



**Bay Area Council Meeting
Saturday, September 12, 2015**

**Richardson Bay Audubon Center
Tiburon, CA
76 Greenwood Beach Road
Tiburon, CA 94920
<http://www.tibronaudubon.org/>**

NOTES

Attending:

Bill Hudson, Golden Gate Audubon
Tiffany Erickson, Madrone Audubon
Susan Kirks, Madrone Audubon
Barbara Salzman, Marin Audubon
Lowell Sykes, Marin Audubon
Hugh Harvey, Mount Diablo Audubon
Wendy Schackwitz, Napa-Solano Audubon
Marty Morrow, Ohlone Audubon
Bob Hirt, Santa Clara Valley Audubon
Jennifer Rycenga, Sequoia Audubon
Stephanie Little, National Audubon board
Ariana Rickard, Audubon California/Mount Diablo Audubon
Mike Lynes, Audubon California (via Skype)

AGENDA

- 9:00 am** **Introductions and finalization of agenda**
- 9:15 am** **National Audubon Board meeting report**
Stephanie Little, Pacific Flyway Chapter Rep

Stephanie serves on the National Audubon Board as the chapter committee chair. She is an environmental scientist with California State Parks. This is a three year term and is elected by chapters. Stephanie represents Hawaii and California.

The National Audubon Board meets three times a year; the last meeting was in Alaska. National Audubon Society (NAS) is developing their next five year strategic plan. The next meeting will be in Dallas, Texas in October.

The next Audubon convention will be July 2017 in Park City, Utah. The 2015 convention took place in July in Virginia. Over 66 chapters (500 members) attended. All levels of Audubon staff were at the convention. There were many field trips and workshops and networking opportunities. Scholarships are available to cover part of the expenses for chapter members. 50-75 scholarships were given for the 2015 convention.

Bob Hirt, Santa Clara Valley – chapters would like assistance with legal requirements. For example, determining grassroots lobbying limits.

9:30am Climate Change and Birds
Wendy Schackwitz, Napa-Solano Audubon

Audubon California created a group of climate super activists made up of two representatives from each council region. Evelyn Cormier from Ohlone and Wendy represent the Bay Area Council. All activists attended a summit in July at Debs Park in LA to figure out how to get climate science out to membership.

NAS distributed a toolkit to all chapters with a DVD, t-shirt, and list of climate threatened and climate endangered birds.

Wendy provided flashdrives to all BAAC reps with the following files:

1. Audubon Climate Scientific Paper – September 2015 (pdf)
2. Video produced by NAS – Climate Change and Birds (3 ½ minutes)
3. Hummingbirds@Home kids activity (PowerPoint)
4. Identification of hummingbirds in Napa (PowerPoint)
5. Napa-Solano Audubon Climate Program (PowerPoint)

Chapters can organize their climate education program around one bird, or several climate threatened/endangered birds. Napa-Solano is focusing on Allen's Hummingbird

Hummingbirds at Home program – participants pick a patch you are going to monitor. Can collect data on a smartphone or enter into database on computer.

Napa-Solano Audubon educates people on how they can provide resources to hummingbirds, like food, water and shelter. 25% of the diet of hummingbirds is insects. Napa-Solano encourages people to not use pesticides that will impact the food resources of hummingbirds. They also provide a guide on hummingbirds that are common in their area.

A popular activity for kids at Napa-Solano tabling events is a DIY hummingbird feeder. Kids can assemble the feeders (using recycled water bottles and small plastic tubs) and then decorate them. These feeders can be made at 50 cents a unit. Napa-Solano also provides instructions on how to make your own sugar water.

Napa-Solano promotes native plants and the creation of hummingbird patches by giving out native seeds. They buy bulk native plant seed from Harmony Farms and put a teaspoon of seeds in an envelope with the Napa-Solano Audubon logo.

