

VOLUME 59 October/November 2025 Number 2

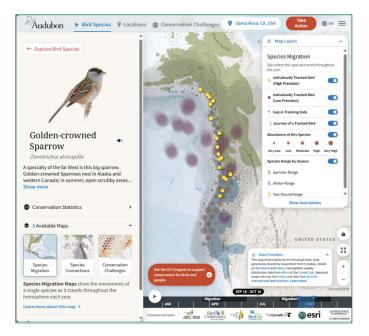
Arrivals and Departures: Migratory birds in Sonoma County

by Dr. Nat Seavy

Each year, migratory birds travel back and forth across the globe. As a result, you find different birds in Sonoma County depending on what time of year it is. These movements also mean that the effects of our local conservation actions to protect birds in Sonoma County extend across the hemisphere.

To help people understand the importance of migration, the National Audubon Society worked with partners and individual researchers to assemble the latest information into the <u>Bird Migration Explorer</u>. This useful tool captures the joy of birds and the wonder of migration through a series of interactive maps.

With the Bird Migration Explorer, you can learn more about the migration routes of your favorite birds using the Species Migration maps, discover which migratory birds use a given



Screenshot of the Bird Migration Explorer Species Migration map for the Goldencrowned Sparrow. The map includes different types of tracking data shown with the smaller yellow and larger purple dots as well as range-wide abundance information derived from eBird records.



Hermit Thrush

Courtesy of Tom Reynolds

location and how they connect it to other places across the Western Hemisphere on the Locations maps, and learn about many of the challenges migratory birds face during the year with the Conservation Challenges maps.

As fall arrives in Sonoma County, so do the migratory songbirds that nested in Alaska and the Yukon. A number of these species will spend the winter in Sonoma County, overlapping with our lives until they migrate north in the spring. You can use the Bird Migration Explorer to learn about migration pathways for some of these species, such as the <u>Goldencrowned Sparrow</u>, <u>Hermit Thrush</u>, and <u>Fox Sparrow</u>. The Golden-crowned Sparrow is a good example of how the Bird Migration Explorer allows users to see the different types of tracking data that researchers have collected to describe the migration of this species.

As these migratory species return to our feeders and favorite birding places, take a moment to celebrate their arrival and the incredible journeys they've made this fall.

Dr. Nat Seavy is a wildlife biologist who lives in Forestville.



A Coastal Swift Migration Report

by Diane Hichwa

Fall migration is here! Look on Cornell's Migration Dashboard for Sonoma County to see how many birds are passing through, the number last night, and a list of expected species. One bird not mentioned in their list is Vaux Swifts! But they are one of our best migration spectacles in our County. They leave summer nesting areas (from Canada to Sonoma County) and move southward in large groups, feeding by day and roosting together for warmth at night. Inland valleys host a large movement but a coastal group gathers as well. Depending on fog conditions and groups resting then moving on, we see – up close – from 700 to 2400 swirling,

stalling, and "see-sawing" as they drop into the brick chimney of an old roadhouse. The swirling movements look like big bagels, then someone in the group changes the direction and all swoop the other way. Listening for their twitter is a good hearing test! Inland valleys with warmer weather and more insects to feed them host bigger gatherings: seeing 2600 on the coast, 20,000 in Healdsburg



Vaux's Swift Migration

Courtesy of Rick Theis

and at "the convergence" 43,000 at McNear Brick. These birds are more closely related to hummingbirds. They have four toes forward instead of 3 forward and one back as songbirds have. Swifts can hang inside a hollow tree or a brick chimney but CANNOT perch on a branch the way our songbirds do. Clustering together gives them a nearly 20-degree temperature boost in the chill of mid-night. The Vaux's Happening study started in 2008 by Larry Schwitters, of Washington state, and continues on as each site submits data. The wee birds move southward, wintering in Central Mexico and into Central America. We are interested in locating other sites being used locally, so if you see the Sonoma group or the Sebastopol group heading for a specific spot, please let us know for the Vaux Happening tracking.

Diane Hichwa lives at Sea Ranch.

