRAGG, CA, 95437

