The 2021 Madrone Audubon/Ernestine Smith scholarship recipient is Riley Zajonc. This scholarship is awarded to a student who attends or has attended Santa Rosa Junior College, transferring to a 4-year university for further education in the fields/majors of biological sciences, life sciences and/or environmental sciences.

Ms. Zajonc is a 2019 graduate of Petaluma High School. While studying at Santa Rosa Junior College, her favorite classes were Botany and Biology with an emphasis in Ecology. She shares, “I’ve loved learning about different plants, especially ferns because those are my favorite. Taking Botany has shaped my observations and drawing skills of plants, which will be… beneficial…later in the field of conservation.” In addition to her Major emphasis, Ms. Zajonc enjoyed diverse classes in American Sign Language, General Chemistry and Intro to Mass Media.

She attended both the Petaluma and Santa Rosa campuses of the Junior College. She has the opportunity to transfer to two universities, accepted to study at both the University of California-Santa Cruz and University of California-Santa Barbara. This summer, Ms. Zajonc will intern at Native Songbird Care & Conservation in Sebastopol, under the supervision of Veronica Bowers.

Ms. Zajonc shared, “My goals are to ensure I have left the planet better than when I was born into it. I want to work in conservation to ensure our lands stay healthy, our water stays clean, our forests aren’t clear-cut, and to ensure that people are safe…” She expressed sensitivity with a desire to be proactive about discrepancies in environmental health and access to Nature. “I want to make sure all people have a voice and are heard and that we stop putting landfills and (polluting) industries in under-resourced areas…”

Some of Ms. Zajonc’s favorite natural places to visit and renew have included Spring Lake Regional Park, Annadel State Park, Bodega Head and the Oregon coast. Ms. Zajonc grew up in Petaluma and often visited Helen Putnam Regional Park and Shollenberger Park. Seeing land that was paved over with development and what appeared to be ineffective planning, she is keenly interested in a return of land to its natural state as well as wilding certain places to benefit local species’ survival and sustenance.

In our discussions, she also shared, “Educating people is so important to me because it helps people understand why helping the environment and protecting our wildlife are extremely beneficial to us in so many ways … I feel at home when out in Nature. There is always something new to see or something new to explore. I want to protect the lands that cannot protect themselves.”
SCHOLARSHIP
Continued from page 1

Congratulations to Ms. Zajonc as the 4th recipient of our annual Madrone Audubon/Ernestine Smith Scholarship. Her educational plans are surely congruent with present-day and future environmental needs as well as justice for communities adversely impacted by inconsiderate planning decisions. We wish her well in her continuing studies!

We also appreciate the Scholarship Review Committee’s good work on behalf of our Chapter to recommend the 2021 recipient.

Bird-A-Thon Fundraiser Ends June 20th

Have you pledged and sent your check to help our Annual Fundraiser? There’s still time! This year, the high donor for the 2021 Bird-A-Thon will also receive a gift of the beautiful American White Pelican Wall Hanging created by Diane Anthony and Judith Lerner.

There’s still time to send a general donation for all teams or your favorite team (please note “BAT general” on check memo line) to Madrone Audubon, PO Box 1911, Santa Rosa, CA 95402.

Or, contact Carolyn Greene to donate to a specific team’s efforts.

Also, contact Bird-A-Thon Coordinator Carolyn Greene’s for questions or more info: cgnpark@icloud.com or call/text 805-443-7289.

A reminder about the dedicated Bird-A-Thon teams, going for marathon birding and species counting to help our Chapter’s annual fundraising needs:

Feather Questers (led by Diane Hichwa)
Oakmont Birding Buddies (led by Carolyn Greene)
Grey-headed Seersuckers (led by Ken Wilson, Becky Olsen & Ian Morrison)
Burrowing Owlers (led by Susan Kirks)
March Madness (Gene Hunn’s 1-person wonderment)

Our last fundraiser of the fiscal year, the donations received for Bird-A-Thon help us plan for the coming fiscal year and our many projects and activities, including our Leaves newsletter, membership programs, the Phenology Project in 2 locations in Petaluma, our youth and family outings at Spring Lake Regional Park, the annual Lincoln Elementary School Bird and Nature Festival, the West 9th St. Santa Rosa nesting support project, and our multiple conservation activities.

If you donated to a team already, we thank you! Help us meet our goal of $6,000 for our 2021 Bird-A-Thon. Mail your check as described above or make a donation via PayPal on our website, www.madroneaudubon.org, by June 20th! Thank you for your wonderful support!