MEMBERS' MEETINGS

(open to the public)

United Methodist Church, Fellowship Room 1551 Montgomery St., Santa Rosa.

> Monday, October 20th 6:30 PM

Members' Meeting and Presentation

by Bird Rescue Center "Who Gives a Hoot?"

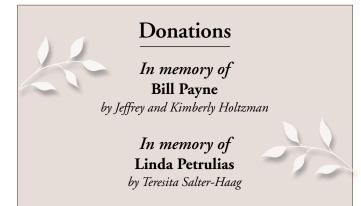
Experience BRC's ambassador owls, the nocturnal wonders and mighty predators.

> Wednesday, November 19th 6:30 PM

Members' Meeting and Presentation

by author, Paul Bannick on Woodpeckers. A Madrone/RROS collaboration.

Paul is an award-winning author, photographer and conservationist. His informative and spellbinding presentations include a combination of natural history, the surprising inter-relationships in nature, and conservation. Paul will be introducing his just-released book, "Woodpecker, a year in a life of North America Woodpeckers."



Conservation Help Needed — Please Volunteer

Are you noticing the decline of birds around you? Have things changed in your neighborhood? You can have an impact by joining our Conservation Committee.

Do you follow a particular conservation topic (e.g. wind energy)? Do you watch an area of the county or city where you live (e.g. Healdsburg, or SW Santa Rosa or Sonoma or ???). Are you concerned about: bird conservation or wildlife issues or habitat loss or wetlands or our parks?

There are many aspects to conservation and protection of the environment. We need lots of ears and eyes to notice situations before they become problems or "issues".

Additionally, Audubon has an Action Network at the state and national levels that you can keep an eye on for upcoming bills needing comments of support or of concern.

But please let me know if you care about a particular topic or place and can help us keep an eye on things. Contact: Diane Hichwa, 707.483.3130, tsrbirdlady@gmail.com



Empty Life

by Gay Bishop

The Occidental bike trail had mercifully few cyclists, runners, and dog walkers the morning I, a senior birder, arrived with binoculars and high hopes. Within the few minutes of heading down the path, I heard a familiar sound overhead coming from the valley oak tree canopy. The sound of the bird's song I hadn't heard in over a year. A song I'd long ago used the mnemonic words: Pretty quick, pretty quick to help remember the sound and singer. It was one of my most favorite migratory birds that pass through Graton, California on their way to southern wintering grounds. Seemed early this year in July. More often, they pass through in September. It is a spectacularly beautiful bird, especially the male in breeding plumage.

I stop and searched the leafy canopy high above me as the bird repeated his call several times. I saw no movement through my bins. I backed away a few steps hoping for a better angle. A middle-aged couple walked toward me. I turned my back to them trying desperately to locate the bird, hoping their movements wouldn't flush the bird and send it on its way. I just had to see that bird.

They came closer and as they passed, the man said quietly, "I've always wanted to do that when I retire."

"Yeah," the woman replied. "You'd need a pretty empty life with lots of time for that."

And then, as they departed, there it was on a bare branch: the male Western Tanager, a thrush- sized bird in breeding plumage, cherry red head, stout bill, sunshine yellow body, black wings and tail, bright white wing bars.



Louis Agassiz Fuertes (1874-1927)

I stayed on it, watching, absorbing, rhapsodizing, exulting, taking in its glorious vision for the few precious moments before the miracle flew away, leaving behind, in its wake, this most appreciative empty-life observer.

Please Help us Update our Mailing List

Did you get the EXTRA edition of *Leaves* in September? Did your newsletter come how you prefer it – by USPS or by email? If not, let us know.

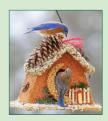
madroneaudubon@gmail.com



FALL HAS ARRIVED... and it's time to think about year-end giving. As always, we count on the generosity of the community to provide our programs and events to members and the public free of charge. If you can, please consider a Fall donation, or a Madrone membership as a birthday or holiday gift. We thank you!

