

# The Whistling Swan



NEWSLETTER OF THE MENDOCINO COAST AUDUBON SOCIETY

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MARCH

2006

## MEETING: MONDAY

March 20

### Russian Gulch State Park Conference Center

Parking is very limited  
car-pooling recommended

Bring your own plates  
and utensils.

6:00 pm potluck dinner

\$2.00 cover charge, bring your own  
wine, \$1 for soda or bottled water.

This meeting, take the time to call  
a friend and bring them.

For further information call 964-6362

7:00 pm meeting

7:30 pm Program: Peter Warner,  
Environmental Scientist  
public welcome

Hosted by Mendocino Area Parks  
Association, this is the Annual Joint  
Meeting and Award Ceremony with the  
Mendocino Coast Audubon Society,  
Mendocino Land Trust, and California  
Native Plants Society.

## MARCH PROGRAM

**Program correction:** Our scheduled  
speaker, Parks Superintendent Mike Wells,  
has accepted a position elsewhere and will  
not be available. Peter Warner, State Parks  
Environmental Scientist and well-known  
Weed Warrior, has graciously agreed to  
stand in. Warner's talk is expected to cover  
exotic invasive plant species, related  
projects county-wide, DPR's activities in  
the Mendocino district, and ways for local  
citizens to get involved.

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

**Monday, April 17, 6:00pm: Program:**  
Japan in Winter. Speaker: Rich Kuehn.  
Catered dinner Japanese/Asian, choice of  
vegetarian or not, at the Gualala Art  
Center, Gualala. RESERVATIONS FOR  
DINNER are needed by the caterer by  
April 3th. Dinner is \$25.00 for all. Program  
only is a \$5 donation.

**May 15:** Annual Meeting of MCAS,  
Caspar Community Center.

## 2005-06 BOARD MEMBERS

### Acting President

Warren Wade

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### Vice President

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### Hospitality

Open

Members are welcome to Board Meetings that are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month. Please call 964-6362 for location and reservations.

## Board Meeting Notes, February 27, 2006

MCAS has sponsored in-school programs in Fort Bragg, Mendocino and Point Arena elementary schools for the past few years. This year our roving teachers are Pam Huntley and Sherry Sellars, acclaimed by both parents and students for their ability to present nature and ecology subjects in a memorable and exciting way. We are now starting to sponsor Snowy Plover presentations to high school students through the California State Parks and Recreation Department – the teacher will be Angela Martin, and the sessions will include both classroom study and field trips. Welcome on board, Angela.

Pam Huntley, in addition to her teaching load is developing a series of Public Service Announcements (PSAs) for once-a-week presentation on “All Things Considered” on KZYX and Z. Each of these will highlight a specific bird species or ecological niche, giving a short look at interesting facts; Pam’s first three PSA pilots excited the MCAS Board – yes, we did learn from them! We will keep you updated on when to expect these interesting and informative PSAs.

We have received additional donations to our MCAS fund-raising drive. Again, we thank all donors for their dedication to conservation and education – in donating to MCAS you are truly thinking globally and acting locally. Our goal is to improve the future of the wild kingdom for our children and grandchildren.

We still have Mendocino County Bird Lists for sale – \$3.00 at the Whale Festivals or MCAS meetings, or \$4.00 by mail (write us at P.O. Box 2297, Fort Bragg, CA 95437, or phone us at 707-964-6362 for credit card purchases).

Next month’s chapter meeting, April 17<sup>th</sup>, will be our annual gala dinner at the Gualala Art Center. Rich Kuehn and Dean Schuler will present video and digital slides from one of their favorite birding trips; their topic is “Winter in Japan”, and they have lovely footage of Japanese birds and mammals, including crane dances. The food and drink will be Japanese/Asian, and we expect to have a wonderful evening, as usual. Reservations are necessary, and must be in by April 3<sup>rd</sup> in order to attend – please fill out and return the enclosed form immediately!!

*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.*

To State Parks Volunteers on the Mendocino Coast

You are cordially invited to this year's  
**WESTERN SNOWY PLOVER TRAINING**



Wednesday, March 15, 2006  
4:00 pm at the  
Russian Gulch Rec. Hall

Some topics to be covered:

- Western snowy plover biology and identification
- Local management and conservation efforts and methods
- Impacts affecting plovers on Mendocino beaches and how we can all help

This will be a PowerPoint-based presentation, with lots of (lovely!) pictures of snowy plovers from the local area and their entire coastal range.