10:30 am Sonoma Creek Restoration
Ariana Rickard, Audubon California

See presentation on Audubon California website: <http://ca.audubon.org/about/bay-area-council>

10:45am Audubon Works and communication platforms
Ariana Rickard, Audubon California

Ariana encouraged all the chapters to set up accounts on Audubon Works and share resources with each other. <https://works.audubon.org/>

11:00 am Policy Updates
Mike Lynes, Audubon California

Mike Lynes was the Conservation Director (2008) and Executive Director (2013) of Golden Gate Audubon. He became Director of Public Policy at Audubon California in early 2014, taking over from Dan Taylor.

SB 32 – would have expanded California’s current climate pollution reduction target to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

The oil industry was very opposed to SB 32 and SB 350. SB 32 became a two year bill, so Audubon California will probably be working on the campaign to pass it again next year. AB 32 also took two years to pass.

SB 350 originally called for a 50% reduction in petroleum use in cars and trucks, a 50% increase in energy efficiency in buildings, and a goal of 50% of state utilities’ power coming from renewable energy, all by 2030. However, the 50% reduction in petroleum use goal was removed and the bill passed on Friday, September 11th.

Some other bills that Audubon California co-sponsored passed, like AB 1482, which creates a Strategic Growth Council that will oversee climate adaptation for critical habitat and AB 498 that will establish state policy calling to preserve and create important wildlife corridors. Transportation funds can now be spent on wildlife corridors.

The legislative bill regarding funding for responses to non-petroleum oil spills died in the appropriations committee. Audubon California is planning to bring it up again next year.

The state parks system relies on bond money and there is currently talk of a second water bond – focused solely on natural resources.

Altamont Pass – Ohlone, Golden Gate, Marin, Santa Clara Valley, Mount Diablo have been involved in mediation, litigation regarding avian mortality there as per a 2007 settlement between the chapters and the wind companies. County agreed to reduce avian mortality of the four focal species by 50% by 2009 and to implement a Habitat Conservation Plan. Based on data from 2005 to 2012, avian mortality has only been reduced by 34%. The County is not adhering to what they agreed to do.

Altamont Winds, Inc. (AWI) was granted a three year extension to continue to operate their old towers rather than repower. AWI was not in the original 2007 settlement.

Wildlife agencies have not acted yet to enforce wildlife protection laws. The US Fish and Wildlife Service could use the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife could apply a state law for the protection of Golden Eagles.

11:15am Chapter Reports

Madrone

Cliff swallow litigation. Ending 2nd year of 3 year Settlement. 2015 a difficult year at the bridge. Large # of swallows arrived in late April to nest and successfully constructed nests. Caltrans did not keep up with its plan for full exclusion. This pattern continued, including not performing nest scraping in an area where swallows were building nests over the river on the east side of the bridge, but biological reports indicating

the activity was being performed. Monitoring of year 2 included 2x daily visits to the bridge to observe construction and bird activity, sometimes 3x daily - from April through August 22nd.

W. 9th St. Heron and Egret 2015 Nesting Season. 325 total nests. Over 215 birds rescued, rehabilitated and released (Santa Rosa Bird Rescue volunteers and IBR's rehab and prep for release) at a designation along the Laguna de Santa Rosa. About 120 birds fell and lost their lives at the site. The community continues to be tolerant and somewhat supportive. Madrone's annual Lincoln School Bird Festival in May, related to the rookery, was a success this year, also. We have been interfacing with Golden Gate Audubon to support their efforts for similar protected nesting sites for BCNH in Oakland and will continue to do that.

Junior Audubon – Rejuvenation of Junior Audubon. Two outings planned so far - to Healdsburg to see the Vaux' Swifts and to Janeann's farm for an "Owl Prowl."

Newsletter - We have a new editor of our newsletter, Asenath LaRue, who just edited her first issue for the October-November newsletter.

Bird Checklists for Sonoma County Regional Parks - We donated a display case to one of the County's new big regional parks, Taylor Mountain in Santa Rosa. We have agreed to produce bird checklists for several of the regional parks and are working on three lists.

Breeding Bird Atlas – 6 year project. USGS sponsoring data collection. In coming year, will look at any possible El Niño changes.

CPA coming to board meeting for presentation on legal requirements.

Santa Clara Valley

Rewriting almost all of internal policies, like the bylaws, to have a functional approach to how we govern and conduct conservation and education programs and membership services.