Madrone Christmas Bird Count will be held on December 28, 2025

Want to spend a fun day birding and contributing to the National Audubon CBC data? Contact our CBC organizer, John Lundblad (johnlunchbag@gmail.com) and ask to join a team.



3



Summer Sightings - Coastal Surveys

by Diane Hichwa

Along the Sonoma coast there are spots where seabirds are counted and spots where marine mammals are counted to monitor populations. Bodega Bay, and Jenner have colonies of seabirds and of Harbor Seals, as do we on the North Sonoma Coast. Our monitors walked to the bluff on July 21 and our eyes got bigger as we saw Gualala Point Island (GPI) covered in Brown Pelicans — 490 of them in the count! Friday July 25 the bird surveyors were again surprised but this time by one Brown Pelican wearing a bright blue band on its leg. Chas Higgins was counting all the birds by species and was able to take a photo through his spotting scope to read the code in white on blue "4CO". International Bird Rescue was delighted to receive the band information and confirm that this one was a survivor! The report came back: 4CO (0769-00440): Sub-adult, male Brown Pelican. Rescued on 5/23/2022 from Goleta, CA. Stabilized at the Santa Barbara Wildlife Care Network until transfer to International Bird Rescue's (IBR) LA Wildlife Center in San Pedro, CA on 6/3/2022 to continue care. Treated for starvation and toenail avulsion. Released on 7/15/2022 in San Pedro.

4CO was rehabilitated during International Bird Rescue's Brown Pelican Crisis Event in 2022. From May through July, their Los Angeles center was inundated with over 300 Brown Pelicans. Most of these birds were young, starving, and cold. To learn more about the crisis response and rehabilitation, please read this **blog post**. Several Brown Pelicans were rescued from the Bluff Trail in April 2025. We hope they fared as well!



Brown Pelicans filling our Los Angeles wildlife center.

International Bird Rescue

Bird Rescue Center or BRC in Santa Rosa takes ill and injured birds in for evaluation, care, rehab and release. When it is a waterbird – like these Brown Pelicans or the herons and egrets of W 9th Street – BRC does triage and the waterbirds then move to IBRRC for specialized care. "It takes a village"!



Eagle with gull and Peregrine watches

Courtesy of Craig Tooley

GPI is in the CA Coastal National Monument, just before crossing into Mendocino County. It hosts a large seabird nesting population that we have monitored since 2007. Brandt's Cormorants spread a checkerboard of nests across the outer top and surrounding all of those nests stand Common Murres. We use periodic drone photos to get accurate counts of nests. Looking from shore, we can only see six Brandt's Cormorant nests but in counting the aerial photos we found 95 nests on June 10 and an additional 31 nests by Aug 18. These seem very late and it will be interesting to see if they are successful! The Common Murres numbered more than 2000, standing upright against the cormorant nests. A few Pigeon Guillemots nest inside crevices, a few Black Oystercatchers use flat spots, and Western Gulls nest across the flat top of the island nearer the land side. On Aug 6 the murres were packed among the Brandts - but the flightless young leap to the ocean surface with their fathers who help feed them for the next weeks. In island photos from Aug 18 "0" remained!



The point of mainland across from GPI on the Bluff Trail has a tree above the water, with branches used by an Osprey and then by a Bald Eagle to survey the waters and the island for food. This "odd couple" provides bird watching entertainment as well.



Special HawkWatch

Saturday October 11th

9:00am - 2:00pm

Registration required

Jenner Headlands Hawk Watch with Dave Barry and Peter Leveque. A special outing on The Wildlands Conservancy property to observe the spectacular Fall raptor migration along our piece of the Pacific Flyway. Our counts will contribute

to the data that has been



Ferruginous Hawk Courtesy of Tom Reynolds

collected for this HawkWatch program for over a decade. Come to observe and learn, or come to count.

Maximum of 20 participants. All must sign a liability waiver and a daily sign-in sheet (per Wildlands Conservancy).

