



February

2008

“Insects of the Pacific Northwest”

Speakers: Pete and Judy Haggard

Monday, February 18, 2008 7:00 p.m.

College of the Redwoods, Room 300 – Follow the Signs

Insects can be found almost everywhere; however, certain habitats are more likely to yield a larger number and a wider variety of insects. What insects inhabit our part of the planet? Do we have more, or does it just seem that way? Peter and Judy Haggard, authors of “Insects of the Pacific Northwest” will share with us some of the common, easily visible insects and some non-insect invertebrates that we might see if we look closely.

Peter Haggard was born and raised in Fargo, North Dakota. In 1972, he received a bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management from Humboldt State University and since then has worked as a county agricultural inspector in California. During this time he has collected, photographed, and identified thousands of insects of the Pacific

Northwest and maintained a database of hundreds of insect species.

Co-author Judy Haggard holds bachelor's and master's degrees in biology from Humboldt State University. After working for state and federal natural resource agencies, she now serves as a consulting wildlife biologist.



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964-8163, djensen@mcn.org

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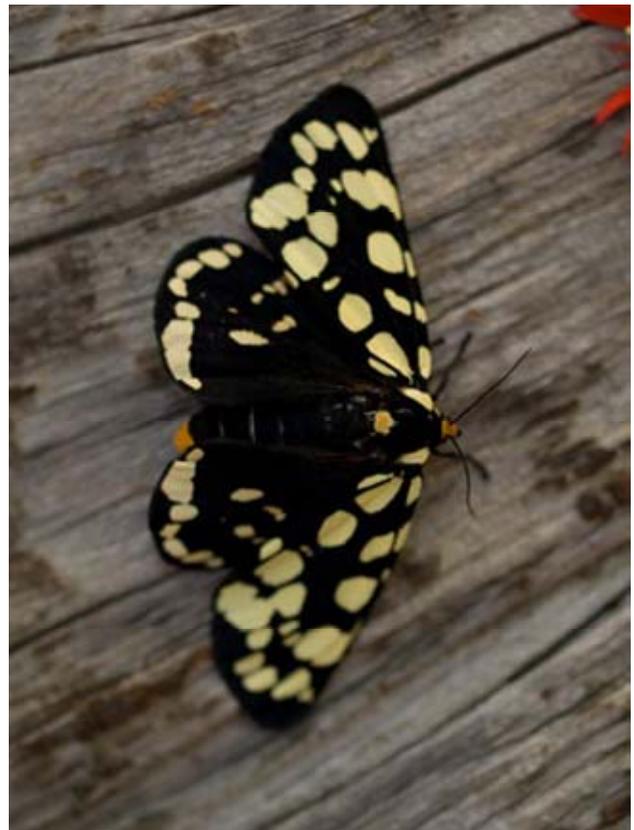
Donald Shephard
962-0223
donshephard@comcast.net

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.

Pictures by John and Judy Haggard



Green Comma



Range Land Tiger Moth

Directions to CR Room 300: From the college parking lot in front of the college, immediately turn right (toward the ocean) and proceed to the first detached building. There is parking available adjacent to the meeting room. AS USUAL NO PARKING FEES WILL BE REQUIRED

Please note changes of dates and locations for meetings in March and April

Annual Environmental Partnership Potluck Event Scheduled for March 3, 2008 St. Anthony's Hall in Mendocino

The annual Environmental Partnership Potluck among the members of the Mendocino Land Trust, the Dorothy King Young Chapter of the California Native Plant Society, the Mendocino Area Parks Association, and the Mendocino Coast Audubon Society will be held on March 3, 2008 at St. Anthony's Hall in Mendocino starting at 6:00 p.m.

The invited speaker this year is Craig Bell, Garcia River Watershed Coordinator, who will deliver "An Update on the Comprehensive Restoration and Recovery of the Garcia River" starting at 7:00 p.m.

Participants are asked to bring an appetizer/salad/casserole/dessert dish to share and to provide their own plates, utensils, glassware, and napkins to minimize the amount of solid waste generated. As host, the Land Trust will provide coffee and decaf, hot water for tea, and water from large recyclable containers. Participants are encouraged to bring other beverages of their choosing including wine.

Donations to defray costs will be welcomed.

For additional information or questions, contact James Bernard at the Land Trust, 962-0470 or jbernard@mendocinolandtrust.org

April 14, 2008 Rich Kuehn "Birding In India", Gualala Art Center

May 19, 2008 Kathy Biggs "Dragonflies", College of the Redwoods

Program Note from January's presentation on the Ivory-billed Woodpecker.

