



The Black Oystercatcher

Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Newsletter- May 2023

RECENT SIGHTINGS

by Roger Adamson



Long-billed Curlew, Ward Ave, Roger Adamson.

Spring migrants, from sandpipers to vireos, announce a welcome change of seasons. Among all the returning birds, we have had a few true rarities; let's consider those first. A Townsend's Solitaire briefly appeared in Ukiah on 31 March; this species is much more abundant in the Sierra, but infrequent in most of its range (DB). A Yellow-headed Blackbird was found at the Ukiah WWTP on the 11th (MS). On the 15th a Great-tailed Grackle caused a stir in Fort Bragg (AS). A Hooded Oriole was on Stewart Street in Fort Bragg on the 16th (LWR). An uncommon Common Tern was seen at Virgin Creek Beach on the 21st (KL). The most interesting find was a Lesser Black-backed Gull on the 27th (LWR); it was an especially dark-mantled individual, apparently not *Larus fuscus graellsii* which breeds in Western Europe, Iceland, and Greenland, and is the subspecies most often seen on our west coast. Lisa's bird may have been one of the subspecies (*L. f. fuscus* or *L. f. intermedius*) that breed primarily in Scandinavia.

Continued on page 2

Inside This Issue

<i>Recent Sightings</i> By Roger Adamson	1-2
<i>BLOY Call for Volunteers</i> By Dave Jensen	3
<i>Trip Report from AVB</i> By Tess McGuire	3
<i>Photo of the Month</i> Winner Shannon Underhill	4
<i>2023 MCAS Scholarships</i>	5
<i>Share the Beach</i>	6
<i>Field Trips</i>	7
<i>Programs</i>	8
<i>MCAS Calendar</i>	9
<i>MCAS Board of Directors</i>	10



*Nesting hummingbird at MCBG.
Photo by Catherine Keegan.*

Continued from page 1

We reported numerous returning migrants this month. The first Purple Martins were on Ten Mile River on the 8th (TB & CK); by the 26th 20 or 30 were checking nest sites under the bridge. A Black-headed Grosbeak was seen at a home in Willits on the 10th (F&D S). A Lazuli Bunting arrived in Ukiah on the 25th (CV). There was a huge flux of Caspian Terns passing our coast around the 20th (LWR). A Long-billed Curlew was scoped on the 26th at Virgin Creek Beach (CL), and our other large shorebird, Marbled Godwit, was seen on the 24th at Ward Avenue (RA). An Olive-sided Flycatcher, always fun to hear, was reported on the 26th (PM). Various warblers, vireos, and other species have been reported. At the same time, the Yellow-rumped Warblers, Merlins, Ferruginous Hawks, Fox Sparrows, and other winter visitors have mostly headed north. We will not see them again until next Autumn.



*Purple Martin, Ten Mile River,
Roger Adamson.*

Best wishes for a bird-y summer. I monitor eBird (eBird.org) and mendobirds (mendobirds@groups.io) for rare birds.

Thanks to these birders for their reports: Dave Bengston (DB), Michael Spencer (MS), Asa Spade (AS), Lisa Walker-Roseman (LWR), Kent Leland (KL), Tim Bray (TB), Catherine Keegan (CK), Roger Adamson (RA), Frank & Darla Sanderson (F&D S), Chuck Vaughn (CV), Chris Lamoureux (CL), Peggy Martin (PM).



MCAS Schwag!

If you are interested in a MCAS t-shirt or hoodie, Catherine Keegan keegan@mcn.org is taking orders. These will all be on black, with a large version of our chapter's logo. The printer requires a minimum of twelve shirts for a printing run.

ANDERSON VALLEY BREWERY FIELD TRIP REPORT APRIL 22, 2023 by Tess McGuire

Five intrepid birders met on a beautiful Saturday morning at the Anderson Valley Brewery in Boonville for some inland birding. The fog had just burned off and, ignoring the many European Starlings and House Sparrows, we walked over to edge of the property overlooking a vineyard where we found a singing Chipping Sparrow. Western Bluebirds and a Black Phoebe were also flitting around. A little bit further on Catherine found a pair of Bullock's Orioles in the same tree in which we watched them build a nest last year. This year they weren't quite that far along, even though we were there two weeks later.