Please come and join us. We would like to provide this information to you to help enhance the contributions you already make to State Parks in Mendocino. Please RSVP, or just drop in – we're looking forward to seeing you!

For more information, feel free to contact Angela Martin at the Russian Gulch headquarters: (707)937-4053, [amartin@mcn.org](mailto:amartin@mcn.org), or PO Box 440, Mendocino, CA 95460.

## Gala April Dinner and Program

The Mendocino Coast Audubon Society is pleased to announce the details of its yearly South Coast dinner meeting. It is scheduled at the Gualala Art Center on Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, beginning with dinner at 6 pm. This year's caterer is Leslie Bates of Savory Coast Catering. She will be serving an Asian-themed three-course dinner accompanied by a choice of beverages. For a full description of the menu, see the enclosed salmon-colored reservation sheet.

At 7:30 pm, following a short business meeting, Richard Kuehn, a local birder and videographer, will present the program, Japan in Winter – Birding in the Land of the Rising Sun, a film he recently edited using his digital video footage and his domestic partner, Dean Schuler's, still digital images. Both men were members of a Field Guides Inc. <<http://www.fieldguides.com/>> trip to Japan during February 2003. They selected this trip as they are in the midst of attempting to photograph all 15 species of the Crane Family in the wild and knew several species from Europe and Asia often overwinter at the Crane Center in Izumi on Japan's third largest island, Kyushu. Amongst the many avian species in the film are 5 species of Crane. To prepare for their trip, they studied Japanese for 4 months under the tutelage of Akiko Docker, a native of Kyoto, Japan, who also lives at The Sea Ranch. This enabled them to travel by themselves for a couple of weeks, including to Yudanaka, where they photographed Japanese Macaques, Snow Monkeys, in thermal pools.

**Reservations are required** and can be made by mailing the enclosed salmon-colored form or by telephoning either Ginny Wade at 707-964-6362 or Connie Schimbor at 707-785-9626 prior to April 3rd. The suggested donation for the dinner and program is \$25, which will be accepted at the door. This popular event is usually over subscribed – to ensure seating for dinner, please call or mail the form immediately!!

For those who cannot attend the dinner, the program only is optional for a suggested donation of \$5 at the door.

## MCAS at the Whale Festivals

Once again, the Mendocino Coast Audubon Society will have a table at the Point Cabrillo Light Station for both the Mendocino and Fort Bragg Whale Festivals. We are talking to interested attendees, showing our storyboard of MCAS activities, and selling Mendocino County Bird Lists and our ever-popular Audubon Birds from Wild Republic.

David Jensen is also leading Audubon bird walks in the Point Cabrillo Preserve starting at 9:00 am on all four days of the festivals – meet at the Point Cabrillo parking lot.

## Invasive Plant Removal

As is painfully obvious in driving Route One between Fort Bragg and Mendocino, we are in serious trouble from the spread of exotic plants, particularly gorse, broom, and pampas grass. Art Morley, Dick Van Alstyne and their crew of weed warriors have made an impressive dent in some areas, Ten-Mile Beach, Big River and Point Cabrillo Reservation in particular, but the weeds are spreading faster than this small team can handle them. **We need more help!** MCAS, teaming up with State Parks personnel, has scheduled a once-a-month weed removal day, the fourth Saturday of each month. Starting Saturday, March 24, at Jughandle State Reserve we will attack the weeds head-on – weed wrenches and instruction in their use will be supplied by State Parks. If you value the native California plants and want to preserve them, please join us at Jughandle at 9:00 am. Work as long as you please, but please work.

## New Board Members

The end of our fiscal year is fast approaching, and several of our current MCAS Board members would like to be replaced by fresh new talent. If you believe in the education and conservation mission of MCAS, we need your help. Our once-a-month Board meetings are short, include dinner and wine, and are dissention free. This is an open invitation to come see how we work together – call 964-6362 for a dinner reservation, or just come to Jughandle Creek Farm at 7:00 pm on March 27 or April 24.

## **The Aleutian Goose Festival Crescent City - March**

The weekend events center around the activities of the Aleutian Canada goose. Virtually the world's entire population visits Crescent City each spring. Must sees are the phenomenal spectacle of the Goose Fly-off at dawn, and at least one trip to see the fields of geese feeding in outlying farm lands. For further information call 1-800-343-8300 <http://www.aleutiangoosefestival>.

