

THE GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY



FOUNDED 1917

Tom Grey/www.tgreybirds.com



Double-crested Cormorant, a species that nests at Lake Merced in San Francisco and Lake Merritt in Oakland, two sites that GGA worked to protect early in its history.

GGA Committees Continue Legacy of Protecting Birds

In the 1918 President's Report for the Audubon Association of the Pacific, C. B. Lastreto begins by stating that the "Association entered into its second year with very promising prospects of continued growth and important accomplishments. Many new members were added to our roster and strong committees were well launched into their work." Despite the setbacks of World War I and an influenza epidemic, the association's committee members worked actively to promote the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, reduce oil spills that were killing

large numbers of birds around the Farallon Islands, and install nest boxes throughout the Bay Area. Lastreto entreats association members "to be vigilant and ready to enlist our services where they may be needed."

In some ways, little has changed since 1919. Golden Gate Audubon members and staff continue to advocate for bird and wild-

life protections, create and restore habitat, and work to reduce impacts to birds from human activities and pollution. Noting the "unfortunate circumstance" that the association's efforts won "little sympathy...from our local press for our work and its objects," Lastreto urged association members to counter "fallacious opinions and interested

opposition" with science-based advocacy and public education. His words are as applicable today as they were then.

For the next 60 years, a single Conservation Committee and several issue-specific subcommittees represented the association (which changed its name to Golden Gate Audubon in 1949). In 1981, the San Francisco and East Bay Conservation Committees were formed to create greater focus on local issues and promote local expertise. In 1998, the Friends of the Alameda Refuge officially formed to promote the creation of a national wildlife refuge at Alameda Point and to protect the endangered California Least Terns that nest there.

Every major accomplishment in Golden Gate Audubon's history may be traced back to work done by one of the conservation committees. In 1919, committee members won the first efforts to reduce the oiling of marine birds and the release of contaminated ballast around the bay and the Farallon Islands by talking directly to oil companies and regulatory officials. In the 1960s, GGA members worked with Marin

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Mary Malec

Western Burrowing Owl, a species in decline in the Bay Area and throughout the state.



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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BIRD BOX

415.681.7422

The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Membership is \$35 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets six times per year (schedule can be obtained from the main office).

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Ann Witter Memorial Environmental Education Fund

Golden Gate Audubon is proud to announce the establishment of the Ann Witter Memorial Environmental Education Fund. Susan Witter created this fund in November 2010 to honor the memory of her sister-in-law Ann, a long-time Golden Gate Audubon member and former National Audubon Society board member.

Ann, daughter of Dean Witter, was an avid amateur birder, botanist, and world traveler who visited all seven continents. As a lifelong outdoorswoman, having managed her family's cattle ranch and ridden horses well into her 80s, Ann knew firsthand the importance and beauty of the natural world. Her passion for education led her to help found University High School. Ann cared deeply about the welfare of children and understood the vital importance of science and outdoor education.

The Ann Witter Memorial Environmental Education Fund will provide support for Golden Gate Audubon's award-winning environmental education program, which offers watershed-based education to children from low-income communities in San Francisco and the East Bay. The program starts in the classroom, then goes outdoors to introduce both students and their family members to hands-on field studies and environmental restoration. Without this program, these youngsters would not have opportunities to directly connect their classroom learning with the outdoors. For many of the students, this is their first visit to nearby parks, beaches, and ocean shorelines, where they learn about the link between environmental health and personal health.

Thanks to the generosity of Ann Witter's family and individual contributors to the fund, Golden Gate Audubon will be able to bring its award-winning education programs to more underserved schools and families in the coming years and transport more young students to fascinating outdoor sites, stimulating their interest in birds, science, and outdoor careers.

To contribute to the Ann Witter fund, please contact Mark Welther, Executive Director, 510.843.9912 or mwelther@goldengateaudubon.org.



Ann Witter.

Birdathon 2011 — Save the Date

Get ready to form your team, pick a favorite birding spot (from local to faraway), and enjoy birding on behalf of Golden Gate Audubon this spring. Birdathon 2011 will kick off April 1 and run through the month, winding up with a big celebration on May 12 that you won't want to miss. We will have prize categories and wonderful prizes galore.

Taking part in the Birdathon is easy and a lot of fun. You can simply sign up for a field trip led by one of our expert leaders, or you can form your own team and explore a local park or an area outside the state or even outside the country. Then ask your friends and colleagues to sponsor you for the Birdathon and help us raise needed funds for our Bay Area conservation and Eco-Education programs. Registration information will be online and in the March-April *Gull*. We will also be at the Berkeley REI store on March 26 and 27, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., if you'd like to register in person or stop by with friends who might want to join the fun.

Help the Environment by Choosing the *Gull* Online

If you download our award-winning newsletter from our website rather than receiving it in the mail, you will help save paper and reduce our expenses. To choose the *Gull* online (with color photos!) and receive an email link to each new issue, email ggas@goldengateaudubon.org or call 510.843.2222.

Habitat Restoration Leads to Wetland Discoveries

My interest in Golden Gate Audubon was sparked after completing a volunteer workday at Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline in Oakland on a dismal rainy day a year ago. I am a lifelong resident of the Bay Area, and the shoreline staging area could have been any address I entered into my GPS. Sure, I had passed the area a hundred times traveling on I-880 to the airport or school, or running errands. Yet, the shoreline never warranted a second glance. Odd? Yes, especially for a geography student and a budding naturalist who takes note of nature wherever it may be. Admittedly, the shoreline's proximity to the industrial section of Oakland meant that, for the most part, all that was natural had been lost and forgotten.

Like any number of regional parks, the 741-acre MLK shoreline can't be solely defined by its geography. The shoreline is a sacred sanctuary fighting a righteous war to hold on to what it is owed. As I stood on the shoreline, I was reassured that the natural

processes at work were just as apparent here as they are in other places in the natural world. I realized this makes preservation and restoration essential because MLK is Oakland's shoreline.

Then I noticed the birds. My eyes were drawn to one bird, then another, and unlike my neighborhood sparrows and finches, these birds were totally unfamiliar. A flock of black and white birds bobbed in the bay nearby, seemingly saluting our efforts to collect trash on their behalf in the storm. These birds were like many of the shoreline plants—I had no reference except for an occasional gull or coyote bush. I longed to know all of them as well as I know my neighborhood Red-tailed Hawk.

Since I began interning at MLK, I've learned about native plants like mugwort, gumplant, lizardtail, and a host of sages, and their nemeses—wild fennel, stinkwort, and clovers. Every time I'm out at MLK, I spot someone birding in the home of the California Clapper Rail, terns, and avocets. MLK

serves as a reminder that advocacy isn't just in the hills and wide-open spaces but in places where nature hugs the shoreline.