Moving on we saw Turkey Vultures circling overhead, heard a Red-shouldered Hawk and California Quail calling in the distance. Three Band-tailed Pigeons and a Mourning Dove flew by. Lots of Acorn Woodpeckers and California Scrub-jays were noisily moving around in the oak trees. As we were scoping the area across the road from the brewery Tim spotted a Green Heron perched on the very top of a very large tree. Not something you see every day. We also heard Black-headed Grosbeaks and Orange-crowned Warblers, but no Wilson's.

My two favorite sightings were a pair of Western Kingbirds that Lisa found and a Northern Mockingbird singing at the top of its lungs. We missed out on Turkeys and Golden Eagles this year but the tasty beer we had with our lunch more than made up for it.



Black Oystercatcher and chicks by Ron LeValley

BLACK OYSTERCATCHER SURVEY SET TO BEGIN - A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

In the merry month of May a Black Oystercatcher's fancy turns to romance and family. In 2023 we will again keep an eye on these charismatic coast nesters as they struggle to raise another clutch of chicks. But we need some new volunteers to help. From MacKerricher to Mendocino there are nests that need watching. If you are the least bit interested, please contact Dave Jensen at 707.326.8815 or djensen@mcn.org.

Experience the thrill of watching the life cycle unfold, from courtship and nestbuilding to egg laying, to the feeding of the fluffy chicks, and finally to the first flights of the young birds. Our team of experienced observers will provide all the training you need. The birds will provide the pleasure. You get to keep the memories.

PHOTO OF THE MONTH: COLORS!



"A Wilson Warbler. Saw or heard at least 10 of these while birding in JDSF this morning. Definitely a spring bird."
by Shannon Underhill

Calling all photographers: We would love to showcase your latest and greatest shots with a themed monthly photo contest. September's theme will be: **Behaviors**. Use this summer to capture some interesting bird behaviors. 3 entries per person, not to exceed 3MB in size per photo. Please include your name, bird identification, and a sentence or two about the entry or how it pertains to the theme. Your contact information can be shared if requested.

Deadline for September's Newsletter will be Sunday, August 27.

Send your submissions for the theme of '**Behaviors**' to: Mendobirding@gmail.com

MENDOCINO COLLEGE ANNOUNCES 2023 MENDOCINO COAST AUDUBON SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Leah Shirley and Jenevie Chan, both of Fort Bragg, will receive Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Scholarships in May at Mendocino College.

The annual Audubon scholarships are awarded to Mendocino College students by Friends of the Mendocino College Coastal Field Station and Natural Sciences. The Field Station is located on the south Mendocino Coast, and the Friends organization is affiliated with Mendocino College Foundation. MCAS supports the Field Station and provides scholarship funding for science students who participate in laboratory studies at the Field Station. Scholarship recipients are selected by faculty members of the college science programs.

Leah Shirley will receive the \$2,500 MCAS Brandon Pill Memorial Scholarship. We know Leah as a volunteer, assistant, and docent at the Noyo Center for Marine Science in Fort Bragg. She is a volunteer member of The Marine Mammal Center's stranding response team (led locally by Noyo Center for Marine Science coordinator Sarah Grimes), and a gray whale docent at Point Cabrillo Lighthouse. Leah was studying marine science at the Fort Bragg campus of College of the Redwoods in 2017 when she received an MCAS scholarship for \$1,000. Her plan to continue at Mendocino College was put on hold when her family's home was destroyed in the Camp Fire on November 8, 2018. More than 19,000 homes were destroyed and 85 people died in the fire. But she is back at school now. Her goal, according to the college's science faculty members, is to obtain a four-year degree and work in ocean conservation and marine mammal research and education. The scholarship is in memory of Brandon Pill, who received a marine science scholarship at College of the Redwoods in 2013.



Leah Shirley

Jenevie Chan will receive the \$2,920 MCAS Greg Grantham Memorial Scholarship. She is a first-generation Asian American. After graduation from Mendocino College, she plans to finish her four-year degree at Fresno State University before continuing on to graduate work in fresh-water and coastal marine habitat resource management. At Mendocino College, Jenevie was a member of Associated Students of Mendocino College where she served as Ecology Director in 2020-2021. She was the Student Representative on the Guided Pathways Leadership Team and Secretary of Women in the STEM Club (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) in 2022-2023. The scholarship is in memory of former College of the Redwoods marine biology professor Greg Grantham who died in November, 2020.