Scholarship Recipients

2018 – Emily Hoeft
2019 – Yesenia Lopez
2020 – Luis Orozco
2021 – Riley Zajonc

New Members

Santa Rosa
Betty Doerksen
Kenwood
Marj Davis
In 2016, Gordon Beebe created a four-part video series by this title, “Why Are Birds Special?” for the Lincoln Elementary School Bird Festival on West 9th Street in Santa Rosa, held at the beginning of May each year. It was shown to the first and third grade classes as an introduction to birds since they didn’t get to join the other grades to view the egrets and herons at the nearby rookery. The series has been completely redone for the next festival with new footage and audio recordings, taken mostly in Sonoma County. Each part of the series covers a basic characteristic of what makes birds unique: flying, eating (using a bill), singing, and laying eggs/nesting with engaging pictorial representations. The series is available for viewing on Gordon’s Nature Videos channel on YouTube. A link to the playlist has been provided on Madrone’s website homepage (www.madroneaudubon.org) under New Items.
Welcome Those Bugs

by Christine Cohen

Gardening to include habitat turns conventional ideas of landscaping and gardening upside down. Insects, bugs and caterpillars are essential to life on this planet. Seed-eating birds must have available to them creepy, crawly and flying creatures to feed their young. In particular, these birds search for caterpillars with soft bodies to shove down the throats of their young. Crunchy beetles and insects are not as easily swallowed or digested. Not only that, during the lives of insects, bugs and caterpillars, many provide essential pollination, cleaning up, and nourishment whether it be for food or to awaken wonder and awe in all of us. A dedicated habitat gardener will select native plants that integrate well with the weather and the eco-system. If you see some leaves that have been chomped on, it may not be so bad. Caterpillars may be at work. They may provide vital nutrients to baby birds or if they survive, turn into a lovely butterfly or moth.

For many of us, we have moved onto property that has already been planted and landscaped. We are likely to be living a demanding lifestyle which provides little time to re-do an entire yard that has been filled with non-native plants. Birds and wildlife may also be accustomed to and have adapted to an existing landscape. One approach to habitat enhancement is to begin on a small scale, selecting a small area in which to grow native plants. Once you have selected where you plan to plant, with some research and experimentation, you can begin the planting process. If you leave a selected plant in a pot and see how it does in the sun, partial shade or full shade, you will better know where to plant. The plant will also have a chance to develop a better root system, given a little time. Flowering plants are crucial to a viable ecosystem. The Monkey flower is amazingly tough in day-long, summer sun. Many native plants may flower at different times of the year, providing vital sustenance, even in winter. The Manzanita and Red Flowering Current are shrubs that help sustain wintering birds. If you go to http://www.edgehill.net-species.htm/, you will find many Native Plant Nurseries throughout California from which to select. Their websites are available to click on. Our local Veronica Bowers at https://nativesongbirdcare.org also has a wealth of information. Just click Resources.

Some plants are considered to be keystone to the ecosystem. Certainly, the California Coast Live Oak, the California Lilac (Ceanothus), and Coyote Bush are examples. They play exceptionally good roles in providing food for the survival of the natural world. Oak trees support up to or more than 270 species of caterpillars. Even with a small garden of native plants, that are carefully selected, you may see a surprise visitor such as a Western Bluebird who has spied your Elderberries or spot Cedar Waxwings flocking to your hardy Toyon for berries! Those insects, beetles and caterpillars, residing among the flowers, leaves, and berries are indicators of a living ecosystem that sustains life. Our careful planting and loving care of our small to larger gardening areas with habitat enhancement are essential in the midst of our climate emergency.

(Visit www.madroneaudubon.org to access our tree and vegetation planting list for habitat enhancement in your garden, yard or personal space.)

Resources: Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, Native Songbird Care & Conservation, California Flora Nursery.
Coastal Things – May-June

by Diane Hichwa

May brings transitions. The variety of shorebirds that wintered at Bodega Bay have donned breeding plumage and by mid-May have left Sonoma County, heading inland or in most cases to Alaska and Northern Canada for nesting. Now we transition to Breeding Seabird Surveys along the rocky North Sonoma coast at Sea Ranch. Common Murres now stand atop Gualala Point Island. The first visible Brandt’s Cormorant nest is in view on May 7, along with 235 murres. (We know that—unseen from shore—by mid-summer we can expect about 97 Brandt’s nests surrounded by 2462 murres standing shoulder to shoulder—the count from our July 20, 2020 aerial photo.)

