



The Black Oystercatcher

Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Newsletter- January 2019

BRIAN SMUCKER PRESENTS

RIDGWAY'S HAWK AND OTHER BIRDS OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



Subadult Ridgway's Hawk F5, photo by Brian Smucker

MONDAY, JANUARY 21 AT 7 P.M.
CASPAR COMMUNITY CENTER



Brian Smucker and chick E7

Brian Smucker spent the spring nesting seasons of 2016 and 2017 with the Ridgway's Hawk Project of the Peregrine Fund in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. They were working to establish a new population of these endemic, critically endangered birds.

Brian will talk about the hawks and the project, how and why it works and what's involved. He will show photos and tell stories of the life cycle of the birds, from egg through nesting adults. He will also show photos of the area and about 25 of the other 85 bird species seen in the vicinity.

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Adult Ridgway's Hawk pair A0.5
photo by Brian Smucker

FORT BRAGG CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT: PRELIMINARY REPORT**Tim Bray**

Count Week began with mild sunny weather and reports of several unusual birds found in and around Fort Bragg, so hopes were high. Alas, Count Day began with mist and drizzle, followed by fierce cold northerly wind. (As I write this the next morning, it is of course sunny, calm, and warm.) Nevertheless, more than seventy people went out in the field and searched for birds, many of which were hunkered down in cover and difficult to see clearly. The ocean was surprisingly calm all morning, belying the forecast for strong wind and high seas, so the offshore charter went out in the afternoon - to be greeted by strong winds and high seas, making for a very wild ride.

*Tennessee Warbler Photo by Roger Adamson*

As always for a Christmas Bird Count, there were unexpected finds and inexplicable misses. The Bald Eagle that had been seen around town regularly for weeks chose that day to disappear, and no Sharp-shinned Hawks were seen in the field. On the other hand, one of the Tennessee Warblers put in an appearance, as did an unexpected Palm Warbler, and two Red-naped Sapsuckers were surprising finds. Out on the wild ocean, several Black-footed Albatrosses came by to marvel at the crazy humans on the boat, but not a single Northern Fulmar could be seen.

*Red-naped Sapsucker Photo: Wiki Commons*

A festive and lively Count Dinner, prepared by the amazing team of Angela and Matt Liebenberg, warmed everyone up for the Tally. Our count ended with 135 species identified in the field. A few additional field reports are coming in as I write this, and the feeder/yard watch tally will take a few days to prepare, so it is likely that number will rise, but it is still on the low end for this Count. It will be interesting to see if the total number for individual birds counted follows the decreasing trend of the last three years.

We concluded by vowing to do it all over again next year on Sunday, December 29 - so mark your calendars, and resolve to find more birds in 2019.

Tim Bray

CAFB Compiler

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dave Jensen



For most of us, December brings two major financial considerations – holiday gift buying and year-end charitable giving. It is unfortunate that these kindred activities that spring from the same spirit of generosity and altruism can, in lean or uncertain times, conflict with one another.

Near the end of each December Johanna and I support those nonprofits whose causes are dear to us to the extent that we feel we can in that particular year. Unfortunately, Santa continues to use my credit card information, so our largess must be tempered by the knowledge that old Saint Visa will come sliding down our mailbox in a couple of weeks.

Some time ago as we began to lose close friends to the inevitable, we sat down with a lawyer and drew up a will. We have worked hard to save enough money that hopefully will outlast us, and after setting aside some for family members, we decided to divide the remainder among a few select causes that will reflect the values we have held in this life. Mendocino Coast Audubon was my primary choice. I believe in mission of this organization, I continue support it with my time and finances while I can, and I want to help it continue to grow and be effective after I am gone.

Year-end giving is simple – you just write a check or charge your donation to a credit card. Planned giving, in its simplest form, is only slightly more complicated. If you have a will or a trust (and if you don't, you should), you can include the following language: "I bequeath [dollar amount or percent of estate] to the Mendocino Coast Audubon Society, a not-for-profit organization, located at P.O. Box 2297, Fort Bragg, California, (Tax ID#31-1578005) to support its ongoing conservation and education activities." Easy Peasy.

