



The Black Oystercatcher

Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Newsletter- May 2018

MATT JOHNSON PRESENTS

Coffee & Wine

International examples of how birds and farmers can mutually help each other



Monday, May 21 at 7 P.M.
Caspar Community Center

Matt Johnson is a wildlife biologist at Humboldt State University. He specializes in the habitat ecology of wild birds, and has worked on bird ecology in tropical coffee farms for over a decade. He has a particular interest in how birds use habitats heavily modified by human activity, and his work has led him to examine the ecosystem services provided by birds. This line of questioning has prompted him to consider the confluence of ecology, economics, and ethics in the conservation of birds. His international work on birds in coffee farms has now broadened to include projects in Jamaica and Kenya, and more recently he has started work on barn owls nesting in winegrape vineyards. His talk will feature the prospects of “win-win” conservation, whereby farms can provide habitat for birds that in turn can help farmers control agricultural pests.

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Wintu Audubon's Annual Lassen Volcanic National Park Campout
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PRESIDENT'S CORNER**Dave Jensen**

This month I am writing to you from my travel trailer, watching snow showers in the mountains of central Nevada. We've been on the road for six weeks, traveled through ten states, and have seen nearly 300 species of birds, including more than sixty life birds. I won't abuse your patience with a lengthy travelogue, but would like to share a few impressions from our journey.

We are so lucky to be birders. I believe it was Darwin who said that a botanist will find the pleasure of discovery wherever he or she travels. Multiply that times movement and color and songs, and you may begin to estimate the enjoyment of a traveling birder. Some species such as White-crowned Sparrows and Yellow-rumped Warblers seem to follow you everywhere. Others, such as Fulvous Whistling-ducks and Green Jays must be enjoyed for a brief time and then are quickly left behind. Others, such as Roseate Spoonbills roosting in pine trees above sleeping alligators beckon you like the Sirens did to Odysseus.

Government and business leaders have noticed us. It seems that every state now has published a set of birding trails to assist with our planning and entice our vacation dollars. Roadside signs direct us to refuges and other viewing areas. If the weather will cooperate, birding today is easier than it has ever been.

The Fellowship of the Field Glasses is a real phenomenon. The birders we have met have been exceptionally nice and have gladly shared their knowledge. "That is a female Hooded Warbler." "You can tell that's an Acadian Flycatcher by the length of the primaries." "There's a field at the end of Willow Street where the shorebirds gather before they migrate after dark." We were at a small wooded lot on South Padre Island when we repeatedly overheard the warm greetings of old friends who had not seen one another in many months, but who had been drawn back together by the presence of migrating cuckoos. Friendships formed in the field by sharing our love for birds.

Migration is a magical thing. I have previously shared my wonder at the movement of ducks and loons along our coast, an event that has occurred for untold thousands of years. Years ago I stood in a forest on the southern shore of Delaware Bay while hundreds of tired migrating grackles literally rained down from the trees. But I felt like a child on Christmas morning when I woke along the Gulf shoreline of Texas and Louisiana, anxious to see what new species had arrived during the night. Bright red tanagers in green Mulberry trees - "tis the season to be jolly." They come in waves, these small fragile flyers who must cross so much water without stopping to rest. My excitement is tempered by respect for the survivors and sadness for the others.

There will be more generations of birders who will share the love of nature and the dedication we feel toward birds. Everywhere we traveled there were families with young children enjoying their time in nature. The desert canyons, the Gulf Coast beaches, even the depths of Carlsbad Caverns were leavened with the sound of children's laughter. But I was most encouraged by several busloads of school children who were out enjoying "Shorebird Days" - in central Kansas! And yes, there were large flocks of migrating shorebirds for them to enjoy.

I believe this will be my last letter to you until September. I wish you all the best until then and hope that you are able to enjoy the birds of summer. As always, thank you for your support.