—LaKisha Mitchell

LaKisha Mitchell has been a Golden Gate Audubon habitat restoration intern since early 2010 and now works with GGA's Eco-Education Program.



Richard Mellor

LaKisha Mitchell at Arrowhead Marsh.

Make Your 2011 Travel Plans

For detailed descriptions, go to Travel with Golden Gate Audubon under Field Trips at www.goldengateaudubon.org. To obtain itineraries or sign up for a trip, contact Chris Bard, trip coordinator, at chrisbard@earthlink.net or 510.522.5699.

NEW TRIP—CASCADES AND SISKIYOU IN OREGON

Harry Fuller, a popular GGA field trip leader who now lives in Oregon, will lead a trip to the Cascade Range and Siskiyou Mountains in search of montane species, as well as birds found in the region's arid habitats. In spring, many birds of the Cascades and Siskiyou, such as Dusky Flycatcher, Hermit Warbler, MacGillivray's Warbler, and Townsend's Solitaire, will be singing on their nesting territories. For photo and video opportunities, the group will observe Clark's and Western Grebes do their mat-

ing dance across Klamath Lake, where Black Tern, Yellow-headed Blackbird, and Redhead are also found.

Trip dates are June 2–5, with an optional extension on June 6 to see the nesting Black Swifts at Burney Falls in California. Cost, excluding transportation to and from Oregon, is \$350–\$475 per person, depending on the number of participants. A \$50 donation to GGA is included.

HONDURAS—SECOND TRIP

If you missed signing up for the first trip to Honduras, you'll want to jump at the chance to go on the second trip, March 19–28. The trip is designed to highlight the diverse habitats across parts of central and western Honduras and includes a visit to the Mayan ruins at Copán. The guide will be Robert Gallardo, a naturalist who has resided in Honduras since 1993.

Cost, excluding airfare, is \$1,800 per person, which includes a \$150 tax-deductible donation to GGA.

BIG BEND AND TEXAS HILL COUNTRY—SECOND TRIP

Another trip has been organized to two birding hotspots in Texas: Big Bend National Park and the Hill Country. Dates of the trip are April 8–17, the ideal time to seek out returning breeding birds and migrating eastern and western warblers and tanagers. Participants will have an opportunity to identify and photograph many of the Big Bend region's flowers, cacti, mammals, and reptiles. Mark Smith of Mark Smith Nature Tours, the trip leader, has led natural history tours for 25 years. Cost, excluding airfare, is \$2,235 per person, which includes a \$150 tax-deductible donation to GGA.

TRAVEL PLANS continued on page 4



AGREEMENT REACHED TO PROTECT ALTAMONT BIRDS

As this issue of the *Gull* went to press, Golden Gate Audubon announced a settlement that will help protect birds at Altamont Pass. On December 3, GGA and four Bay Area Audubon chapters—Santa Clara Valley, Mt. Diablo, Ohlone, and Marin—joined the Attorney General’s Office in negotiating an agreement that will remove old-generation wind turbines on an accelerated schedule and replace them with fewer modern turbines that could reduce impacts to birds by as much as 80 percent. More details are available on our website and will appear in the March/April *Gull*.

EAST BAY DOG GROUP

Our East Bay Dog Group has a new leader, Pam Young, and will begin meeting in January to develop and implement recommendations, signage, and other tools for reaching out to dog owners and helping them understand that off-leash dogs often harm wildlife. The group, comprised mostly of dog owners, will be looking for cooperative solutions to help humans, dogs, and wildlife share our open spaces. If you are willing to help with this important issue, please contact Pam Young, pamyoung2@mac.com.

JOIN GGA AT THE FLYWAY FESTIVAL

Golden Gate Audubon will participate in the 15th annual San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival, held February 11–13 at Mare Island in Vallejo. The three-day event is packed with field trips to local birding sites, tours of historic Mare Island, slide talks about birds and other wildlife, and many other activities for both adults and kids. As in past years, volunteers will staff a table and share information about GGA with festival goers. Volunteers sign up for brief time slots, then are free to enjoy the festival activities for the rest of the day. If you are interested, please contact Jennifer Robinson Maddox, jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.919.5873.

RESTORE HABITAT AT GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SITES

We invite you to join us for our monthly workdays at our restoration sites on both sides of the bay. During winter, we work on site preparation and also plant. For site details and directions, please go to www.goldengateaudubon.org/volunteer.

- Alameda Wildlife Refuge: January 9, February 13, 9 a.m. – noon.
- Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline, Oakland: January 15, February 19, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Pier 94, San Francisco: February 5, 9 a.m. – noon.

BURROWING OWLS RETURN TO BERKELEY

To date, two Western Burrowing Owls have shown up at Cesar Chavez Park, located near the Berkeley Marina. Several times each week, volunteers with our Burrowing Owl Docent Program monitor the owls, point them out to park users, and educate the public about the owls and the need to protect them. This year, volunteers will survey the nearby Berkeley Meadow, part of the Eastshore State Park, where three owls wintered last season. We invite you to visit the park and see the owls before they leave at the end of March.

MAKING SF BUILDINGS SAFE FOR BIRDS

Early in 2011, the San Francisco Planning Commission will decide whether to approve proposals from Golden Gate Audubon, the

American Bird Conservancy, and the San Francisco Planning Department that would help make the city’s built environment safer for birds. The requirements and voluntary guidelines, contained in a report titled “Standards for Bird-Safe Buildings,” would apply to new structures and those undergoing major rehabilitation in locations most dangerous to birds.

The standards, which cover glass, lighting, and urban wind technology, are available for public comment. The report is posted at www.goldengateaudubon.org. We encourage you to provide comments by email to the planning commissioners, through the commission secretary, linda.avery@sfgov.org, and to Legislative Manager AnMarie Rodgers, AnMarie.Rodgers@sfgov.org.

DOG MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS COMING SOON

The National Park Service is expected to release the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for public review and comment. The alternatives in the DEIS will determine the pet policy in the GGNRA. Public workshops will be held, and Golden Gate Audubon will comment on the proposed rules. The final NPS decision will be based upon public comment, legal review, and federal approval.

We need GGA members and supporters to attend meetings, submit comments, and conduct outreach. If you can help, please contact Mike Lynes, Conservation Director, mlynes@goldengateaudubon.org. Also check our website for news and actions you can take.

TRAVEL PLANS from page 3

ECUADOR—SECOND TRIP

At 9.2 species per square kilometer, Ecuador boasts the highest biodiversity in the world relative to the size of the country and is noted for its excellent birding opportunities. On this trip, October 14–28, participants will explore various habitats on the east and west slopes of the Andes, from the high mountains of the Yanacocha Reserve at 11,482 feet to the lowlands of Silanche Reserve at 984 feet. Edison Bueñano of Sword Billed Expeditions will be the guide. Cost, excluding airfare, is \$3,050 per person, which includes a \$150 tax-deductible donation to Golden Gate Audubon.