Directions: At 9:00am we will meet at Jenner Headlands Preserve parking lot, 1 mile North of the town of Jenner. (Not the Jenner Visitor Center lot). At 9:30 sharp we will carpool in no more than 5 cars up to the Jenner Headlands (behind locked gates). There is a short, approx 0.1 mile, somewhat steep climb up to the HawkWatch spot. If we aren't fogged in, you will have beautiful views of the ocean and learn helpful landmarks to describe the location of the raptors seen.

Hawkwatch runs from 10:00 to 2:00. Bring, water, lunch, layered clothing including a jacket, sunscreen, shade hat, camp chair, raptor ID books, binoculars and spotting scope (if you have). Rain cancels.

If you'd like to join us you must sign up online at madroneaudubon@gmail.com. Please leave your name, email, and a way to contact you for any updates or cancellations.

Junior Audubon

Saturday October 11th

11:00am - 12:30pm

No registration required

Bird Box Building

Ages 6-15

Enjoy a morning with your kids building nesting bird boxes. Learn how important these boxes are to the survival of bluebirds, swallows, and other birds. Spring Lake Regional



Park, Shady Oaks Picnic Area, 393 Violetti Rd, Santa Rosa. County Parks parking permit is required. (may purchase at entrance kiosk).

Contact: John Lundblad - johnlunchbag@gmail.com

Bird Walks



Gentoo Penguin • Courtesy of Carolyn Johnson

No registration required.

All these events are free to members and the public.

Thursday October 9th

8:30am - 10:30am

Spring Lake Regional Park, Santa Rosa

Directions: Take Newanga Ave., off Summerfield Rd. Meet at the south end of park near restrooms. County Parks parking permit is required. We will bird along the lake to the Fisherman's Trail, looking for resident and fall arrival birds.

Leader: Janet Bosshard (707) 480-3432

Saturday October 18th

8:30am - 11:00am

Spring Lake Regional Park, Santa Rosa

Directions: Channel Drive & Violetti Road Entrance.

Parking permit required.

Leader: Linda Fraley (559) 779-5211

Thursday, November 13th

8:30 AM - 10:30 AM.

Ragle Ranch Regional Park, 500 Ragle Rd, Sebastopol

County Parks parking permit is required.

Available at entrance kiosk.

Directions: Go through park entrance and meet back by the dog park and rest rooms. We will walk on mostly flat, dirt paths, looking for fall bird visitors.

Leader: Janet Bosshard, (707) 480-3432

Thursday, December 11th

8:30am - 10:30am

Ellis Creek Ponds, 3900 Cypress Dr, Petaluma

Directions: From Hwy 101 south, get off at Hwy 116, left on Lakeville Hwy, turn right on S. McDowell Blvd. Ext, right on Cypress Drive and follow to end through the gates, park near the restrooms. We will look for early water birds. Be prepared for cool, windy conditions. Watch weather report for seasonal showers. We'll still try to walk, if conditions are not too severe. Free parking. **Leader:** Janet Bosshard: (707) 480-3432.