FIELD TRIP REPORT: HENDY WOODS Tim Bray

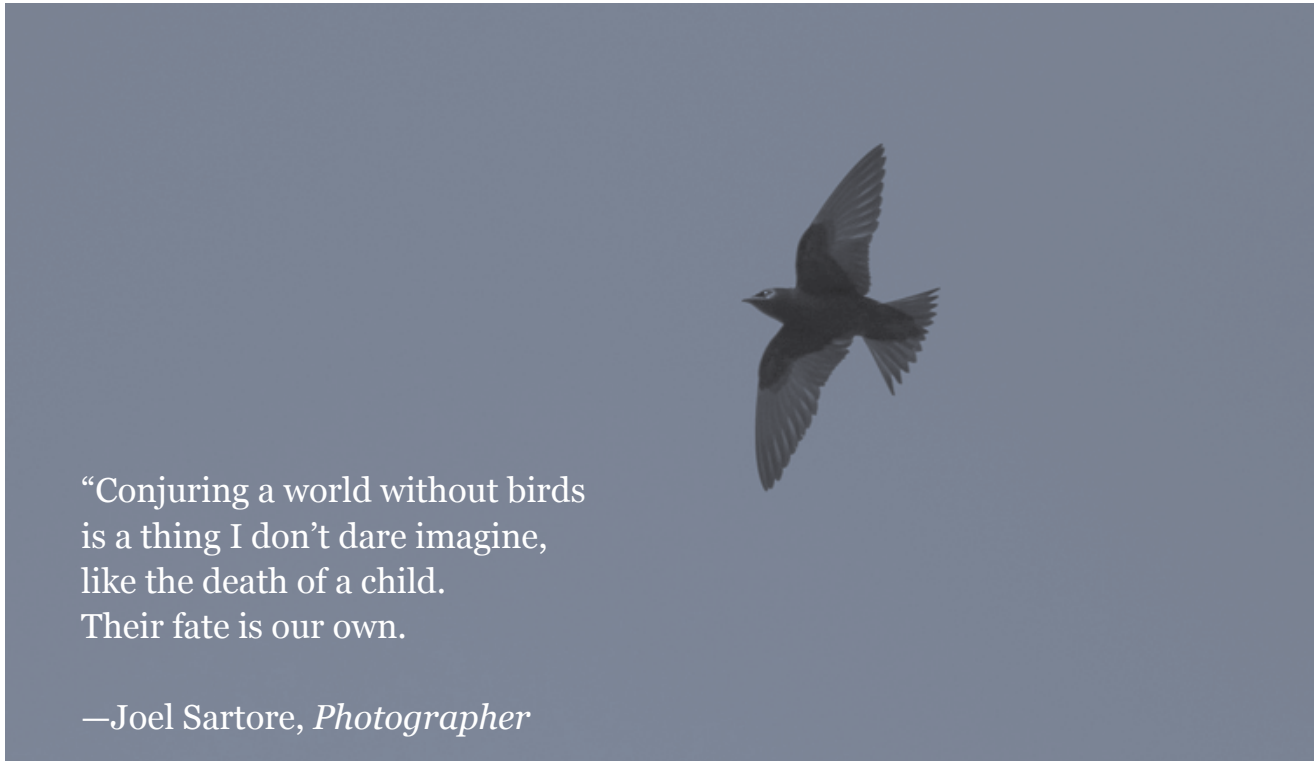
The bridge over the Navarro River provided a splendid view of many Swallows and one beautiful singing male Black-headed Grosbeak, among many other birds. Working our way into the woods, we heard but could not quite see singing Hermit and Black-throated Gray Warblers and Western Tanagers. We did eventually get good views of Pacific-slope Flycatchers and Wilson's Warblers. Purple Martins called occasionally and were briefly spotted swooping through the treetops, along with a lone Vaux's Swift. Out in the meadow, along the river bank, we were treated to the sight of Northern Rough-winged Swallows flying into their tunnels. Roger Adamson spotted a distant soaring raptor that proved to be a Golden Eagle, barely identified before it disappeared into the distance. Altogether we saw or heard 48 species of birds.



Pacific Slope Flycatcher by Ron LeValley

WHY DO BIRDS MATTER?