Don’t miss Bob Lewis’s photographic tour of Ecuador on January 20 (see facing page).



SPEAKER SERIES

JENNIFER ROBINSON MADDOX, COORDINATOR

Up and Down the Mountains in Ecuador

Bob Lewis

Berkeley: Thursday, January 20 — 7 p.m. refreshments, 7:30 p.m. program

Ecuador has one of the most diverse avifauna of any country, with more than 1,660 species of birds in an area the size of Colorado. The geography is dominated by the Andes Mountains, which bisect the country from north to south, and rise to 20,000 feet from the Pacific plain in the west and the Amazon basin in the east. From the humid tropical rain forest, or Chocó, in the northwest and the dry Tumbesian lowlands in the southwest to the cold Paramo grasslands of the high Andes, each habitat has its unique birds. Bob Lewis's talk, based on two 2010 trips to Ecuador, will focus on the birdlife of the different regions. His northern trip was similar to the route for Golden Gate Audubon's Ecuador tours (see facing page). Edison Bueñano, guide for his southern trip, will lead the GGA trips.

Bob, a former GGA board member and a long-time birding instructor and field trip leader, is addicted to birding travel and bird photography. He and his wife, Hanno, have explored the parks and sewage ponds in more than 35 countries and anticipate adding to the list.

Berkeley Speaker Series: Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda (between Solano and Marin). Directions: www.northbrae.org/directions.htm.



Red-heated Barbet.

Bob Lewis/www.wingbeats.org

Birding and "Turtling" in Trinidad and Tobago

Brent Plater

San Francisco: Thursday, February 17 — 7 p.m. refreshments, 7:30 p.m. program

The twin island nation of Trinidad and Tobago is a well-known birding hotspot, with the world-famous Asa Wright Nature Centre as its pinnacle destination. Bearded Bellbird, Trinidad Motmot, and Trinidad Piping Guan are among the specialties that birders hope to see when they visit. The other wildlife, from monkeys to sea turtles, are equally enthralling. Brent Plater was a Fulbright Scholar in Trinidad and Tobago in 2010. Eddie Bartley, president of Nature Trip, joined him for a wildlife adventure. See the amazing images they captured, learn about efforts to protect birds and sea turtles, and get a feel for what it is like to travel to one of the most biologically diverse places in the Caribbean.

Brent is an adjunct professor at Golden Gate University School of Law, a lecturer at San Francisco State University, and the executive director of the Wild Equity Institute. He was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of the West Indies at St. Augustine. While there, he taught in a graduate program on tropical biodiversity conservation and management and conducted legal research on the protections afforded leatherback sea turtles.

San Francisco Speaker Series: First Unitarian Universalist Church and Center, 1187 Franklin Street at Geary. Visit www.uusf.org/visitors_faq.html, and use the Map It! link on the left for directions. Public transit, street parking, and parking in a lot for a fee are available.



Trinidad Motmot.

Brent Plater

Special Offer—Don't Miss Out!

Renew your Golden Gate Audubon membership for 2011—or if you are not a member, consider joining—by January 30, and Scope City, 350 Bay Street, San Francisco, will give you a 10 percent discount on binoculars and other fine optics. We will mail you a coupon to use (some limitations may apply), along with our thank-you for your support. Remember that GGA members enjoy many benefits throughout the year: *The Gull*, filled with field trips, classes, and conservation news unavailable from other sources; a discount at our Nature Store and for fee-based trips; and invitations to member-only activities.

We hope that we can count on you, because reliable support enables us to protect more wildlife and their habitats. You can renew or join at www.goldengateaudubon.org, call us at 510.843.2222, or mail a check to Golden Gate Audubon, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Ste. G, Berkeley, CA 94702. For more information about Scope City, call Sam at 415.421.8800 or go to www.scopecity.com.


Lands End Workday

Enjoy observing the birds of Lands End in San Francisco, while you work to improve their habitat. The East Wash, a site within the interior of Lands End, is known for its high avian diversity. Golden Gate Audubon and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy are holding a restoration workday on February 12, 1 to 4 p.m. Participants should convene at the top of the golf course access road across from the Palace of the Legion of Honor, where 34th Avenue meets El Camino del Mar. Tools, snacks, and water will be provided.



FIELD TRIPS

JENNIFER ROBINSON MADDOX, COORDINATOR

\$	Entrance fee
	Biking trip

For questions about individual field trips, contact the leaders. If you cannot reach a leader, email Jennifer Robinson Maddox, jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org. For updates to the field trips and new trips offered before the publication of the next newsletter, go www.goldengateaudubon.org/field-trips/field-trips.

San Francisco Botanical Garden

Sundays, January 2, February 6,
8 – 10:30 a.m.

Alan Ridley, allanrid@pacbell.net; Helen McKenna, 415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall; Dominik Mosur, polskatata@yahoo.com (February 6 only)

Meet at the front gate of garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. This delightful section of the park has several micro-habitats that attract an array of resident, migrant, and vagrant birds. This monthly trip is oriented toward helping beginning birders develop their skills in spotting and identifying birds. The garden charges \$7/person if you are not an SF resident or a Botanical Garden member. Please bring identification for residency and membership status.

Jewel Lake

Tilden Regional Park, Berkeley

Fridays, January 7, February 4,
8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Phila Rogers, coordinator, 510.848.9156, philajane6@yahoo.com

Monthly first Friday trips continue at Tilden. Meet at the parking lot at the north end of Central Park Dr. for a 1-mile stroll through this lush riparian area. Prepare for muddy trails. Heavy rain cancels.

Palo Alto Baylands and Mountain View Shoreline

Santa Clara County

Saturday, January 8, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Dan Murphy, murphsf@yahoo.com

The wetlands, marshes, and open water at Palo Alto and Mountain View are among the richest bird habitats on San Francisco Bay. Levees and boardwalks allow excellent views of the 60 to 80 species that winter in the South Bay. Ducks, shorebirds, waders, gulls, raptors, and many more make for an ideal birding experi-

ence. Meet in the parking lot on the right side of the road at the gate just before the duck pond near the Baylands Preserve. If it has been raining, wear boots or waders since the levees can be muddy. Bring lunch and liquids. Food and facilities are available at the Palo Alto Airport. Rain will not cancel.

From Hwy. 101 in Palo Alto (just south of Dumbarton Bridge), exit at Embarcadero Rd. East. Stay to the right and be careful not to end up on the Oregon Expressway. Drive east, over the freeway, to the end of the street. Turn left and continue to the gate before the duck pond.