Of course there are other planned giving strategies that are more complex, such as designating Mendocino Coast Audubon Society as a beneficiary (the percentage of your choice) on one of your retirement plans or IRAs; naming Mendocino Coast Audubon Society as a beneficiary (or contingent beneficiary) on a life insurance policy; a Charitable Gift Annuity which allows you to receive a guaranteed lifetime income payment in return for a transfer of cash, stock, or real estate to the Mendocino Coast Audubon Society; a Charitable Remainder Trust, which establishes a trust during or after your lifetime that provides income to the beneficiary of your choice (may be yourself), and the remaining value of the trust to Mendocino Coast Audubon Society; or a Life Estate with Remainder Interest, which gifts a future interest in an asset (example, a home) to the Mendocino Coast Audubon Society, while retaining the right to use it for your lifetime. I told you it could become complicated, so please consult your lawyer if you wish to pursue any of these.

If, like Johanna and I, you are thinking of leaving a legacy of environmental education and local conservation of birds and their habitats, consider discussing a bequest to Mendocino Coast Audubon Society with your attorney or financial adviser. If you decide to include Mendocino Coast Audubon Society in your estate plan, we hope you will contact us so we can thank you, discuss the gift with you, and honor your wishes appropriately. We are here for only a brief time, but the impact of our actions and the decisions we make can live long after we are gone. Happy New Year, and thank you for your support.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT



YOUNG BIRDERS IN THE FIELD Sarah Grimes, Education Chair

Anderson Valley High School senior, Caleb Devine-Gomes joins in for full day of the Fort Bragg CBC. Seen here with others after the bicycle trek up Big River. Caleb will get credit in his high school wildlife biology class for participating. Celeb is off to college next year and we wish him all the best.

MANCHESTER CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - JANUARY 2, 2018



California Towee Photo: Becky Bowen

Last year's Christmas Bird Count in Manchester in Elk was an astoundingly wonderful experience. Led by well-known ceramic artist Chris Bing, we spotted a California Towee very near downtown Elk.



Photo: Becky Bowen

SAVE OUR SHOREBIRDS

Becky Bowen

LIFE IN PLOVERDALE IN 2018 – IT WAS ALL ABOUT THE LITTLE THINGS



To teach children about Snowy Plovers, we take a quotation from the Mendocino Coast Audubon Society's children's book, "The Life and Times of Pink Lady." The main character, a plucky Snowy Plover who speaks Spanish and English, asks us to put ourselves in a plover's feathers. Only then, Pink Lady says, will we understand just how big the world looks to a bird that is smaller than a tennis ball – or a chick that is no bigger than a grape.

To these birds, a human footprint in the sand is a place safe from the fierce winter beach winds. A feast is a sandhopper. Ravens or dogs are as big as lethal tractor trailers. Drones, kites, and other flying toys are perceived as raptor-like predators that trigger fear and flight – or a race to a hiding place for chicks who can't fly for some 28 days after hatching.

It's no wonder that a chick's chances of survival are slim – they need all the help they can get from us. To get another sense of the size of a plover's world, take a look at the photo below. In the foreground is the adult male Snowy Plover that raised three chicks in the summer of 2018 on Ten Mile Beach in Inglewood Fen-Ten Mile Dunes Preserve in MacKerricher State Park. In the background are the chicks that have been herded toward the protective high spots and vegetation of fore dunes. The chicks that are about two weeks away from learning how to fly (and twice as big as they were at hatching). All three survived and are now presumed to be with a good-sized winter flock on the same beach. Like Pink Lady said, it's all about perspective. It's hard for us grownups to see the world like plovers do. We don't always get it, but children do.



Photographs by B. Bowen

MCAS FIELD TRIPS AND EVENTS

**Please hold these dates for our Audubon Christmas Bird Counts:
Saturday, January 5, 2019 - Manchester Circle
Saturday, January 12, 2019 - Sea Ranch "Unofficial CBC"**

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5 9:00 A.M. CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - MANCHESTER

Join fellow bird-watchers and nature enthusiasts from Elk to Point Arena.