Western Gulls, our only breeding Sonoma County gull, have been seen copulating and gathering loose nesting material. One survey team observed Pigeon Guillemots copulating. They will nest inside the rock crevices—great protection but no observation view unless we see a small fish in the beak of a parent as it is delivered to the crevice. Black Oystercatchers, aka BLOY, one of few locally nesting shorebirds, are holding territories and tossing pebbles to prepare for nesting in a scrape on the rocks above the high tide line. We are sending bluff-walkers out to check the 24 nest sites of 2020, since they often return to the very same spot they nested at previously. This is year 10, the final year, of the Black Oystercatcher Breeding Survey sponsored by Audubon California. Hopefully next year we can follow up with a 2nd population census of the entire California coast. Local volunteers will be watching the 3 larger islands weekly to count birds and follow nests. This continues a study started in 2007 in response to a new local fireworks display that disturbed the colony of nesting birds. Other volunteers will peer over the bluff edge to record Pelagic Cormorant nests, eggs, and chicks. And the Black Oystercatcher volunteers will each be assigned a nest to watch weekly and to try to follow the chicks to fledging success! (BLOY parents often move the chicks to a safer more protected spot, which is of course harder for US to find!) The season transitions from migration into nesting as our volunteers gear up for interesting observations.

Legacy Giving Program

September 2021 Leaves will feature information about Madrone Audubon’s new program. Indeed, Sonoma County is home to incredible landscapes and habitats deserving of long-term conservation and support for birds and wildlife. We’re fortunate our Chapter membership continues to grow and we maintain a membership base of longstanding, dedicated members. The Legacy Giving Program will provide a pathway for trusts, wills and estate planning, to continue to support our Sonoma County birds, wildlife and habitats. We look forward to sharing the program information with you in September.
Travel Opportunities in 2022 with Talon Tours

Jan. 4-20, 2022 - Birding & Wildlife Uganda

Known as the “Pearl of Africa,” Uganda is a land of lakes, rivers, mountains, forests and Acacia Savannah, home to many of Africa’s birds and mammals. Our route will take us through a patch of Uganda’s scenic areas, passing amongst many villages plus isolated pockets of woodland, tropical rainforests, papyrus swamps, farmlands and mountainous landscapes as high as 8000 feet.

Sites we visit include the Mabamba Wetland, the only reliable location for the mighty Shoebill in the whole of Africa, Lake Mburo National Park, a small National Park boasting a multitude of habitats and species, Bwindi Impenetrable NP, famous for endangered Mountain Gorillas and a high number of Albertine Rift endemics, Queen Elizabeth NP, that has the highest biodiversity rating of any Natural Reserve in Africa and is famous for its tree climbing Lions. The Kibale NP has the highest concentration of primates in Africa, including Chimpanzees, and offers great birding, Budongo Forest provides prime forest birding while Murchison Falls NP is the largest National Park in Uganda. The Murchison Falls along the Victoria River Nile is home to all manner of wildlife, including Lions and Leopards. Kidepo Valley NP, Uganda’s most isolated and spectacular Park, is known for its abundance of wildlife with over 75 species of mammals and 470 species of birds.


Feb. 9-24, 2022 - Birding Guyana

The English-speaking country of Guyana is located on the northeast shoulder of South America. Diversity of habitat within Guyana supports just over 800 species of birds from 72 different families. Habitats we cover include the Coastal Plain where we look for Yellow-tufted Woodpecker, Blood-coloured Woodpecker, Rufous Crab Hawk and Guyana’s national bird, the Hoatzin. Also, the Interior Rainforest, home to the Harpy Eagle, the Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock, Capuchinbird, White-plumed Antbird and Waved Woodpecker and seasonal wetlands and savannah of the interior, home to the highly endangered Sun Parakeet and Red Siskin plus the very range-restricted Hoary-throated Spinetail and Rio Branco Antbird - all of which are Guianan Shield Endemics. In addition to the spectacular birding there are good chances to see Giant River Otters, Tapir and Giant Anteaters plus seven species of monkey.

Our chartered flight from the coast to the interior will stop at the Kaieteur Falls. Kaieteur Falls, the world’s largest single-drop waterfall is spectacular while the flight to the falls exposes views of the vast unbroken rainforests that make this country so desirable for birding and wildlife viewing.