Bird Walk for Beginners at MLK Jr. Regional Shoreline

Oakland

Saturday, January 8, and

Sunday, February 6, 9 – 11:30 a.m.

Laura Gobbi, 510.435.9802, imgobbi@gmail.com

Winter birding is spectacular at this park, where the habitat suits both migrant and resident birds. Come learn to locate and identify common waterbirds and land birds during this easy walk. We will begin at Garretson Point and make our way toward Arrowhead Marsh. Bring a scope if you have one. Heavy rain cancels.

Take I-880 south to Hegenberger Rd., then make the first right onto Edgewater and drive to the end. Turn left into the East Bay Regional Parks lot.

Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline

Oakland

Thursday, January 13, 9 – 11:30 a.m.

Gary and Chris Bard, chrisbard@earthlink.net, 510.301.2987

The shoreline offers excellent views of shorebirds, waders, and dabblers. Arrowhead Marsh is the home of numerous Clapper Rails. In winter, large rafts of scaup and goldeneye float offshore. Occasionally, raptors soar overhead. The walking is on flat ground. Please bring a

scope if you have one. Rain cancels. Restroom is available near parking lot.

From I-880 south, exit at Hegenberger Rd. Turn right onto Hegenberger, continue .7 mile across a small bridge over a channel, and turn right on Pardee Dr. Continue to Swan Way and turn left, then turn right into the park. Meet at the lot at end of road.

Heron's Head Park

San Francisco

Saturdays, January 15, February 5,
March 5

Beginning at 10 a.m., tours led by interns from Lowell and Lincoln High Schools equipped with spotting scopes will leave every 30 minutes, with the last tour at 11:30 a.m. Join them to experience the thrill of observing and learning about the waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds that call the park home during the winter. The park is at Jennings St. and Cargo Way, two blocks south of Pier 96. Free parking is available near entrance. For additional information, call 415.387.9160. Sponsored by Golden Gate Audubon, San Francisco Nature Education, Port of San Francisco, and Literacy for Environmental Justice.

Pescadero State Beach and Marsh

San Mateo County

Saturday, January 15, 9 a.m. – noon

Martha Wessitsh, 415.681.8059, martha@wessitsh.com

We will scope seabirds and shorebirds from the beach and then go into the marsh to see land birds as well as ducks on the ponds. Meet at the parking lot west of Pescadero Rd. Weather may be cold and windy or warm and sunny, so dress accordingly. Bathrooms are available. There will be about 1 mile of walking on generally flat ground. Heavy rain cancels.

Bird Walk for Beginners and Children at Aquatic Park

San Francisco

Sunday, January 16, 10 – 11 a.m.

Carol Kiser, Carol_Kiser@nps.gov

Park Ranger Carol Kiser will teach you how to locate and identify some common

waterbirds and land birds during this easy stroll along the Aquatic Park shoreline. Bring binoculars and bird books if you have them. Wear sunblock and a hat, and dress in layers. Carol Kiser, park ranger for many years at San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, has led bird walks since approximately 1990. There is free 4-hour parking at the foot of Van Ness Ave. Parking garages are in Ghirardelli Square on Beach St. and at the Anchorage Mall on Beach near Leavenworth.

Claremont Canyon

Oakland

Sunday, January 16, 9 – 11:30 a.m.

Erica Rutherford; Andrea Bennett;
John Colbert 510.541.2100,
eastbaybirding@gmail.com

Learn to locate and identify some common birds in the hills during this moderate walk. We will begin at the very top of Panoramic Way behind Memorial Stadium and bird along the Panoramic Ridge in both Claremont and Strawberry Canyons. Meet at the last intersection at the top of Panoramic Way. Please email eastbaybirding@gmail.com for a map of the meeting location and for parking suggestions. Dress in layers. Heavy rains cancels.

Corona Heights

San Francisco

**Fridays, January 21, February 18,
8 – 10 a.m.**

Brian Fitch; Dominik Mosur,
polskatata@yahoo.com

Meet in front of the Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, at the end of Museum Way off Roosevelt. We will circle Corona Heights, checking the east canyon woodland and north forest for residents and migrants, as well as monitoring the hilltop scrub and south cliff.

Coyote Hills Regional Park

Fremont

Saturday, January 22, 9 a.m. – noon

Anne Hoff, anne2210b@sbcglobal.net

This is a park with something for everyone, especially in the winter. We'll see waterfowl, raptors, shorebirds, passerines, and more. Meet at the Visitor's Center parking lot at the end of the entrance road.

Bring a scope if you have one. Heavy rain cancels. For a map and directions, go to www.ebparks.org/parks. \$

Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park Oakland

**Wednesdays, January 26, February 23,
9:30 a.m. – noon**

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066,
hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey,
510.528.2093, ruthtobey@gmail.com

Meet at the large spherical cage near the Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue. We will bird around there, then go up the garden path toward Children's Fairyland or walk down the lake toward Embarcadero, after which we will cover what we missed. January and February are still peak months at the lake. Some of the winter migrants may have left in February, but most will be here, and the first cormorants might be staking out their island rookery. Take the 12, N, or NL bus to Grand and Perkins, and walk into park on Perkins. Best parking is at boat-house lot near spherical cage. Entry (via Bellevue near Children's Fairyland) is probably free on weekday mornings, but will be \$3 if the kiosk is occupied.

Mines Road

Alameda and Santa Clara Counties

Saturday, January 29, 8:30 a.m.

Steve Lombardi, 925.785.0130,
hot-rock@sbcglobal.net; Rusty Scalf

Mines is an isolated road that runs through varied habitat from Livermore through the mountains of Alameda and Santa Clara. Eventually, it winds up at the top of Mt. Hamilton (but we won't go that far). Depending on timing, we may continue down Del Puerto Canyon Rd. to its junction with I-5. We would then return to Livermore on the freeway. Likely birds are Mountain Bluebird, American Pipits, and Horned Larks. We might see Phainopepla, Roadrunner, Lawrence's Goldfinch, and Lewis's Woodpecker, along with the usual oak woodland and scrub species. A good resource for birding Mines Rd. is Art Edwards's annotated checklist, available on Joe Morlan's website: <http://fog.ccsf.cc.ca.us/~jmorlan/ala1.htm>.

Because the road is narrow, and turn-outs are short, the trip is limited to 20 participants. Carpooling will be manda-

tory, as it will be dangerous if we caravan with more than five cars. To sign up for the trip, contact Steve Lombardi. Confirmed participants should meet at 8:30 a.m. near the Starbuck's in the Portola Village Shopping Center, Livermore, .75 mile south of I-580 on No. Livermore Ave. at the northwest corner of the intersection with Portola Ave. Pack a lunch, water, and snacks. There are no services (including restrooms) on Mines Rd. unless the Junction Cafe is open, which is not dependable. Plan to be self-sufficient. Bring walkie-talkies if you have them. Trip will last all day.