Funding for both scholarships comes from the MCAS scholarship fund (including funds from the former MCAS Save Our Shorebirds Program) and generous donations from community members Ginny Rorby and Sarah Quentin; and from MCAS Audubon member Jeanette Boyer. If you would like to donate to the 2024 scholarships, please contact MCAS Scholarship Chair Judy Steele at judys@mcn.org



Jenevie Chan



SHARE THE BEACH

DOCENT OUTREACH PROGRAM



Learn about our coastal habitats and marine environment. Share your knowledge and enthusiasm with park visitors.

Help State Parks protect our wonderful natural heritage. As a bonus, earn a State Park pass!



Do you love parks?

Do you enjoy meeting people and sharing information about our unique plants and wildlife and beautiful coastal areas?

Consider joining State Parks as a Volunteer for the new *Share the Beach* docent program!



Training will take place in May, followed by educational field visits to our local state parks.

Volunteer opportunities are available throughout the summer at both MacKerricher State Park and Manchester State Park.

INTERESTED?

For more information, please contact Alison Cebula

707-937-9176

Alison.Cebula@parks.ca.gov

FIELD TRIPS

OFFSHORE PELAGIC TRIP

Sunday, May 7 from 7:00 AM - 5:00 PM
32440 N Harbor Dr, Fort Bragg, CA 95437

We have scheduled an all-day offshore seabirding trip for Sunday May 7 out of Noyo Harbor, on the *Kraken*. Cost is \$175 per person, paid directly to Anchor Charters. Act quickly if you want to go with us; these trips usually sell out in advance.

To reserve a spot, contact Chuck Vaughn, cevaughn@pacific.net

May is an exciting time to go offshore as birds are moving through the region. Fewer pelagic trips have been run in Spring, so less is known about the species present, but Albatrosses are abundant and Petrels are possible. We can also expect Jaegers, Terns, Phalaropes (in breeding plumage), Auklets, Sabine's Gull, and likely a few Shearwaters as well. Grand prize would be Short-tailed Albatross, which has been seen on May trips in past years.

This trip will depart at 7 AM and return to the dock around 5 PM. Conditions permitting we may go 30 miles offshore. Even if it's rough we should be able to reach the Noyo Canyon area where seabirds often congregate only 10-12 miles out.

NAVARRO BEACH FIELD TRIP

Saturday, May 13 from 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Meet at the top of Navarro Beach Road, south of the Navarro River, right after crossing over the Hwy. 1 bridge. We will walk down the road to the beach and back, about one mile each way. Spring migrants have arrived and we're hoping to find Wilson's warbler, Warbling vireo, Pacific-slope flycatcher, a variety of swallows, and possibly a Bald eagle or two. Once at the beach we will scope the bay for any ducks and loons. Bring water, snacks and good shoes.



Osprey by Megan Smithyman

PROGRAMS

NATHAN PIELOW PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS



Mendocino Coast Audubon welcomes Nathan Pieplow, professor and author of the *Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds*, published in two volumes, Eastern (2017) and Western (2019) to the Mendocino Coast for two workshops and programs in Caspar and Gualala.

Nathan, an avid bird sound recordist and videographer, is the author of the bird sound blog Earbirding.com, a board member of the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, an author of the Colorado Birding Trail, and former editor of the journal *Colorado Birds*. Nathan teaches writing and rhetoric at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

WORKSHOP: A Shared Vocabulary for Bird Sounds

Workshop Fee: \$36. Registration is limited to 15 and is closed once filled!

South Coast - Saturday May 13, 2023, at 7:00AM

Mill Bend house, 46902 Old Stage Rd, Gualala 95445

Please contact Cheryl Harris cheryleharris@sbcglobal.net

North Coast - *FULL, WAITLIST ONLY*

Sunday May 14, 2023, at 7:00AM at Russian Gulch State Park CA-1, Mendocino

Please contact Hayley Ross hayleyhross@gmail.com

PROGRAM PRESENTATION: The Language of Birds

All around us, the birds are constantly telling us who they are and what they are doing. In this talk for any audience, Nathan Pieplow unlocks the secrets of their language. You'll listen in on the pillow talk of a pair of Red-winged Blackbirds and learn the secret signals that Cliff Swallows use when they have found food. You'll learn how one bird sound can have many meanings, and how one meaning can have many sounds—and how, sometimes, the meaning isn't in the sounds at all. This talk from the author of the *Peterson Field Guide to Bird Sounds* is an accessible, entertaining introduction to a fascinating topic.