How the Guyana tour is organized: This is a small group tour with a maximum of 8 people. Further information is available at https://talontours.com/tours/guyana-2022-2/.
SATURDAY WALKS
Gordon Beebe has not scheduled Saturday walks for June-August 2021. Please refer to Madrone’s website for updates or changes. www.madroneaudubon.org.

JUNE THROUGH AUGUST THURSDAY WALKS
COVID-19 Precautions
Outside activity restrictions are loosening up. We will follow the latest protocols, during these walks. Come in good health with no recent exposure to someone with the COVID virus. The attendance limit is being raised to 10 birders. **To reserve a space, please call Janet Bosshard: (707) 526-5883. Reservations will be accepted on first come, first served. If the walk has met the limit, there will be a waiting list in case of cancellations. Please call ASAP if you need to cancel.

June 10th
Spring Lake Regional Park, Santa Rosa, parking permit required. Meet at the first parking lot across from the swimming lagoon. We will walk past the dam and along the lake to the Fisherman’s Trail. **To reserve a space, please call Janet Bosshard, (707) 526-5883

June 24th
Crane Creek Regional Park, Rohnert Park, parking permit required. Take Petaluma Hill Road to Pressley Road, Rohnert Park. A special Sonoma Co. Oak Woodland habitat. **To reserve a space, please call Janet Bosshard, (707) 526-5883.

July 8th
Ragle Ranch Regional Park, Sebastopol, parking permit required. Meet back by the dog park, near the restrooms. We’ll look for the Acorn Woodpecker habitat and other songbirds in the Oak Woodlands. **To reserve a space, please call Janet Bosshard, (707) 526-5883.

July 22nd
Laguna de Santa Rosa Trail, Sebastopol, parking does not require a park pass. Meet in the parking lot off Hwy #12 before the gas station. We will walk along the channel and the field trails. **To reserve a space, please call Janet Bosshard, (707) 526-5883.

August 12th
West County Trail, between Sebastopol and Forestville, off Hwy #116, no parking pass required. This is a paved path, through Sonoma County’s country habitat. **To reserve a space, please call Janet Bosshard, (707) 526-5883.

August 26th
Sonoma Valley Regional Park, Glen Ellen, off Hwy #12, parking pass required. Meet near the trail head, opposite the dog park. We will walk the paved path. There is a bench halfway down the path to sit a while and listen for the birds. It is a cool park on a warm morning for a bird walk. **To reserve a space, please call Janet Bosshard, (707) 526-5883.

Membership Renewals for Spring Processing Now!

Are you a National Audubon member?
Please consider joining our local chapter, Madrone Audubon.
(see membership form, back page)
News Updates

California Condors – On May 1, Ventana Wildlife Society reported the egg laid by Redwood Queen was likely not going to hatch (see our April-May 2021 Leaves). The egg was suspected to have failed or was infertile. Condor eggs typically hatch 50-60% of the time. In other Condor news, many read about the group of 15-20 Condors who became temporary residents on a southern California property owner’s deck. A New York Times article entitled “Pesky Condors Invade California Home” surely missed the point of this endangered species, temporarily inhabiting a residential area in the Condors’ home range. We enjoyed Ventana Wilderness Society’s analysis: “By now, you may have noticed that condors in southern California made national news for ‘invading’ a home, and we wanted to take a minute to alert you to the matter. First and foremost, wouldn’t it be nice to have this problem? Second, this is a situation where a property was easily accessed by curious condors in a remote, wildlife adjacent area. The homeowners, who were away for the weekend, may not have been aware that it’s possible to flush the birds away with a water hose and if not present, then using a water sprinkler. In today’s society, we must learn to live with wildlife, whether that’s a mountain lion prowling around at night, a raccoon getting into your trash can, or condors ‘partying’ on your beautiful backyard deck. The New York Times quotes one Twitter user as saying: ‘Your mom (the homeowner) has been adopted by a critically endangered species. I’d call that an honor.’ We may be biased, but we would too!”

Important Update - Farallon Islands – The proposed drop of a 2nd generation anticoagulant poison (Brodifacoum) is now anticipated for review by the California Coastal Commission in September 2021. The US Fish and Wildlife Service recently released an updated Consistency Determination in response to several concerns expressed by Commissioners. Madrone Audubon is reviewing this document and will prepare another detailed comment of opposition to the proposal.