In celebration of 2018 as the Year of the Bird, each issue of The Black Oystercatcher will reprint a response from one of the avian enthusiasts who were asked: "Why do birds matter?"



"Conjuring a world without birds
is a thing I don't dare imagine,
like the death of a child.
Their fate is our own.

—Joel Sartore, *Photographer*

Purple Martin by Ron LeValley

SAVE OUR SHOREBIRDS

Becky Bowen



Shorebird migration is underway. From now until the end of May, shorebirds (some in breeding plumage) are flying to Arctic breeding grounds. They drop down to our beaches to rest and refuel. After May, we won't see them again until July, when they fly south. Only Western Snowy Plovers, Black Oystercatchers, Killdeer, and Spotted Sandpipers live here year-round.

Counterclockwise from top are photos from our April SOS training surveys: Black Oystercatchers, a Greater Yellowlegs, and a Surfbird. At lower right is a photo taken by Angela Liebenberg in 2009 of a Western Snowy Plover nest. Western Snowy Plover nesting season is from March through September. Please help us protect these federally threatened birds by hiking only on wet sand whenever possible, especially at Virgin Creek and Inglenook Fen-Ten Mile Dunes Preserve in MacKerricher State Park and at Manchester State Park. Killdeer nests (usually 4 eggs) also are laid on open sand and are vulnerable to human, dog, vehicle, and horse traffic.

Shorebird photographs by B. Bowen



Save Our Shorebirds is an ongoing MCAS citizen science program in partnership with California State Parks. To participate in SOS surveys in MacKerricher State Park, please contact B. Bowen at casparbeck@comcast.net. We currently are posting Save Our Shorebirds survey sightings at www.facebook.com/SaveOurShorebirds

Wintu Audubon's Annual Lassen Volcanic National Park Campout



Manzanita Lake, Lassen Volcanic National Park photo by DimiTalen

We have enjoyed the birding and camping at the Lost Creek Group Campground for several years, so we are scheduling this event again this year in conjunction with Altacal Audubon. Group Camp sites #4 & 5 have been reserved for the nights of Friday, July 27 and Saturday, July 28. We are inviting the Redwood Region, Peregrine, Mendocino, Plumas and Redbud Chapters to join us.

Species expected include Osprey, Pileated Woodpecker, White-headed Woodpecker, Black-backed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, Vaux's Swift, Common Nighthawk, Bufflehead, Gray Jay, Brown Creeper, American Dipper, Mountain Bluebird, Yellow Warbler, Western Tanager and Cassin's Finch. Possibles include Sooty Grouse, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Cassin's Vireo, Pygmy Nuthatch, Green-tailed Towhee and Evening Grosbeak.



Western Tanager by Ron LeValley

We will bird Manzanita Lake and vicinity on Saturday morning. The rest of the itinerary is open and will depend on the interests of the participants.

Folks can either camp at Lost Creek or drive up for either or both Saturday and Sunday. Campers can arrive at the campsite at a time of their choosing on Friday afternoon. Saturday day trippers should meet at the Kutra's Park meeting place at 8:00 am Saturday morning to car pool. Day trippers for Sunday, July 30, will meet at the campsite at 9:00 am.

Lost Creek (<https://www.nps.gov/lavo/planyourvisit/lost-creek-group-campground.htm>) has primitive facilities; pit toilets and no electricity. Potable water is available. Contact Larry Jordan, 949-5266 or email Webmaster@WintuAudubon.org for other particulars.

MCAS FIELD TRIPS MAY AND JUNE 2018

SATURDAY, MAY 19*, 2018 - 9:00 A.M.

NAVARRO RIVER with Dave Jensen

Meet at the park-and-ride area just south of the bridge.

We usually bird the area around the bridge first, then go to the beach and work our way back, if the wind is blowing in. Songbirds along the road include Wilson's and Orange-crowned Warblers, Pacific-slope and Olive-sided Flycatchers, Hutton's and Warbling Vireos, Black-headed Grosbeak and Bullock's Oriole. Bald Eagle, Gray Jay, Western Kingbird and Rose-breasted Grosbeak have been found on this trip.