## **Godwit Days Shorebird Celebration**

Extraordinary birding opportunities await you at the 11th annual Godwit Days shorebird celebration. Located on California's North Coast, they offer towering redwoods, rocky ocean coasts, wild river valleys, the expansive mud flats of Humboldt Bay and the world-renowned Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, home to 253 species of birds and mammals.

The events include trips, workshops and presentations and are available for a flat fee for the weekend. This includes the keynote speaker.

## **Mendocino Whale Festival Saturday and Sunday March 4 and 5**

and

## **Fort Bragg Whale Festival Saturday and Sunday March 18 and 19**

**Mendocino Coast Audubon will  
have bird walks for both festivals**

## **Healthier Pest Control**

### **ONE: Practice Prevention**

Pests, whether bugs, weeds, or other undesired organisms, are usually the symptom of a problem rather than the source --- prevent [problems that can lead to pest infestations.

- Remove potential pest hiding and breeding sites. Keep outdoor areas clear of trash and standing water. Keep indoor areas clean and dry.
- Keep your plants and soil healthy. Healthy plants can better resist, and recover from, pest damage. Plant native flowers, trees, shrubs and grasses to take advantage of their ability to thrive in your area.
- Make natural pest enemies welcome. Toads, dragonflies, lady beetles, bats, and numerous other species are natural allies in best control. Learn your allies and support them.
- Move a little higher --- a longer, thicker lawn will crowd out weeds.

### **TWO: Make Sure You Have a Problem**

Seeing a bug or weed doesn't mean you have a "pest problem."

- Take the time to identify your "pest." Is it a beneficial or non-pest species?
- Reconsider what's a weed. Tolerate some plants other than grass. Allow naturally occurring plants to fill in problem spots. There are many low-growing wildflowers that can tolerate mowing and will add some diversity to your lawn area. Create a "mowed meadow."
- Pest control does not mean pest elimination. Realize that insects can live in your lawn and garden, and not cause damage. The mere presence of a potential pest species does not mean you have a problem. It must be abundant enough to cause damage. Is it?

**Next Month: Use Less-toxic  
Pest Control Choices**

## WHALE FESTIVAL BIRD WALKS

The MCAS will hold two bird walks in conjunction with the Mendocino Whale Festival March 4 & 5. And two walks with the Fort Bragg Whale Festival March 18 & 19. Last year people, from 10 to their mid-70's, enjoyed seeing meadow larks, four different hawks and shore birds, too. Pelagic pigeon guillemots, which winter at sea and are only now coming to shore to nest were spotted.

By the Fort Bragg Whale Festival, in two weeks, the barn and violet green swallows will be back in the area.

It's a short and easy walk (down hill both ways) through the open headlands to **Point Cabrillo Lighthouse**. Join David Jensen for a closer look at coastal birds at **9:00 am both Saturday and Sunday, March 4 & 5th and again on March 18 & 19th**. Follow signs for the lighthouse posted on Hwy. One.

## BIRD WALKS

There are two scheduled bird walks at the Botanical Gardens -- our regular bird walk on the **third Wednesday** of each month; meet at the **Botanical Gardens at 8:00 am**. The birding basics walk on the **first Saturday is at 9:00**.

Members of the Botanical Gardens enter free, others are asked to make a donation when exiting.

There will be binoculars available to borrow for people who need them.

## FIELD TRIPS

### NOTE CHANGE IN DAY

**SUNDAY March 12 8:00 am**

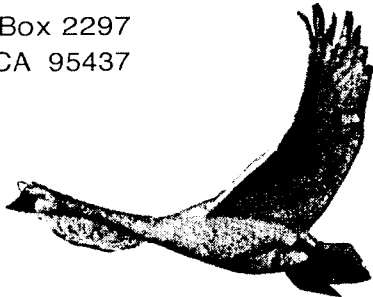
**Van Damme State Park**. Meet at at Van Damme Beach parking lot.

**April 9:00 am Sea Ranch**. Meet at Knipp-Stengle Barn, west side of Hwy. One, Mile Post 53.71

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## MENDOCINO COAST AUDUBON SOCIETY

Post Office Box 2297  
Fort Bragg, CA 95437



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