Panoche Valley

San Benito and Fresno Counties

Sunday, January 30, 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Chris Carpenter, cgbirds64@comcast.net, 510.547.2201

The valley consists primarily of private property, so on this trip we will stop along the road to look for specialty birds found in the area, such as Golden Eagle, Lewis's Woodpecker, Loggerhead Shrike, Phainopepla, Horned Lark, Mountain Bluebird, Vesper Sparrow, and Lark Sparrow. Meet in Paicines at the junction of Hwy. 25 and County Rd. J1, about 13 miles south of Hollister. Trip ends at I-5 and Little Panoche Rd. Be sure to bring food and to obtain gas in Hollister, as there are no gas stations en route. Rain cancels.

Winter on Tomales Bay

Marin County

Sunday, January 30, 9 a.m.

Harry Fuller, 541.488.8077,
www.towhee.net

Meet at the Bear Valley Visitor Center in the Pt. Reyes National Seashore. We will bird both shorelines of Tomales Bay looking for loons, grebes, gulls, shorebirds, raptors, and ducks. Bring lunch. Trip ends in midafternoon. For directions to the seashore, go to www.nps.gov/pore.

Putah Creek South Fork Preserve

Yolo County

Saturday, February 5, 8 – 10 a.m.

Aaron Haiman, anhaiman@ucdavis.edu

FIELD TRIPS continued on page 8

FIELD TRIPS from page 7

The preserve is a wonderful riparian corridor that runs from Lake Berryessa to the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. It offers opportunities to bird along the creek and out into some of the nearby open grasslands. Possible highlights include unusual ducks, winter raptors, and winter warblers and sparrows. Participants will be walking on uneven trails and through often coarse or prickly grassland vegetation; sturdy hiking boots and long pants are strongly suggested. February can be cold, so wear warm clothing. Beginning birders and families are welcome. Rain cancels. The trip is limited to 15 participants. Email the leader to reserve space. Those signed up for the trip should meet at the preserve, on Mace Blvd. south of I-80. The entrance to the parking lot is on the left just after the bridge over Putah Creek. The preserve has free parking but no bathrooms.

Berkeley Marina

Sunday, February 6, 9 a.m. – noon

Anne Hoff, anne2210b@sbcglobal.net

We'll explore the rocky shoreline and mudflats, scope near the pier, and look for the Burrowing Owls at Cesar Chavez Park. Expect waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, and a surprise or two. Bring a scope if you have one. Park behind the Seabreeze Restaurant at the corner of University Ave. and Frontage Rd. on the west side of I-80, and meet across University Ave. at the gates to the Eastshore State Park/Berkeley Meadows. Heavy rain cancels.

Duboce Park and Lower Haight

San Francisco

Sunday, February 13, 10 a.m. – noon

Dan Daniel, ddandan@pacbell.net;
Charlie Hibbard; Kori Dean

In conjunction with Friends of the Urban Forest (www.fuf.net), we will walk the streets looking at birds and trees, and consider how they work together. Starting at Duboce Park, we will go up to the lower edge of Buena Vista Park, cross the Panhandle to Hayes St., look at the new Divisadero plantings and designs, glance into Alamo Square (and walk through it if time permits), and end up back at Duboce Park. Birders can learn how to

identify street trees and hear about what goes into making San Francisco streets greener. Botanists can learn how to identify the birds they see and hear, as well as about what might be attracting them. Meet at the front of the Harvey Milk Recreational Center, 50 Scott St. at Duboce. An N-Judah stop is just down the street. The 6, 71, and 24 buses stop within a couple of blocks. Please email Dan Daniel at ddandan@pacbell.net if you plan to attend so leaders can plan for the group size.

Briones Reservoir Overlook

Orinda

Saturday, February 19, 9 – 11 a.m.

Kitty O'Neil, 925-787-6666,
[kittoi@hotmail.com](mailto:kitto@hotmail.com)

Learn some local birds and get hooked on bird-watching! Briones is a tranquil reservoir surrounded by rolling hills and woodlands. We'll look for Bald Eagles and hawks over the face of the dam, ducks and herons in the reservoir, and woodpeckers and songbirds all along the way. The short trail from the parking lot to the fire road could be muddy, but the rest of the walk is easy and mostly paved. Meet at the Briones Overlook parking area, 1.5 miles northeast of Camino Pablo/San Pablo Dam Rd. on Bear Creek Rd. Restrooms are available near parking lot. Check www.BayAreaBirdWalks.com for directions and rain plan.

Sacramento River Delta by Boat

Saturday, February 19, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Space may be available on this trip with Dolphin Charters to explore the delta, looking for Tundra Swan, Snow Goose, White-fronted Goose, and myriad ducks. The boat departs from the Antioch Marina. Trip is limited to 30 participants. Cost is \$80 for GGA members, \$90 for nonmembers. To reserve space and make payment, contact Stephanie Strait by Friday, January 14, at 510.843.2222 or ggas@goldengateaudubon.org. Confirmed participants will receive directions. \$

Lake Merced

San Francisco

Saturday, February 19, 8 – 11 a.m.

Dan Murphy, murphsf@yahoo.com

Lake Merced and the adjacent parklands form critical habitat for migrating, wintering, and nesting birds on the coast. The freshwater marsh surrounding the lake is the largest between Pt. Reyes National Seashore to the north and Pescadero to the south. Between the marsh, the open water, and the surrounding uplands, Lake Merced is an excellent habitat for many birds. During the past several years, it has been home to the earliest-nesting Great Blue Heron colonies in the Bay Area. Join us as we explore this natural treasure for lingering wintering birds, early nesting species, and the first spring migrants.

Meet at Sunset Circle, the large circular parking lot at the south end of Sunset Blvd. We plan to walk a little over a mile and drive to several sites around the lake. Wear sturdy shoes and layered clothing for highly changeable coastal weather.

Honey Lake

Lassen County

Saturday – Sunday, March 12 – 13

Dave Quady, 510.704.9353,
davequady@att.net

We will search Lassen for Greater Sage-Grouse, Bald Eagles, and other wintering birds of the Eastern Sierra. The trip is limited to the first 20 participants who sign up with the leader; reservations open up at noon on January 24. Detailed directions will be provided to those confirmed on the trip.

Lodging is available in Susanville; primitive camping is available in the Honey Lake State Wildlife Area. Plan to bring warm clothing, lunches for both days, and a scope if you have one. Carpooling is encouraged.

