OCTOBER

MEETING: MONDAY
OCTOBER 17

CASPAR COMMUNITY CENTER
(IN DOWNTOWN CASPAR)

BRING FRIENDS AND
CAR POOL
Program: 7 p.m.

All MCAS presentations are free. The cost of the Caspar Community Center is $88. A donation towards the rental of the facility is always welcome. For further information call: 964-6362 or 937-4463

Program: The Birds of Borneo
Matthew Matthiessen

Matthew Matthiessen, who presented last October's program is an avid birder living in Ukiah. He will show slides of his trip to Borneo in June of 2004. The slide show will feature large colorful hornbills, trogons, and dozens of other birds, as well as orangutans, the largest flower on earth, and nests used in "bird nest soup." Borneo, the third largest island in the world, has 35-40 endemic species of birds. Matthiessen, an engaging speaker and excellent photographer often birds along the Mendocino Coast as well.

Upcoming Programs

November 21, 7:00 pm @ the Caspar Community Center. Speaker TBA

MCAS Scholarships

Tanya Smart, our Scholarship Chairman, is waiting for applications from students at College of the Redwoods. Each year MCAS grants a $1000 scholarship to a graduated CR student that is majoring in the natural sciences.

Back in Print

"Northwestern California Birds"
Stanley W. Harris

Living Gold Press has just published the third edition of "Northwestern California Birds" by Stanley W. Harris. Originally published by Humboldt State University it's been out of print for a couple of years. Dr. Harris spent over 2000 hours revising and updating this latest 460-page edition. The book covers over 35,000 square miles of NW California, includes detailed habitat descriptions, bar graphs, status and distribution for over 500 species and maps to local hot spots. Available at www.livinggoldpress.com/nwcbirds.htm
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Hospitality
Open

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

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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.

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Board Meeting Notes, September 26, 2005

Our Mendocino County Bird Lists are due back from the printer this week. We have received our new resale license, so that we can pay the sales tax to the State; the Board decided to charge a flat $3.00 per list at meetings, and $4.00 by mail – the sales tax will be included in these prices for simplicity. Up to half the production run will be sold at cost to the Peregine Chapter, who prepared the list; our contribution was cleaning up the cover drawings and formatting the entire list for printing. The Board also decided to send a free bird list to anyone joining MCAS for $50 or more. Inevitably, the list is already obsolete; Dorothy Tobkin’s sighting of an Eastern Yellow Wagtail takes the listed 399 species up to an even 400, so be sure to add this first-in-the-county species in by hand.

Jeanne Coleman submitted her proposed in-school and after-school teaching programs and budget which were approved enthusiastically by the Board. As in past years, our main teacher will be Pam Huntley, but this year she will be assisted by Sherry Sellars. Our hope is that after a period of working with Pam, Sherry will be teaching her own section of classes, thus doubling the number of elementary students we serve. We are also considering scholarships and supplements to extend Nature Camp opportunities for older students; we would be happy to take donations for these causes.

In addition to her teaching, Pam Huntley will be doing a few short informational radio spots on one or more of the local radio stations. We’ll keep you informed about when and where.

Matt Gerhart has put out a call for interested birders to perform the fall Big River bird surveys. If you are interested in joining and have been trained in visual and auditory bird identification, email Matt at: mgerhart@mendocinolandtrust.org

MCAS has also volunteered to perform a baseline bird survey on the Georgia-Pacific property in Fort Bragg. This survey would probably be performed next spring, before significant grading or building has taken place on the site. We do not expect rare or endangered birds, but a baseline survey should identify the major species currently using the property for comparison with future surveys. We have not yet heard back from G-P or the City.

State Parks has applied for a grant for removing gorse and broom from the Jughandle State Reserve. In cooperation, Jughandle Creek Farm plans to remove the gorse near their common boundary with the Preserve; they need $1400 to pay for mowing, as well as volunteers to do the hand work. Please send checks to Jughandle Creek Farm, Box 17, Caspar, CA 95420

Once again, we would be happy to have you join us for our Board meeting at Jughandle Creek Farm, on October 24th. Call 964-6362 for dinner reservations.
A dedicated group of birders under the leadership of Bob Keiffer and Chuck Vaughn have revised the Mendocino County birdlist. This has been a monumental task and MCAS is pleased to make this checklist available to our members at a price of $3.00 per copy, including tax. If you wish it to be mailed, the price is $4.00, including tax and shipping. Copies will be available at our membership meetings or you can use the enclosed order form. If you would like multiple copies, please call 964-6362.

The checklist contains a seasonal listing of the 399 birds seen in Mendocino County, including pelagic birds; usual habitats and nesting information are also covered. Note that the 400th bird, the Eastern Yellow Wagtail, is not included – you will have to write it in by hand until the next edition!

MCAS is pleased to have assisted Erica Fielder in her most recent project to help visitors enjoy and appreciate the Gardens. Erica has designed and executed six beautiful trail signs showing the common birds to be seen in each of the six major ecological areas of the Gardens. The signs are excellent reproductions of Erica’s original pastel art work – when the sun and weather take their toll on these signs, they can be readily replaced with new reproductions of the originals. MCAS members provided technical advice with the bird illustrations, the area descriptions, and the sign positioning, as well as partially funding the project. Major funding was also received from the Mendocino County Community Foundation, the Gardens, and Erica herself.