Yellow-billed Loon	5/19	Bodega Harbor, N. end (individual present last year)	LH, et. al.
Yellow-billed Loon	7/3	Bodega Harbor, N. end, continuing	GH, et al
Franklin's Gull	5/6-9	Bodega Harbor vicinity	TB, RM, et al
Bonaparte's Gull (300+)	5/19	Bodega Harbor	LH, et al
Tristram's Storm-Petrel	7/27	Offshore Marin County	M.Ob.
Herald Petrel (probable)	5/24	Offshore Mendocino Co., Ft. Bragg, likely 1st for Calif.	PP, M.Ob.
Cocos Booby	Aug-Sept.	S.E. Farallon Island	AJ, et al.
Bar-tailed Godwit	7/26	Bodega Harbor, Gaffney Pt.	CD
Red-necked Phalarope (2)	6/2	Spaletta Pond, Pt. Reyes (alt plumage)	D. Mosur
Baird's Sandpiper	9/11	Bodega Harbor/ Campbell Cove; calling fly-over	DN
White-winged Dove	6/7-8	Nunes Ranch, Pt Reyes	EM, CC, SC, et a
Vaux's Swift (200+)	9/5	Timberhill Rd. just W. of Laguna de S.R.	D Barry
Vaux's Swift (2-3)	9/11	Bodega Head	DN
White-throated Swift	7/13	Petaluma; Hwy 101 @ Corona Rd. (flew from under bridge)	DN
White-throated Swift	6/24	Hwy 101 @ Sonoma/Marin line (flew from under bridge)	DN
Purple Martin (1)	9/11	Bodega Head, foraging with VGSW's and BASW's	DN
Willow Flycatcher (2)	9/11	Campbell Cove, Bodega Bay	DN
Townsend's Solitaire	6/2	Drake's Beach (late migrant)	DS, DM
Hooded Warbler (fem.)	6/6	Bodega Bay Marine Lab entrance trees	DN
Yellow-r."Myrtle" Warbler	6/2	Nunes Ranch, Pt Reyes (Full alternate plumage)	DM
N. Parula Warbler	6/7-8	Nunes Ranch, Pt. Reyes	EM, CC, RM, TI
American Redstart	6/5	Bodega Bay Marine Lab residence trees	LH
Tennessee Warbler	6/4	Campbell Cove (singing male)	DN, TB
Townsend's Warbler	9/3	Ives Park, downtown Sebastopol	DN
Townsend's Warbler	9/11	Campbell Cove; same bird at Owl Canyon later in day	DN
Blackpoll Warbler	8/4	Drake's Beach (early migrant)	CC
Chestnut-sided Warbler	6/7-8	Mendoza Annex/Mendoza Ranch (singing male)	CC, et al
Palm Warbler	6/8	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse trees (singing male)	M.Ob
Northern Waterthrush	8/4	Abbott's Lagoon trail	CC
Yellow-breasted Chat	6/8	Whitehouse Pool trail, Marin County	LH, CC, et al
Yellow-breasted Chat	9/11	Russian Gulch	LH
Summer Tanager (male)	8/25-Sept	Santa Rosa Creek trail	JS, et al
Tricolored Blackbird (35)	6/2	Mendoza Ranch	DM et al
Tricolored Blackbird (1)	6/2	Spaletta Ranch (singing male)	DM et al
Tricolored Blackbird (60)	6/8	Mendoza Ranch	DM
Yellow-headed Blackbird	6/7	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse (fly-by)	EM, CC, et al
Lincoln's Sparrow	9/11	Campbell Cove (FOS)	DN
Lawrence's Goldfinch (pr.)	5/18	Burdell Mtn San Andreas Fire Rd.	DM
Lawrence's Goldfinch (fem)	6/2	Mendoza Ranch, Pt. Reyes	DM
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	6/8-9	(2) Pt. Reyes Fish Docks	CC, EM, et al
Indigo Bunting	6/8	Mendoza Ranch, Pt. Reyes	CC
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	6/2	Owl Canyon (singing male)	DN
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	6/7-9	Campbell Cove (singing male seen-but sounded like BHGR!!)	DN, TB, SC
Rose-breasted Grosbeak (2)	6/8-9	Pt. Reyes Lighthouse trees	CC, EM, et al

CONTRIBUTORS: Dave Barry, Tony Briggs, Scott Carey, Connor Cochrane, Cedric Duhalde, Lisa Hug, Gene Hunn, Alvaro Jaramillo, Renee Masotti, Many Observers, Ethan Monk, Dominik Mosur, Dan Nelson, Peter Pyle, David Sexton, and Josh Snead.