Free and open to the public; donations welcomed.

South Coast - Friday May 12, 2023 at 7:00PM

Ohlson Ranch House, 37405 Shoreline Highway, The Sea Ranch 95497

Parking passes are required for this event, please contact Cheryl Harris cheryleharris@sbcglobal.net

North Coast - Monday May 15, 2023 at 7:00PM

Lions Club 430 East Redwood, Fort Bragg 95437

For more information about the presentation, please contact:

Terra Fuller at terrafuller74@gmail.com

CALENDAR

The Beginner's Birdwalk and the Early Birdwalk at the Gardens are continuing on the regular schedule. As always, check our website for the most up-to-date information, and keep up with the postings on our Facebook page.

MAY 2023

Tuesday 2 - Mendocino Coast Audubon Society Board Meeting 6:00 PM

Saturday 6 - Beginner's Bird Walk 9:00 AM - Noon

Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, 18220 Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA 95437

Saturday 7 - Pelagic Trip 7:00 AM - 5:00 PM See page 7 for more information.

Friday 12 - The Language of Birds Presentation 7:00 PM

Ohlson Ranch House, 37405 Shoreline Highway, The Sea Ranch 95497

Saturday 13 - Navarro Beach Field Trip 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Meet at the top of Navarro Beach Road. More on page 7.

Saturday 13 - Workshop: Shared Vocabulary for Bird Sounds 7:00 AM

Mill Bend house, 46902 Old Stage Rd, Gualala 95445

Sunday 14 - Workshop: Shared Vocabulary for Bird Sounds 7:00 AM *FULL

Russian Gulch State Park CA-1, Mendocino

Monday 15 - The Language of Birds Presentation 7:00 PM

Lions Club 430 East Redwood, Fort Bragg 95437

Wednesday 17 - Early Bird Walk 8:00 AM - Noon

Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens, 18220 Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA 95437

JUNE 2023

Saturday 3 - Beginner's Bird Walk* 9:00 a.m. - Noon @ Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens

Wednesday 21 - Early Bird Walk 8:00 a.m. - Noon @ Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens**

JULY 2023

Saturday 1 - Beginner's Bird Walk* 9:00 a.m. - Noon @ Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens

Wednesday 19 - Early Bird Walk 8:00 a.m. - Noon @ Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens**

AUGUST 2023

Tuesday 1 - Audubon Society Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. in-person, location TBD.

Wednesday 16 - Early Bird Walk 8:00 a.m. - Noon @ Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens**

For complete and current calendar, updates, and useful links, visit:

www.mendocinocoastaudubon.org

www.facebook.com/mendocinocoastaudubon

MCAS BOARD MEMBERS AND PROGRAM CHAIRS 2022-2023

President	Tim Bray	tbray@mcn.org	(707) 734-0791
Vice President	David Jensen	djensen@mcn.org	(707) 964-8163
Secretary	Roger Adamson	radamson@mcn.org	
Treasurer	Jim Havlena	havlenas@fix.net	
Education	Pam Huntley	pjhuntley@hotmail.com	
Membership	Adam Hutchins	raptorous@me.com	(707) 734-3470
Zoom Czar	Nicolet Houtz	nicolethoutz@gmail.com	
Programs	Terra Fuller	terrafuller74@gmail.com	(707) 964-4675
Programs	Hayley Ross	hayleyhross@gmail.com	
Off-Board Chairs:			
Scholarship Chair	Judy Steele	judys@mcn.org	
Field Trips	Tess McGuire	tmcguire9130@gmail.com	
Newsletter Editor	Megan Smithyman	mesmithy@gmail.com	
Social Media	Catherine Keegan	keegan@mcn.org	

Mendocino Coast Audubon Society e-mail address: audubon@mcn.org

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mendocino Coast Audubon Society is to help people appreciate and enjoy native birds, and to conserve and restore local ecosystems for the benefit of native birds and other wildlife.

MENDOCINO COAST AUDUBON SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 2297

FORT BRAGG, CA, 95437