**Please note date change*



Bullock's Oriole by Ron LeValley

SUNDAY, MAY 13, 2018 7:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

SPRING PELAGIC TRIP with Rob Fowler and Todd Easterla

This trip will depart from Noyo Harbor on the Trek II at 7 AM. We will be at sea for 9 to 10 hours, going 30-40 miles offshore to find birds rarely or never seen from shore, including Albatrosses, Shearwaters, Jaegers, Storm-petrels, Puffins, etc.

The cost will be \$150 per person and advance reservations are required. Contact Chuck Vaughn, cevaughn@pacific.net 707-462-8137 or Tim Bray, tbray@mcn.org (707) 734-0791 for more information.



*Black-footed Albatross
by Ron LeValley*

SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 2018 9:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.
MENDOCINO COAST AUDUBON BIRD PADDLE

Enjoy the birds of the Noyo River Estuary from the water. This is a gentle, slow-paced kayak trip for all ages and abilities. We will travel through different habitats include riparian, Bishop Pine Forest, North Coast Coniferous Forest, and estuarine which offers the opportunity to see birds of different habitats in a short period of time. Encounters with Harbor Seals, California Sea Lions, River Otters and other interesting mammals is also likely. Liquid Fusion Kayaking's Cate and Jeff are avid wildlife watchers and birders so the birds of the Noyo have a couple of keen eyes and ears keeping tabs on their whereabouts.



Signup online at liquidfusionkayak.com and enter the code MCASPADDLE to get the special rate for Mendocino Coast Audubon Society members:

\$20/adult - Kayaks, life jackets, and paddles will be provided. Participants may bring their own kayak or canoe. Life jackets must be worn. No previous kayaking or birding experience necessary. We will be using tandem recreational and sea kayaks that are comfortable and stable. Participants should bring a binoculars, hat for sun and/or warmth, a jacket, and footwear that can get wet.

CALENDAR

MAY 2018

Saturday 5 - *Global Big Day and Beginner Bird Walk* Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens 18220 Highway 1 Fort Bragg, CA 9:00 a.m.-Noon* Leader: Dave Jensen

Sunday 13 - *Pelagic Trip* Trek II out of Noyo Harbor. All day from 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Advance reservations are required. Contact Chuck Vaughn, cevaughn@pacific.net or Tim Bray, tbray@mcn.org for more information.

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

Saturday 19 - *Navarro River* Meet at the park-and-ride area just south of the bridge. 9:00 a.m.-Noon Leader: Dave Jensen

Monday 21 - *Meeting* Caspar Community Center 7:00 p.m.
Matt Johnson presents: Coffee & Wine: International Examples of How Birds and Farmers Can Mutually Help Each Other.

Sunday 27 - *Coastal Trail Bird Walk* North Coastal Trail, Fort Bragg 10a.m.-Noon, Meet near restroom at foot of Elm Street, Fort Bragg. Leader: Dave Jensen

JUNE 2018

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

Saturday 9 - *Kayaking Noyo River* Liquid Fusion Kayaking 32399 Basin Street, Fort Bragg, CA 95437 9:00 a.m.- 10 a.m. Leader: Cate Keegan
No previous kayaking or birding experience necessary. We will be using tandem recreational and sea kayaks. Participants should bring a binoculars, hat for sun and/or warmth, a jacket, and footwear that can get wet.

Wednesday 20 - *Bird Walk* Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens 18220 Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA 8:30 a.m.-Noon* Leader: Tim Bray

Sunday 24 - *Coastal Trail Bird Walk* North Coastal Trail, Fort Bragg 10a.m.-Noon, Meet near restroom at foot of Elm Street, Fort Bragg. Leader: Dave Jensen

**These walks are free, but there is an entry charge for participants who are not Garden members*

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

MCAS BOARD MEMBERS AND PROGRAM CHAIRS 2016-2017

President	David Jensen	djensen@mcn.org	(707) 964-8163
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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
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