MADRONE AUDUBON SOCIETY FUNDS STATEMENT July 2024 through June 2025

		Conservation &	š	Stewardship Task	
	Operating	Education	Subtotal	Force	TOTAL
Balance as of June 30, 2024	157,182.14	-54,508.73	102,673.41	1,486.67	104,160.08
Income					
Friends' Dues	9,850.00	0.00	9,850.00	0.00	9,850.00
Donations	16,916.22	0.00	16,916.22	0.00	16,916.22
Donations-CBC	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	00.0
Donations-E Smith Trust	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	00.0
Donations-Farallones	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	00.0
In Kind Donations	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	00.0
Bird-A-Thon	1,687.00	0.00	1,687.00	0.00	1,687.00
NAS Sharing	5,460.75	0.00	5,460.75	0.00	5,460.75
Investment Income	0.16	0.00	0.16	0.70	98.0
Miscellaneous Income	16.02	0.00	16.02	00.00	16.02
Other Grants	0.00	3,439.00	3,439.00	0.00	3,439.00
Investing Income	5,353.59	0.00	5,353.59	0.00	5,353.59
Total Income	39,283.74	3,439.00	42,722.74	0.70	42,723.44

103,742.35	1,287.37	102,454.98	-64,905.67	167,360.65 *
-417.73	-199.30	-218.43	-10,396.94	10,178.51
43,141.17	200:00	42,941.17	13,835.94	29,105.23
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
200.00	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2,385.14	0.00	2,385.14	0.00	2,385.14
25.38	0.00	55.38	55.38	0.00
765.14	0.00	765.14	0.00	765.14
0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	00.0
19.97	0.00	19.97	0.00	19.97
968.32	0.00	968.32	0.00	968.32
16,827.31	0.00	16,827.31	0.00	16,827.31
6,077.21	0.00	6,077.21	6,077.21	0.00
6,200.51	0.00	6,200.51	6,200.51	0.00
1,507.44	0.00	1,507.44	1,250.00	257.44
8,134.75	0.00	8,134.75	252.84	7,881.91
42,723.44	0.70	42,722.74	3,439.00	39,283.74
20:000/0	00.0	20.000/0	00.0	20:00/0

*E.I. Smith Bequest: \$100,131.55 Schwab balance, June 2025/Operations Fund Balance = \$67,229.10

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STEWARDSHIP TASK FORCE BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

Total Expense

Net Income

FUNDRAISING

PUBLICITY

Balance at end of period (June 30, 2025)

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

CONSERVATION

EDUCATION

LEAVES

ADMINISTRATIVE

Expense

MEMBERSHIP EXPENSES

OUTREACH

JUNIOR AUDUBON GENERAL MEETINGS



October / November 2025



TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL
TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL
PROMPTLY
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY
CALENDAR ENCLOSED
CALENDAR

MADRONE LEAVES



Visit us on the Web at: http://www.madroneaudubon.org

Madrone Audubon Society meets on the third Monday of each month, except in June, July, August, and December. Meetings start at 6:30 PM, Zoom or in-person 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.

President: Carolyn Johnson madroneaudubon@gmail.com	Observations: Dan Nelson birdsurf64@sbcglobal.net – 707-479-2918			
Vice President: John Lundblad	BBA:			
Treasurer: Claudia Norby Recording Secretary: Sandra Settle Correspondence Secretary: Marie Witt Assistant Secretary/Treasurer: Stacy K. Li Conservation: Diane Hichwa	Christmas Bird Count: cgrabill@gmail.com - 707-495-7340 Chris Grabill cgrabill@gmail.com - 707-495-7340 John Lundblad jlundblad@srcs.k12.ca.us - 707-484-8638 Bird Rescue Center 707-523-BIRD Native Songbird Care & Conservation 707-484-6502 Northern California Rare Bird Alert 415-681-7422 National Audubon Society: 225 Varick Street, NY, NY 10014 212-979-3000			
Join Madrone Audubon – Support Your Local Chapter Please complete this form if you wish to join Madrone Audubon or renew your Madrone membership				
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.	Name Address City State Zip			
☐ New member ☐ Renewal	Phone Email			
☐ Senior \$20 ☐ Basic Member \$30 ☐ Family \$40 ☐ Student \$15	Please send my <i>Leaves</i> via email			
☐ Sustaining \$50 ☐ Supporting \$100 ☐ Patron \$500 Madrone Audubon is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our tax identification number is 94-	Please make your check payable to "Madrone Audubon Society." Detach this panel and mail to: Madrone Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1911, Santa Rosa, CA 95402			