Bob Keiffer believes the information gathered by Cornell Researchers indicates that the bird still exists. He has again committed to travel to South Carolina at his own expense in April to look for the illusive Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Anyone who would like to help Bob with these expenses can send a check made out to Robert Keiffer, P.O. Box 354, Hopland, CA 95449.

President's Corner

The main reason for birding's popularity is the joy we receive when we directly encounter the natural world and its wonders. Over the years, that popularity has expanded in response to the availability of new and more innovative devices that facilitate this personal encounter. At first there were the academics and eccentric collectors with their shotguns, followed by the early field guides of Peterson and others, then came affordable high-quality optics, and now this phenomenon called "The Internet."

Ironically, the same computer that often keeps us indoors, alone and isolated from "the real world," staring at a fluorescent screen and tapping plastic plugs can, if used wisely, lead us to many enjoyable birding adventures. You can learn of interesting birds within minutes after they have been seen a block away or on the other side of the continent. You can watch in real time as Peregrine chicks hatch on the top of a tower in Rochester, New York. You can watch the radar screens in disbelief as huge clouds of birds erupt over North America each night during migration season. Those are just some of the reasons I spend a little time birding on the web each day.

The Whistling Swan

As many of you know, I am dedicated to helping others become the best birders they can be. In that spirit, I have decided to write a series of short articles about birding and the Internet. In this issue I will briefly discuss state and regional bulletin boards for bird sightings.

Future articles will discuss many other resources available on your computer, including online newsletters and magazines for birders, sites that offer help with bird identification, sites to post and track your field observations, online bird photo galleries, interesting blogs written by and for birders, and live nestbox cams that allow you to follow the reproductive cycle from pre-copulation bond renewal to the successful fledging of the hatchlings.

Many of the same skills you use in the field (a good eye for detail, good recordkeeping, a sense of adventure and exploration, the desire to learn, patience, and the ability to find your way back from whence you started) will help you on the Internet as well. My goal will be to give you an idea of what is available and recommend a few places to start your own journey. In the process I will undoubtedly learn from you as well.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggested favorite sites, please contact me at djensen@mcn.org. I will be glad to hear from you and will offer any advice I can. But please understand that when it comes to technical computer matters, I am simply a user – not a guru; a diner – not a chef. Besides, that's why they invented technical support.

I wish you all happy birding – in the field and on the web!

Dave Jensen

Up and Coming Bird Festivals and Events

2008 Winter Wings Festival

February 15-17 2008

Klamath Falls, OR

www.winterwingsfest.org

Aleutian Goose Festival

March 28-30, 2008

Crescent City/Del Norte, CA

www.aleutiangoosefestival.org

Call 1-707-465-0888

Godwit Days

April 17-21 2008 Arcata, CA Go to www.godwitdays.com

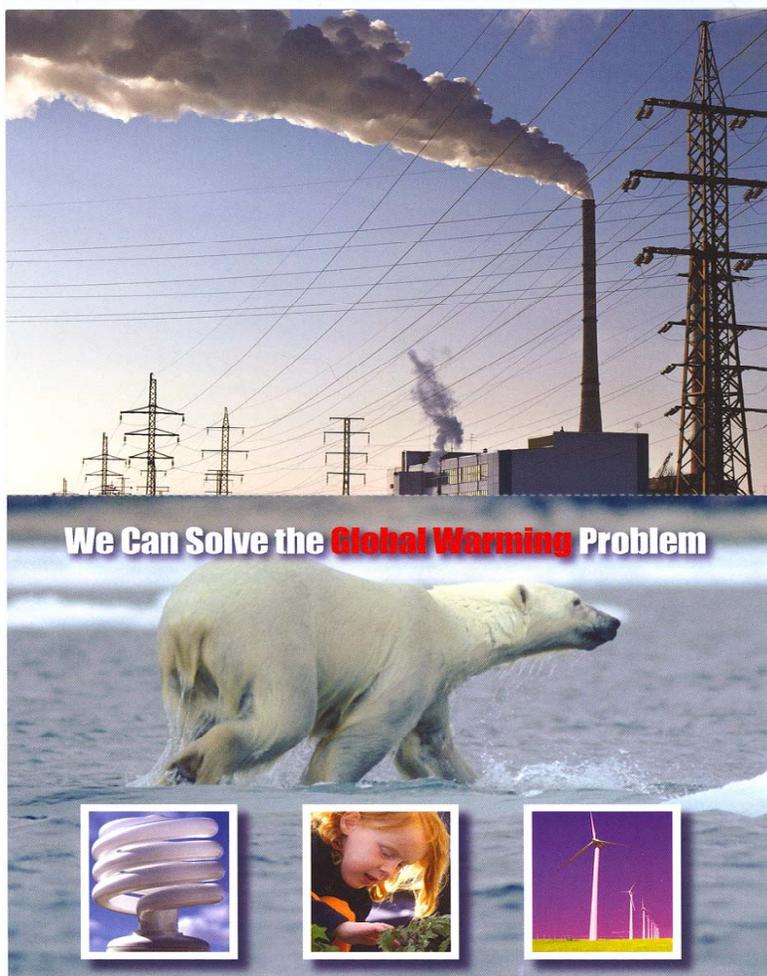
11th Annual GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT: Count for Fun, Count for the Future