Our comment will offer information about a multi-faceted alternative that should be required to be evaluated with a plan for subsequent implementation. Recent media articles featuring proponents of the poison drop have been misleading and have claimed there is no other way to eradicate mice on the Farallon Islands and that alternatives are either not available or infeasible. This is not true, and it is important to understand that strong advocacy for the poison drop is a proposal that has been pushed for many years, at least 15, to drop Brodifacoum in an attempt to eradicate mice. Like many organizations in Sonoma County, we are deeply concerned about serious risks, bykill of non-target species, and poisoning our marine sanctuaries as well as infiltrating the food chain when other species, such as raptors, ingest a poisoned mouse or other species that has ingested a poisoned mouse. The responsibility for an alternative proposal is not ours. Opposing this proposal and describing the severe concerns, risks and unknowns, regardless of described “safety” plans should be sufficient.
NEWS UPDATES
Continued from page 8

Now, however, Madrone Audubon, along with other opponents, will provide additional updated information to facilitate considering a multifaceted alternative proposal, which is low risk, takes a longer period of time, and requires a different approach, a proactive and safe approach, to reduce and eliminate the mouse population on the islands. There is no 2nd generation anticoagulant poison drop included in the alternative proposal. We recommend our members send emails and/or letters, stating opposition to the US Fish and Wildlife Service’s proposal. Include a strong statement of support to protect our marine sanctuaries, the Farallon Islands ecosystem, and request a requirement for an intelligent, different approach to address the mouse population and protect the Ashy Storm-Petrel on the Farallon Islands. The US Fish and Wildlife Service proposal to drop Broadifacoum over the Farallon Islands should not be recommended to proceed.

Address for email: Farallonislands@coastal.ca.gov. (Please blind carbon copy BCC susankirks@sbcglobal.net when you send your email.)

Address for a letter: John Weber, California Coastal Commission, 455 Market St., Ste. 300, San Francisco, CA  94105.

For Our Members

For all of us, the years 2020 and 2021 have been unusual and challenging. While we were hunkering down and slowing our pace, birds and wildlife expanded their territories into what was historically theirs to begin with. Their vocalizations, foraging and traveling from place to place became more evident to sharp-eyed observers—such as bird watchers! Do you have stories to tell about interesting wildlife experiences or did you face challenges that you would also like to share? Please send stories, maximum 200 words, to Christine, Leaves Editor, forearthandsea@gmail.com

Phenology Project Volunteers
Madrone Audubon sponsored citizen science research

Two Petaluma Locations
Paula Lane: 9 avian, 2 mammal, 4 plant species
(This Nature Preserve project is currently modified & continuing.)
Petaluma River Bridge: Cliff Swallows (March-August)
Both Projects are in our 4th Year!
Accepting new volunteers for long-term, climate change impact project. Visit 1 hour monthly, observe, record data for National Phenology Project
To volunteer, contact: Susan Kirks, Madrone Audubon President. 707-241-5548, susankirks@sbcglobal.net
(Beginning birders/naturalists welcomed)
A Sincere Thank You to Our 2020 Donors

$500 and above


$200 to $499


$100 to $199


$50 to $99

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<tr>
<th>Species</th>
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<td>GB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lazuli Bunting (2)</td>
<td>4/13</td>
<td>Chileno Valley Rd.</td>
<td>DN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-headed Grosbeak</td>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>Jenner Headlands</td>
<td>MBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-headed Grosbeak</td>
<td>4/24</td>
<td>Helen Putnam Regional Park</td>
<td>DN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Madrone Audubon Society
Post Office Box 1911
Santa Rosa, California 95402

Summer 2021

Madrone Leaves is published bimonthly from October through May, plus one issue each in June and September.

MADRONE LEAVES

Madrone Audubon Society meets on the third Monday of each month, except in June, July, August, and December. Meetings start at 7:00 PM at First United Methodist Church, 1551 Montgomery Dr., Santa Rosa. All membership meetings and walks are open to the public. Information: e-mail - info@madroneaudubon.org.

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Please note: We are a chapter of National Audubon, but membership in and donations to Madrone Audubon are separate and support our local chapter. Membership and donations are tax deductible.

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☐ Senior $15 ☐ Basic Member $25 ☐ Family $30

☐ Sustaining $50 ☐ Supporting $100 ☐ Patron $500

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City ___________________ State ____ Zip __________
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