Yosemite National Park

Friday – Sunday, June 3 – 5

Dave Quady, 510.704.9353,
davequady@att.net; Dave Cornman

The lower and middle elevations of Yosemite National Park are alive with singing birds in late May and early June. A variety of habitats supports a rich diversity of birdlife, typically including seven flycatchers (three *Empidonax*), three vireos, seven

FIELD TRIPS continued on page 10



November brought a rash of megararities to California: the state's 2nd **Ivory Gull** (*Pagophila eburnea*) in Pismo Beach, just the 3rd **Black-tailed Gull** (*Larus crassirostris*) in Long Beach, a 3rd record **Brown Shrike** (*Lanius cristatus*) in McKinleyville, and a never-before-seen **Bean Goose** (*Anser fabalis*) in Salton Sea. Bay Area rarities weren't too shabby either. Here's the story.

LOONS TO DUCKS

Anglers and birders were treated to a juv. **Yellow-billed Loon** (*Gavia adamsii*) off Berkeley Pier, ALA, Nov. 26–29 (ES, SD; mob). A boat trip to Bodega Cyn., SON, documented a **Short-tailed Albatross** (*Phoebastria albatrus*) on Nov. 21 (SH, KPe, DS, GT, TMG, MV). Coastal observers witnessed a die-off of Northern Fulmars in Nov., but up to 470 Fulmars at Bean Hollow SB staved off hunger by scavenging a Blue Whale carcass (mob). Pigeon Pt. seawatches on Oct. 16 and Nov. 1 reported 3 Black-vented and 2 Short-tailed Shearwaters (RT, LB).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

Northern Goshawks were reported flying over the Golden Gate to SF, on Nov. 10 (BF) and harassing a Cooper's Hawk at Tolay Cr. Ranch, SON, on the 17th (RR). A late **American Golden-Plover** (*Pluvialis dominica*) lingered Oct. 20–Nov. 19 at Shollenberger Park in Petaluma, SON (RS; mob). On Oct. 12, a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper foraged near Ora Loma Sewage Treatment Plant, ALA (BR). Stilt Sandpipers made appearances on Oct. 26 at Crittenden Marsh, SCL (FV), and on Nov. 17 at Hayward's Landing, Hayward RS, ALA (BR).

A pale gull at the Bean Hollow SB whale carcass on Nov. 26 showed good field marks for **Iceland Gull** (*Larus glaucooides*), but its size and aggressiveness raised questions about its parentage (AJ). Sabine's Gulls were reported Oct. 9 from Battery Godfrey in the Presidio, SF (PS, JC), and on Oct. 16 from Pigeon Pt., SM (RT, LB). A pair of Ancient Murrelets trick-or-treated along the Great Hwy., SF, on Oct. 31 (PS).



Bob Gundersen/www.flickr.com/photos/bobgundersen

Black-throated Blue Warbler at Fort Mason, San Francisco.

DOVES TO THRASHERS

An Oct. 27 visit to PRNS Lighthouse, MRN, produced an Eastern Phoebe (ST); a 2nd bird turned up on an Oct. 29 census of the proposed ALA NWR, ALA (LF, JL). A **Great Crested Flycatcher** (*Myiarchus crinitus*) took part in a rarity invasion at the SF Zoo on Oct. 28–31 (HC, JC; mob), along with Scarlet, Summer, and Western Tanagers and 2 Tropical Kingbirds (DMu, AR, DA; mob). A squadron of 6 Purple Martins crossed the Golden Gate, SF, on Nov. 14 (AH).

A Gray Catbird harvested berries in Dimond Park, Oakland, ALA, Oct. 16–25 (MR; mob), while another catbird paused briefly on the 18th at Nunes (A) Ranch, PRNS (DMo). A Brown Thrasher feeding on toyon berries at Pt. Pinole RP Nov. 24–29 was a 1st county record for CC (LL; mob).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

Warbler migration highlights included Virginia's Warbler in Half Moon Bay, SM (AJ;

KPa); Magnolia Warbler at Bodega Harbor, SON (DK, fide JL; KH); Black-throated Blue Warblers at Nunes (A) Ranch, Bodega Bay, and Fort Mason, SF (DF, TMC, SL, TC; mob); and Blackburnian Warblers at PRNS Fishdocks and Half Moon Bay (CB, AJ; mob).

The season's 2nd Scarlet Tanager touched down at PRNS Lighthouse, MRN, on Oct. 8 (ET, fide OJ). A female Lark Bunting immigrated through Angel Island, MRN, on Oct. 14 (DW). In mid-October, Lapland Longspurs were reported from Bedwell Bayfront Park in Menlo Park, SM (PM, RF), from Spaletta (C) Ranch, PRNS (MD; mob), and from Palo Alto Baylands, SCL (AJ). Beginning Nov. 10, 2–4 Lapland Longspurs and a Chestnut-collared Longspur laid over at Mt. Trashmore, Hayward RS (BR; mob).

A Bobolink flew over Battery Godfrey on Oct. 7 (PS). A Rusty Blackbird was located among the dairy ranch blackbird flocks on outer PRNS Oct. 19–21 (RS, HH). A female Baltimore Oriole, found foraging on eucalyptus blossoms in Washington Park in ALA on Nov. 26–29, would be a 1st county record (NA; mob).

An invasion of Evening Grosbeaks started with a flock of 7 on Sep. 28 near Mt. Tamalpais, MRN (JC, AK). Flocks were reported sporadically through late November from coastal locales in SON, MRN, SF, SM, and the Santa Cruz Mountains of SCL. Up to 40 birds lingered at Gazos Cr. Rd., SM, Oct. 10–17 (GH; mob), and a single bird wandered inland to Roberts RP, ALA, on the 30th (ZB).

See **Birding Resources** at www.goldengateaudubon.org, for complete sightings data.

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers; "oob" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions.

Abbreviations for Observers: AH, Alan Hopkins; AJ, Alvaro Jaramillo; AK, Andy Kleinhesselink; AR, Allan Ridley; BF, Brian Fitch; BR, Bob Richmond; CB, Courtney Buechert; DA, David Armstrong; DF, Dea Freid; DK, Dan Kopp; DMo, Dominik Mosur; DMu, Dan Murphy; DS, Dan Singer; DW, David Wimpfheimer; ES, Ellen Sasaki; ET, Erika Taketa; FV, Frank Vanslager; GH, Garth Harwood; GT, Glen Tepke; HC, Hugh Cotter; HH, Hugh Harvey; JC, Josiah Clark; JL, John Luther; KH, Kirk Hopkin; KPa, Kathy Parker; KPe, Ken Petersen; LB, Leonie Batkin; LF, Leora Feeney; LL, Laura Look; MD, Matthew Dodder; MR, Mark Rauzon; MV, Martijn Verdoes; NA, Noah Arthur; OJ, Oscar Johnson; PM, Peter Metropulos; PS, Paul Saraceni; RF, Rich Ferrick; RR, Ruth Rudesill; RS, Rich Stallcup; RT, Ron Thorn; SC, Scott Carey; SD, Sheila Dickie; SH, Steve Howell; SL, Steven Lewitsky; ST, Scott Terrill; TC, Tony Collins; TMC, Tom McCuller; TMG, Todd McGrath; ZB, Zach Baer

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; CP, County Park; Cr., Creek; Cyn., Canyon; GGP, Golden Gate Park; Hwy., Highway; L., Lake; MRN, Marin; Mt., Mount; N., North; NAP, Napa; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; OSP, Open Space Preserve; PRNS, Pt Reyes National Seashore; Pt., Point; Rd., Road; Res., Reservoir; RP, Regional Park; RS, Regional Shoreline; S., South; SB, State Beach; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve

warblers, and many other species in full song and breeding plumage.