February 15-18, 2008 Sponsored by the National Audubon Society and Cornell Lab of Ornithology

The GBBC is a citizen-science project covering all of Canada and the US. Observations from bird watchers of all ages and skill levels are used to track trends in population and distribution from year to year. Participation is free and no registration is required. Count birds for as little as 15 minutes or for as long as you like, keeping track of the highest number of individuals of each bird species seen at one time. Reports are taken on line and sightings are immediately converted to maps, lists, and charts that can be explored by continent, region, state, or locality. For more information please visit www.birdcount.org or Contact Melissa Hopkins at citizenscience@audubon.org or call 202-861-2242, ext. 3050

Sign UP early for MCAS May 18th Pelagic Trip. The cost is \$95 per person. We sail from Noyo Harbor in Fort Bragg aboard the Trek II. To reserve your spot, please mail a check, **PAYABLE TO MCAS**, for \$95 each to: Karen Havlena – Pelagic Trip, PO Box 40, Fort Bragg, CA 95437-0040. Please include name(s), addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of participants. Confirmations will be sent out at a later date. Look for more information in future newsletters.

A Message from the National Audubon Society:



My **Global Warming** Pledge

- I pledge to switch my light bulbs to compact florescent bulbs.
- I pledge to reduce car travel or use pubic transit when possible.
- I pledge to use less energy to heat/cool my house.
- I pledge to educate others to take action.
- I pledge to write to legislators on the importance of passing strong global warming legislation
- I pledge to stay informed by joining the Audubon E-Activist list (email required)

The following is a suggested letter to send to Legislators:

“Dear Senator/Congressional Representative,

Please support strong global warming legislation to cut global warming pollution by 80% by 2050; require that 20% of all electricity be generated from renewable sources by 2020; and mandate higher fuel economy for cars and light trucks. Much can be done with conservation as well. This is urgently needed to protect wildlife and our own future.” Sign and send with your name and address.

Let your legislators know you are concerned about Global Warming. This is a message from Audubon E-Activist List. To join got to <http://takeaction.audubon.org/> – as a member of Audubon's E-Activist List, you'll receive:

Audubon Advisory, our monthly newsletter on what's hot on Capitol and what action Congress took in response to your emails and phone calls.

Audubon E-Alerts, timely information and take action information when your email or phone call can make or break protections for birds, wildlife and habitat.

We hope you'll join the thousands of others who help us every day in the battles on Capitol Hill to protect our environment.

A Closer Look at Anna's Hummingbird

Donald Shephard

Anna's Hummingbird, the largest hummer on the coast, received its name from Anna De Belle Massena, the wife of a 19th century Italian Duke who collected a specimen. Here is a closer look at her namesake.



Photo courtesy of Ron LeValley

Hummingbirds have a metabolic rate more than fifty times as fast as a man's, even at rest. Its resting heartbeat is 480 beats per minute and can go as high as 1,260 per minute when excited. Resting hummingbirds breathe 250 times a minute and feed about every 15-20 minutes all day long, more at dawn and dusk, to maintain their energy levels. After filling their crop by sipping nectar hummingbirds will rest while the crop is emptying into the rest of the digestive system and forage again when the crop is about half-empty.

When the weather is bad and they can't feed they will go into a state of torpor to save energy. The hummingbirds are still and stiff

and cannot fly. Incubating and brooding females don't go into torpor; otherwise, eggs and un-feathered nestlings would perish. This swing from hyper-activity to torpor and the gorging on food, reminds me so much of my sons in their teenage years.

If ordinary birds are sailplanes with feathered propellers at their wingtips, then hummingbirds are helicopters, a machine the Duchess Massena could only have conceived had she studied Leonardo Da Vinci's mechanical drawings. These remarkable living helicopters can fly straight up, hover, fly backwards, and even, for short distances, upside down. Their wings are structurally different from those of other birds; they are almost rigid, moving little at the wrist and elbow, but rotating freely at the shoulder joint. During hovering, the wings describe a figure eight from 22 to 72 times per second, as if the tiny bird were sculling through the air. Like a helicopter, it cannot walk, but must use its wings just to change position on a twig.