Thank You Erica!
Pelagic Trip Report

September 25, 2005

It was a beautiful day on the ocean, but very few birds were seen.

Highlights were two Short-tailed Shearwaters and about 250+ Rhinoceros Auklets. Mammals included three blue whales and 2-4 humpback whales.

A complete list follows:

BIRD SPECIES:
- Red-throated Loon 1
- Pacific Loon 1
- Common Loon 3
- Black-footed Albatross 3
- Northern Fulmar 8
- Pink-footed Shearwater 4
- Sooty Shearwater 50
- Short-tailed Shearwater 2
- Brown Pelican 7
- Brandt's Cormorant 1
- Double-crested Cormorant 25
- Pelagic Cormorant 1
- Surf Scoter 3
- Red-necked Phalarope 20
- Pomarine Jaeger 2
- Parasitic Jaeger 1
- Heerman's Gull 1
- California Gull 50
- Western Gull 100
- Common Murre 50
- Cassin's Auklet 1
- Rhinoceros Auklet 250+

OTHER SPECIES:
- Humpback Whale 2-4
- Northern Elephant Seal 1
- Harbor Seal 5
- Blue Whale 3
- Dall's Porpoise 6
- Ocean Sunfish 1
- Blue Shark 1

Views on the Pelagic Trip

Editor's Note: Out 30 miles, the weather could not have been more beautiful; visibility excellent; not as many birds as usual but numerous marine mammals that captured everyone's attention.

That's what I heard from numerous other participants.

David Jensen said the water was colder than usual, ranging from 51-53 degrees.

On this first pelagic trip, most of my time was spent in a stupor (maybe a torpor) clutching a white bucket that smelled of many old fish. That's also what I saw; the bottom of that bucket.

Looked like everyone else had a grand time. I overheard a guy named Tom say, "It was the first time I've been out and I wanted to stay forever."

In November, the Central Valley Bird Club's Symposium

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the Ninth Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium, Nov. 17-20, 2005, at the Radisson Hotel in Stockton, CA.

In addition to field trips, workshops, and a Birding Nature Fair and Art Show there will be over 25 vendors selling nature-related items.

Keynote speakers include "Hot on the Trail of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker" by Bobby Harrison and CVBC's very own John Trochet.

The schedule, brochure, registration form, etc. are on the website:

http://www.cvbs.org

The non-computer inclined can contact Frances Oliver at (209) 369-2010.
This is a very rare bird here in the continental United States. It is an Eastern Yellow Wagtail, an old world bird that breeds in small numbers in northern Alaska, but otherwise does not normally occur in the new world. This young bird was discovered September 16, 2005 by local birder Toby Tobkin; it delighted local birdwatchers during the two days the bird was seen at Virgin Creek Beach. This was the first record for Mendocino County and one of about 20 for all of California. The sighting of the Eastern Yellow Wagtail brought birders from all over the county and beyond. Ron LeValley captured this wonderful picture. The bird measures 6 1/2 inches long. This immature bird was light yellow breasted with a darker breast band. Wagtails are in the same family (Motacillidae) as the more common Pipits. The family is noted for its relatively large feet. The family has slender bills adapted to eating insects and spiders. As they walk they pump their tails up and down; hence the name Wagtail.

New Phone Number for MCAS

964-6835

Our new phone number will be answered by a machine. Messages will be directed to the proper person by David Jensen, MCAS Vice President. In the white pages we will be listed as Audubon Society of the Mendocino Coast (this puts us under the A’s where most visitors to the coast will look first). We will be listed in the yellow pages under Environmental, Conservation and Ecological Organizations.

Membership 2005-2006

Thanks to all of you who rejoined and welcome new members. We appreciate your supporting the efforts of our chapter in education and conservation. The program year started off with an outstanding speaker with more wonderful programs to come. Please encourage friends who haven’t rejoined to send in their membership form. We will send out one more reminder. People can also join at a meeting; please bring a friend who is new to Audubon on October 17th.
FIELD TRIP

Saturday, November 12 Field Trip: 9:00 a.m. Hawks of the South Coast. Meet at the south end of the Navarro River Bridge to caravan south.

Thursday, November 24: Thanksgiving Bird Count. Call 964-6362

Sunday, December 11 Field Trip: 9:00 a.m. Manchester and Point Arena. Meet at Hwy. 1 and Miner Hole Road, Mile Post 17.54.

Sunday, December 30, Christmas Bird Count: Call 964-6362 to participate. Contact Art Morley @ 964-2541 for more information.

BIRD WALK

We have two scheduled bird walks at the Botanical Gardens. The birding basics walk is on the first Saturday of each month at 9:00. Mark your calendars now.

Our regular bird walk on the third Wednesday of each month; meet at Audubon at the Gardens at 8:00 am.

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

For those who need binoculars there will be some to borrow.