This trip is limited to the first 20 participants who sign up. Sign-ups begin at noon on January 31—by *email only* please to davequady@att.net.

Past participants have found it convenient to camp at Hodgdon Meadow in the park (reservations are necessary, as the campground fills up fast) or to stay in campgrounds or lodgings outside the park's Big Oak Flat entrance. Details, including meeting times and locations as well as lodging suggestions, will be provided to those confirmed on the trip. Participants should bring warm clothes, rainwear, and rubber boots for wet meadows, as well as lunches for Saturday and Sunday, and be prepared to walk about 3 miles each day. Carpooling is encouraged. \$

Wish List for GGA Programs

We are seeking generous donations in support of GGA activities. If you can provide any of the services or items, please contact Stephanie Strait at sstrait@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.2222.

Good photographers who can document events, Eco-Education activities, and local birds

Video camera and digital camera

Office equipment: laptop computers of recent vintage, in good condition; fax machine in excellent condition; ergonomic or well-padded adjustable office chairs

Optics: scopes; shockproof and waterproof binoculars for adults (8x40, 8x42) and for kids (7x or 8x, lightweight compacts with auto focus)

Outdoor sandwich boards (lightweight plastic, dry erase)

Tools: level; laser measuring device that includes metric; twine or string (not plastic) to tie weeds into bundles; hand tools (Cape Cod weeder, mini hoe, trowel, rake); long-handled tools (weeder, hula hoe)

Kid-sized gripping garden gloves

Rain ponchos for adults and kids

Small diesel bus in great shape to transport children for Eco-Education Program

Donations through November 19, 2010

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation advocacy, environmental education, and habitat restoration activities! (Membership renewals at basic levels are not included, but we greatly appreciate your support as well.)

GOLDEN EAGLE (\$1,000 AND ABOVE)

Anonymous, Andrea Burhoe, Alan Harper and Carol Baird, Irmgard Schmid-Maybach, Susan Witter in honor of Ann Witter

PEREGRINE FALCON (\$500 TO \$999)

Mary E. Martin, Richard Powell Walking

LEAST TERN (\$200 TO \$499)

Caroline Booth, Katherine C. and Jeffrey Bairey, George F. and Virginia Bing, Jeffrey H. Cohen, Jason Crotty, Pauline L. Fong, Andrew R. and Sharon Gillin, Ursula K. Heise, Anne K. Kelley, Russell and Karen Merritt, Angus MacDonald Parker, Joyce and Jim Schnobrich

CLAPPER RAIL (\$100 TO \$199)

Ann Adams and Samuel D. Williams, Tom Ainsworth, Terry L. Bamberger, Ellen W. Barth, Donald Bird and David N. Young, Vern S. Bothwell and Kirsten Stacey, Laura Buss and Niles Follin, Mary E. Cantrell, Patricia E. Coffey, Don and Nancy Colberg, Michael J. Curtin and Audrey Y. Ichinose, Burley A. Daye, J. Julian Elliot, Arthur Feinstein, Cornelia A. Foster, Patricia M. Gannon, Janet D. Gore, Patricia Lynn Gotchall, Bill & Judy Hein, Elizabeth A. Hook, Rich & Terry Horrigan, Robert and Connie Hosemann, Diane Ichiyasu, Oliver James and Anne Whaling, Dorothy Kakimoto, Lucy Kihlstrom, Carey A. Knecht, Alan L. Leavitt and Marianne Eilmann, Catherine S. Lyon, Mara K and Don Melandry, Mardi and Jeff Mertens, Elizabeth Murdock and Paul R. Cort, Marilyn and David Nasatir, Geraldine S. and Marvin Richard Nathan, Ann M. and Harlan "Mike" Richter, Lionel Schour, Ann Sieck and Daniel R. Hill, Leslie Smith and James F. Pfeiffer Carol A. Sughrue, Linda Swanson, Richard S. Taylor and Tracy Grubbs, Mary L. Turner and Norma Randig, Linda Clark Vallee, Stephen Waldman, Carolyn C. and Melvin M. Webber, Matt and JoAnn Zlatunich

GIFTS (TO \$99):

Robert A. Ach, Marianne Adkins, Kenneth D. Alborn and Nick & Blue Thompson, Patricia Arack, Lori Willson Arnold and Jack B. Arnold, Jr, Brenda J. Bailey, Bruce Bell, Barbara Benner, Linda L. Boyd, V. C. Broaddus, Bei Brown, Karen A. Butterfield, Virginia L. Carder, Jean Colvin, Melanie Coyle, Dennis R. Creek and Linda R. Kroll, Loring G. and Ann S. Dales, Tim Daly and Mary O'Sullivan, Vicki Derdivanis, Barbara Doe, John R. Domzalski, Mary Donovan, Dietlinde M. Elliott, Edward Feng, Elizabeth Fitzsimmons, Richard A. Gale, William J. and Zettie Lee Giddens, Thomas J. and Jane M. Graly, Catherine Gordon Gross and

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MEMORIAL GIFTS

From Linda K. and Robert O. Boyd, in memory of Richard Klingman

IN-KIND GIFTS

Lillian Fujii and Steve Hayashi: optics, tripod, books

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS

Given by Janet Stodter for Tito Dziensuwski

Given by Edith Landrith-Robertson and J. Michael Robertson for Patrick Daugherty

EMPLOYEE GIFT MATCHES

Clorox Company Foundation, Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund

GRANTS:

The David B. Gold Foundation, for Eco-Education programs
The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, for Altamont litigation
Ohlone Audubon Society, for Altamont litigation

BEQUESTS:

From the estate of George Homem



CLASSES

ALBANY ADULT SCHOOL

The following classes are held in the East Bay at the Albany Adult School. To register, go to the school's website: www.albanyadultschool.org. Details about the classes, including fees, can also be found on the AAS website, under the Audubon/Nature Studies category.