The breast muscles of Anna's Hummingbird are estimated to be approximately four times as large, proportionately, as those of a pigeon. This great muscle burden is one price the bird pays for being small. The rapid wing motion causes them to expend most of their energy in flight; hummingbirds can consume half of their body weight in food per day. We know that they visit flowers for nectar and in so doing brush pollen onto specific areas of their heads, for example, fuchsia's deposit pollen on the bird's throat. The next fuchsia visited receives the pollen and may get a few fuchsia mites into the bargain.

Hummingbirds possess a long, slender tongue that extends far beyond the tip of the bill. The hyoid apparatus, a forked structure made of a number of small bones and connected muscles, wraps around the entire skull, coils around the eyes, and controls the tongue extension. (Woodpeckers have a similar arrangement). Hummingbirds' tongues have long grooves, and the outer half is divided although the split is rarely visible. Capillary action, a physical force that causes fluids to rise in small diameter tubes, carries nectar up tiny grooves running the length of the tongue to the mouth, with no sucking required.

The Whistling Swan

Hummingbirds will make daily rounds in which they will visit patches of flowers and feeders in a predictable sequence called trap lining. Their diet consists of far more than carbohydrates. Invertebrate prey includes fruit flies, gnats, mosquitoes, thrips, aphids, caterpillars, ants, insect eggs, and spiders and their eggs. These small arthropods help them meet protein, vitamin and mineral requirements. Hummers feed on insects by hawking like flycatchers, gleaning from leaf surfaces, and poaching from sapsucker holes. They also glean small insects trapped in spider webs. They eat spiders and gorge on eggs and young then pilfer their webbing to build their nests.



Photo courtesy of Ron LeValley

Hummingbird feathers produce color both through the actual pigment of the feather and through iridescence reflecting off the facets of the feather itself. This reflective feature is what causes a hummer's gorget to glitter when you are looking at the bird head on (lower photo) and to become duller when seeing the same bird from another angle (upper photo).

I wonder if the Duchess of Massena would have enjoyed having the Anna's Hummingbird named after her had she known all this. Despite the thievery from the Sapsucker, the spread of the fuchsia mite, and the outright persecution of spiders, I suspect she would be awed by these colorful whirling dervishes of the avian world.

News from MCAS:

Audubon Story-time was a great success. For those of you who were wondering the picture of the bird on the poster is an African Hornbill.

Radio Spots (Field Notes) on KZYX: Pam Huntley has recorded additional bird spots. Listen in on Monday morning during Community News between 6 and 7 am and Wednesday morning during Morning Addition between 7:50-8:00 a.m.. A big thank you to KZYX for airing these wonderfully informative spots.

Results of the Fundraiser for Education: Thanks to the following individuals for their generous support. Jean Cunningham, Lydia Edison, Jim and Karen Havlena, David Jensen, Marilyn Katzel, Rich Kuehn and Dean Schuler, Charlene McAllister, Art and Jean Morley, Lisa Orselli, Don and Wendy Roberts, Susan Smith, Judith Sill, Ruth Sommer, Sharon Valenti, and Warren and Ginny Wade.

It is not too late to join this list of supporters. As the donations to our education program have grown we have been able to expand the program and will continue to do so with your support. Please send your donations to MCAS, P.O. Box 2297, Fort Bragg, CA 95437. Don't forget you can donate by credit card, please give your card number and expiration date. MCAS shreds all credit card information to protect your privacy.

“Whale Festival Volunteers Needed: Fun loving volunteers needed to help with the Audubon Booth at Point Cabrillo for the Mendocino Whale Festival, March 1-2 and Fort Bragg Whale Festival, March 15-16. The booth is educational and tells the more than 600 visitors to these events about MCAS, local birds, our education program, the SOS program and all the fun things we do. No experience necessary. Contact: Judy Steele, 937-2216, judys@mcn.org

Birding on the Internet – The Bulletin Boards

Why join an electronic bulletin board?

Many people have the misconception that bulletin boards are only for rare bird sightings. That is certainly not the case. Although rare bird sightings are a real treat, they are, in fact, rather rare. Bulletin boards are also a good way to learn about special events such as pelagic trips and birding festivals. Often there will be informative discussions about topics of interest. I rely on them as an early warning system for spring and fall migrants as well as irruptions of northern species in winter. When I read of warbler sightings in the Bay Area or Snowy Owls in Humboldt County, I know it's time to start paying attention.