To join, contact David Jensen:
djensen@mcn.org or 964-8163



Great Blue Heron by Becky Bowen

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12 9:00 A.M. CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT ROUNDUP

Every year the Christmas Bird Counts find some unusual or even rare birds, often in unexpected places. We will pick out the best sightings from the two coastal Counts and try to re-find as many birds as we can in one short day. Participants should meet at the entrance to Rose Memorial Cemetery off North Franklin Street in Fort Bragg. We will carpool from there to selected viewing locations. Contact Tim Bray or Dave Jensen for additional details.



"B5 Oriole" from the 2012 Fort Bragg CBC is the first Mendocino County record Baltimore Oriole. Found by Al DeMartini. photo by Richard Hubacek.

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

www.HarborLiteLodge.com

Harbor Lite
LODGE

120 North Harbor Drive
Fort Bragg, California 95437

1-800-643-2700

CALENDAR

JANUARY 2019

Saturday 5 - Christmas Bird Count - Manchester Circle 9:00 A.M. to Noon,
Join fellow bird-watchers and nature enthusiasts from Elk to Point Arena.
To join, contact David Jensen: djensen@mcn.org or 964-8163.

Saturday 5 - ~~Beginner's Bird Walk~~* Canceled, please join us on the Manchester Count.

Saturday 12 - Christmas Bird Count Roundup - 9:00 A.M. to Noon
Meet at Rose Memorial Cemetery off North Franklin Street in Fort Bragg.

Saturday 12 - Sea Ranch "unofficial" CBC.

Contact: Diane Hichwa for more information dhichwa@earthlink.net

Wednesday 16 - Early Bird Walk* 8:30 a.m. - Noon Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens
18220 Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA Leader: Tim Bray

Monday 21 - Meeting 7:00 p.m - 9:00 p.m. Caspar Community Center
Presentation by Brian Smucker of the Peregrine Fund about Ridgway's Hawk and other birds of the Dominican Republic.

Sunday 27 - Coastal Trail Bird Walk 10a.m. - Noon North Coastal Trail, Fort Bragg
Meet near the rest room at east end of parking lot at the foot of Elm Street.

FEBRUARY 2019

Saturday 2- Beginner's Bird Walk* 9:00 a.m. - Noon Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens
18220 Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA

Saturday 9 - Nest Box Building Workshop 9:00 a.m. - Noon. More information TBA

Wednesday 13 - Audubon Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Contact David Jensen for more information: djensen@mcn.org (707) 964-8163

Monday 18 - Meeting 7:00 p.m - 9:00 p.m. Caspar Community Center

Wednesday 20 - Early Bird Walk* 8:30 a.m. - Noon Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens
18220 Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA Leader: Tim Bray
Meet in the parking lot. Wear comfortable shoes and bring a hat and water.

Sunday 24 - Coastal Trail Bird Walk 10a.m. - Noon North Coastal Trail, Fort Bragg
Meet near the rest room at east end of parking lot at the foot of Elm Street.

**These walks are free, but there is an entry charge for participants who are not Garden members.
Those who are not MCBG members can request a "Guest of Audubon" discount.*

**For complete calendar, updates, and useful links, visit: www.mendocinocoastaudubon.org
And please visit us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/mendocinocoastaudubon**

MCAS BOARD MEMBERS AND PROGRAM CHAIRS 2018-2019

President	David Jensen	djensen@mcn.org	(707) 964-8163
Vice President, Field Trips	Tim Bray	tbray@mcn.org	(707) 734-0791
Secretary	Nicolet Houtz	nicolethoutz@gmail.com	
Treasurer	Jim Havlena	havlenas@fix.net	(707) 964-1280
SOS, Conservation Chair	Becky Bowen	casparbeck@comcast.net	(707) 962-1602
Education	Sarah Grimes	zewa@mcn.org	
Membership	Adam Hutchins	raptorous@me.com	(707) 734-3470
Programs	Terra Fuller	fullerterra@hotmail.com	(707) 964-4675
Programs	Hayley Ross	hayleyhross@gmail.com	
Off-Board Chairs:			
Webmaster	Catherine Keegan	keegan@mcn.org	
Newsletter Editor	Megan Smithyman	mesmithy@gmail.com	

Mendocino Coast Audubon Society e-mail address: 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