Birding by Ear #1

Denise Wight, blkittiwake@yahoo.com

Four Thursdays, January 20 – February 10, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus four Saturday field trips, January 22 – February 12, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Birds communicate by making a variety of sounds all year long, even in the middle of winter. This class will focus on bird sounds heard at this time of year in our area. We will learn to locate and identify birds by chirps and calls as well as by the songs of some species that are now starting to sing. Field trip locations can be found on the instructor's website.

Birding by Ear #2

Denise Wight, blkittiwake@yahoo.com

Four Thursdays, March 3 – 24, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus four Saturday field trips, March 5 – 26, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Spring is almost here. Birds will soon be in full song, and it's the perfect time to learn or brush up on some of our local songsters. We will study birdsongs in class and visit various habitats to get a full range of the types of songs we hear in the Bay Area. For field trip locations, visit the instructor's website.

Birds of the Bay Area

Rusty Scaff, RScaff@sonic.net; Bob Lewis, Bob@wingbeats.org

Five Wednesdays, January 12 – February 9, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus four Saturday or Sunday field trips, January 15 – February 6, and one weekend-long trip, February 12 – 13

An abundance of wintering shorebirds along the coast; ducks, cranes, swans, and geese in the Central Valley; and our resident winter songbirds offer a wonderful opportunity to learn to identify California birds. Field trip locations and times will be noted on www.wingbeats.org.

Beginning Birding

Anne Hoff, Anne2210b@sbcglobal.net

Four Wednesdays, February 9 and 16, March 2 and 9, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus five consecutive Sunday field trips, February 13 – March 13

Winter in the Bay Area means thousands of birds resting and feeding before they head out to where they will breed. Learn about identifying common birds, as well as about local habitats, binoculars, and field guides.

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON

The following class is held at the Golden Gate Audubon office, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley. The class size is limited to 20. The fee is \$80. Sign-ups begin on Monday, January 10, at noon. To register, call 510.843.2222

North American Owls

Dave Quady, davequady@att.net

Four Tuesdays, February 8, 9, 15, and 16, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus three field trips, probably the evening of February 12 and the late afternoon and evening of February 19 and 26

Like many birders, you are probably fascinated by owls. Now is your chance to learn what makes them different from other birds, and how to identify them by sight and sound, as well as to gain an in-depth understanding of their habits and habitats. The evening classes will be illustrated with slides, along with sounds of these birds of the night. Field trips will visit local owl habitats, where participants can hope to hear and see owls. Dave Quady, a frequent GGA field trip leader, is the author of the owls section of National Geographic's *Complete Birds of North America*.

JOE MORLAN'S SAN FRANCISCO CLASSES

The first sessions of Joe Morlan's spring classes on North American birds, endorsed by Golden Gate Audubon, start in early February. Joe is the recipient of the 2010 Ludlow Griscom Award (see page 12).

Field Ornithology I, an introduction to birds and birding, meets on Tuesdays, February 8 to March 22. Field Ornithology II, an in-depth study of land birds, meets on Wednesdays, February 9 to March 23. Field Ornithology III, focusing on waterbirds, meets on Thursdays, February 10 to March 24. Optional field trips are arranged for weekends. All classes are held from 7 to 9:15 p.m. at the Marina Middle School, 3500 Fillmore (free parking provided). A \$10 discount is given for registering a week early. For more information, go to <http://fog.ccsf.cc.ca.us/~jmorlan> or call 415.561.1860. Register online at www.evolve.com/ce.ccsf.

Bird-watching in Panama

Golden Gate Audubon and the Latin America Committee are offering a trip to Panama, a country with more than 960 species of birds and such interesting wildlife as sloths and howler monkeys. Dates are June 4–12, with an optional extension to western Panama June 12–16. Cost, including airfare, is estimated at \$2,900 per person (plus \$950 for the extension); this includes a \$250 tax-deductible donation (plus \$50 for the extension) for GGA and the Latin America Committee. For details, go to Field Trips on the GGA website, or contact Steve Margolin, sgmpanama@digitalpath.net or 530.342.6476.

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY

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LEGACY from page 1

Audubon to raise funds and create Audubon Canyon Ranch. In the 1980s, members organized fundraisers to help save Mono Lake and committed to the successful litigation against the Port of Oakland that led to the creation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline, an important tidal marsh that is vital for endangered California Clapper Rails.

Though Golden Gate Audubon has a dedicated staff, our real strength—and the ability to affect local policies, create habitat, and educate the public—lies in our members, especially those who participate in the conservation committees. Today, San Francisco Conservation Committee members provide oversight for projects at Lake Merced, on Ocean Beach, and in the Presidio while also attending hearings at city hall and tracking issues that affect every park and open space in the city. In the East Bay, committee members created the Burrowing Owl Docent Program, which has successfully protected owl habitat at Cesar Chavez Park and educated hundreds of park visitors, and have formed a new working group to collaborate with dog owners on finding ways to share our open spaces and protect sensitive bird areas. Efforts by the Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge have contributed to making the California Least Tern colony at Alameda Point the most productive in the state and vital to the species' continued recovery.

These accomplishments are only achieved when dedicated members step up to work on issues, follow developments, and attend hearings. In 1919, Lastreto acknowledged that “the success, growth, and the value to each member of the Audubon Association depends upon the interest each takes in its welfare. Besides your continued loyalty which I wish to call for, may I also urge upon you to enlarge our membership. Surely everyone has some friend who can enjoy with you your companionship with birds, and others who would gladly join us in our efforts to give them protection, even if only with the small monetary contribution and moral weight given by a large membership.”

Lastreto's call to action is as urgent today as it was in 1919. We face growing human populations, even more significant pollution problems, climate change, declining migratory bird populations, and many other obstacles to wildlife conservation. Our proud association can only be successful if its members—each of you reading this article—participate in the effort.

You can help by enlarging our membership and by inviting friends to join or engaging them with one of our Speaker Series, a bird walk, or participation in our Birdathon. You can get involved by volunteering to monitor birds, support our education programs, or help in our office. As much as we appreciate and depend on your membership contributions, we are reminded of Lastreto's words

that the success of our “association” depends entirely on the interest each of our members takes in its welfare. The best way to get started is by joining one of our conservation committees.

—Mike Lynes, Conservation Director

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

The East Bay Conservation Committee meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the GGA office, 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley. The San Francisco Conservation Committee meets the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way. Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge meets the third Monday of the month in Alameda. For more information, contact Mike Lynes, mlynes@golddengateaudubon.org.

Joe Morlan Honored

Long-time GGA member Joe Morlan is the 2010 recipient of the Ludlow Griscom Award, given by the American Birding Association for outstanding contributions in regional ornithology. The ABA award recognizes Joe for his many activities, among them serving as coordinator of the GGA-sponsored Northern California Bird Box and teaching field ornithology for more than 30 years. We congratulate Joe on receiving this well-deserved award.