MENDOBIRDS is the one electronic bulletin board that covers Mendocino county, and much of Lake county as well. Posted topics include “wild birds and birding in Mendocino county and nearby areas: interesting observations, sightings of uncommon, rare, and extremely rare birds, birding locations, trip reports, identification issues, birding events, club activities, and other issues of interest to the birding community.”

How does it work?

To view postings on MENDOBIRDS, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mendobirds>.

Several recent postings will be visible. For instance, “Bald Eagle, Booneville - Friday afternoon about 1:00 in the rain, there was a Bald Eagle sitting in an oak tree right near highway 128. It was about halfway between . . .” You can also view archive postings by clicking on the month and year of interest in the “Message History” section. Fortunately, because they are primarily text files with occasional links to photos, most electronic bulletin boards are quickly downloaded on dial-up connections.

If you are interested in receiving regular postings to your email account, click on the “Join This Group” button at the bottom of the page and follow the directions. Most electronic bulletin boards require that you register as a member in order to post sightings. All have a designated moderator who is responsible for maintaining order and civility, with the right to bar anyone who fails to abide by the rules (yes, there are rules, but we'll get to that later).

Unfortunately, most bulletin boards are local or regional in content. In the past when I wanted to check whether the warblers had returned to the Bay Area or any Snowy Owls had been seen up north, I would have to logon to several different bulletin boards. Last year I discovered a wonderful website that reports the postings from twenty-nine electronic bulletin boards throughout California: [Sialia.com](http://www.sialia.com). Now I simply click on one bookmark each morning.

To access this website, type www.sialia.com then click on “The CA Birding Lists Digest.” The page will open with reports for that day divided by area of interest: California-wide, Northern California, and Southern California. You may also select from a list of previous postings for the last 31 days. I studied the Sialia postings for the Central Valley before I went with a group of friends to visit the Sacramento and Colusa Wildlife Refuges in January. I strongly recommend that you at least visit this site, especially if you are planning to travel outside the county.

I encourage you all to visit the two electronic bulletin boards I have listed. From there you can follow links to many other interesting sites. Birding on the internet is a lot like birding in the field - on a good day you see something really special, and on a bad day you have fun.

Next month – Rules and Protocol

2007 Christmas Bird Count; Art Morley has completed his tally and has submitted the list of birds seen and recorded on December 30, 2007 during our Christmas Bird Count to the National Audubon Society. The full list is included in this newsletter. A total of 131 species were recorded. Again a big thanks to all who participated.



Don't let this happen!

The population of corvids (the family of birds that includes crows, ravens, and jays) has increased dramatically during the past two decades. There are many reasons. These are fairly intelligent birds who have adapted to human carelessness. Corvids can be found wherever trash is strewn on the ground. This was a scene in Mendocino, but it is everywhere, just look around. At the recent Snowy Plover Conference in San Diego it was reported that the two toughest issues facing and affecting the survival of the snowy plover are habitat degradation and predation. In Northern California the main predators are ravens and crows. Let's keep our trash where it belongs! Make sure you are not feeding these birds.

Bird Walks

The Mendocino Coast Audubon Society will host two walks at the Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens during the month of February. Our monthly beginners' bird walk will be held on the first Saturday of the month, February 2, at 9:00 A.M. Our midweek bird walk will be held on the third Wednesday of the month, February 20, at 8:00 A.M.

Birders with all levels of experience are invited to attend these walks. Binoculars will be available for those who need them. Admission is free for Botanical Garden members. For more information on these and other activities, please call 964-8163 visit our website "mendocinocoastaudubon.org."

February Field Trip to View the Birds of MacKerricher State Park

On Saturday, January 12, the Audubon Society hosted a field trip to Ten Mile Beach. On Saturday February 9, at 9:00 a.m. the field trip will be at Lake Cleone and Laguna Point, MacKerricher State Park. Meet at lake parking lot. Binoculars will be available for those who need them.



Bird Sightings

1/3 **Black-legged Kittiwakes**, Laguna Point

1/12 & 13 **Northern Shrike**, near the mouth of the Ten Mile River on the south side

1/16 **Palm Warbler**, Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens

1/17/08 **Cackling Goose**, Ten Mile River

1/25 **Bald Eagle**, perched in an oak on Highway

128 just east of Booneville, between the Highway 253 intersection and the CDF station

1/26 **Pine Siskin**, a large flock returned to lower Pudding Creek area in Fort Bragg