A new Executive Director will start on October 5th. Announcement will be made soon.

Wildlife education day will be Saturday, October 17th at Blackberry Farms, expect about 600-700 people.

Facebook has a 9 acre forest and lawn area on the roof. Sequoia and Santa Clara Valley have agreed to survey for birds and report on what is seen. Have seen 14-16 species almost every survey.

Conservation and education group is very active.

Mount Diablo Audubon

Many new board members: new editor, secretary, new hospitality chair and social media chair – Rosalie Howarth. Chapter also has Facebook and Meetup pages. Need a website manager.

Annual fundraising letter (about 1600 letters total) brings in around \$10,000 in December.

Young Birders Club recently went on a birding trip to Putah Creek near Davis and did a behind the scenes tour of Lindsay Wildlife Museum.

Citizen science phenology project called BirdSeasons California started in March. 20 volunteers are divided into four teams. One team every week visits Martinez at the Mt. View Sanitary District and record

data on seven different bird species. All data is inputted into a database with the National Phenology Network. Working with Sandy DeSimone at Audubon CA.

Sequoia

Chapter members recently witnessed abusive use of a drone. Leslie Flint put information on drone response on Sequoia Audubon website: <http://www.sequoia-audubon.org/index.html> (Also on Audubon Works: <https://works.audubon.org/groups/chapters/drone-use-reporting-harassment-birds>). Observers should report abuse to law enforcement and get a video if possible.

Coordinating two Bioblitzes with Cal Academy iNaturalist and Native Plant Society. Saturday, September 26th – San Pedro County Park. 8:30 – noon. Avenue for membership growth with younger people.

Big Sit Birdathon is now in its 5th year. Big Sit will be combined with a Big Ride led by Rob Furrow which will last from 8am – noon on Sunday, October 11th. After the Big Ride, participants will gather at noon on hill overlooking Pescadero marsh for the Big Sit. Big Ride participants will compete with Big Sit participants.

30,000 resident home complex proposed on former Cargill Salt Ponds. Since there is no water access, the project cannot currently go forward. Sequoia would like to see the marsh restored.

Chapter has moved general and board meetings to Burlingame Humane Society. Sequoia is working with them on a Cats Indoors program.

Pati Rouzer has replaced Sue Cossins as admin support and doing outreach and grant activity.

Golden Gate

Hérons in downtown Oakland were chased off island in Lake Merritt. Chapter is doing tours taking high school kids to see colony. Golden Gate made a brochure on bird-safe tree trimming practices.

Installed big plastic tubes at fishing pier. There are now 15 bins for fishing gear so people can properly dispose of fishing lines to prevent entangling of birds and other wildlife.

Symbolic fencing has been installed at Snowy Plover site in Alameda.

Active habitat restoration occurring at seven different sites, like Crissy Field and Arrowhead Marsh. 1500 volunteers involved.

Docent program for Oakland Herons and Burrowing Owls.

Ohlone

Board is currently in flux with some new members.

Junior Audubon group starting.

Education Chair – Marty Morrow

Marin

Stable board – no term limits, little turnover. 15 board members

Closed escrow on Corte Madera property and they are now raising money to draft and implement a restoration plan.

Group of people in Marin County are talking to land management agencies and trying to stop the use of herbicides which would impact the conservation and restoration work the chapter does on their properties.

Mountain bikers would like to open trails in Mill Valley, which is a concern as Spotted Owls nest there.

Rich Samonie is helping the chapter develop a Facebook page.

12:30pm Hanging Chads – new and unresolved issues to put a button on Bird the Bay

Chapters are invited to hold their own events or participate at Richardson Bay with the Annual Waterbird Festival on Saturday, February 6th.

Google project

Audubon California is collaborating with Google on two projects: Birding the Google Campus and Habitat@Home. Bay Area chapters are invited to apply for funding for these two projects. Grant applications are due October 31st, 2015.

Pick dates of BAC meetings for next year

All meetings will take place at Richardson Bay, 76 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon, CA 94920.

Three meetings in 2016:

Saturday, January 9th

Saturday, April 9th

Saturday, September 10th

Meeting adjourned at 2pm.