



# SEQUOIA NEEDLES

Bulletin of the Sequoia Audubon Society, San Mateo County  
Founded 1949

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February-March, 2010

## DISCOVERING BIRDWATCHING IN NAMIBIA

BY SARAH KAY

This September, my parents and I took a three-week vacation to Southern Africa. My parents hired a private tour guide to drive us through Namibia, Botswana, and Zambia, and introduce us to the culture, the food, the people, the wildlife and, above all else, the birdwatching. My mother has been an avid birdwatcher for over ten years. My father shares in her joy, but from a more photographic perspective. While on occasion I have enjoyed a bird or two with them in the backyard of their beautiful Belmont home, I am by no means a birdwatcher of my own accord. Having lived in South Africa previously, I knew that the continent held other beautiful treasures that were sure to keep me entertained. Yet I was still a bit apprehensive about three full weeks of birdwatching.

After a quick visit to South Africa, I met up with my parents and our guide, Josh, on day four of their tour. Much like my father, I take great interest in photography, but at the start of the tour, I found myself taking lots of pictures of the scenery and of my parents instead of the birds themselves. Our itinerary had us constantly on the move and as we traversed the Namibian landscape, I found myself more and more interested in the birdwatching. As an inexperienced birder, I did not think to bring binoculars. Luckily, my parents brought an extra pair for me and as I looked closely at the birds and the details of their plumage, I began to find myself anxiously awaiting a chance to view the next bird through Josh's powerful scope.

I never knew how many kinds of birds there were, apparently over 10,000 species of birds in the world! The list of birds we were searching for was several hundred long and soon I was drawn to the hunt. My first delight was an amazingly photogenic Lilac-breasted Roller that we found on our way to eat lunch by the Khan River. It was spectacular shades of blue, green, and purple, glistening in the afternoon sun on a power-line against the backdrop of the Erongo

*(Continued on page 4)*



Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill taken by Larry Kay, September, 2009 in the Damara-land desert near Twyfelfontein, Namibia, at the Aba Haub rest camp.

## Rare Birds in San Mateo County

By  
Kris Olson

### October-November 2009

This fall brought new rare birds – those seen less than 10 times in the county – from the sea and land.

- Oct. 11 – **Short-tailed Albatross** and **Flesh-footed Shearwater**, on a boat trip out of Half Moon Bay
- Oct. 12 – **American Golden Plover** at Mori Point
- Oct. 17 – **Wilson's Storm Petrel**, East coast bird, on a private sailing trip
- Oct. 18 – **White-chinned Petrel**, first record in Calif., SAS boat trip (See full account on page 4.)

October also saw eight other unusual birds: three Eastern warblers: **Blackpoll**, **Black-throated Blue**, and **Palm Warbler**, along with a **Horned Lark**, **Bobolink**, **Vesper Sparrow**, **Lewis's Woodpecker**, and **Fork-tailed Storm Petrel**. **Laysan Albatross** were seen on both boat trips, Oct. 11 and 18.

November brought more unusual birds:

- Nov. 13 – **Tundra Swans**, at Pescadero
- Nov. 29 – **Snow Geese**, also at Pescadero, two immatures
- Nov. 30 – **Ross's Goose**, one immature joined the Snow Geese
- Nov. 30 – **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** in Menlo Park (and Dec. 1, one at Cascade Creek on the coast)

*(Continued on page 3)*

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## MEETING PROGRAMS

BY SUE COSSINS & SONNY  
MENCHER

### Namibia's Wildlife Is Overwhelming

By SAS members Larry, Eileen, and Sarah Kay

Thursday, February 11, 7:00 PM

In September 2009, Larry, Eileen, and Sarah Kay went on safari to Namibia in Southwestern Africa. Here's how they describe their adventure.

Monthly Meetings  
San Mateo Garden Center  
605 Parkside Way, San Mateo  
*Parkside Way is west of Alameda de las  
Pulgas, between 26th and 28th Avenues.*

"Our plan was to see Namibia, Botswana, and Victoria Falls in Zambia. Our trip had a little bit of everything: adventure, culture and history; deserts and rivers, mountains and swamps; good food and great people; and lots and lots of birds and mammals. September is a fantastic month in Namibia. It is the end of the dry season and the birds and mammals are desperate for water, so they gather in great numbers at the waterholes. What a dream for us, as herds of elephants, prides of lions, and huge flocks of weavers, larks, sandgrouse, and vultures gather to drink.

Our safari included kayaking with seals and dolphins in Walvis Bay; a visit to Rooibank to see Namibia's only true endemic, the Dune Lark; a visit to Twyfelfontein to see the bushmen rock engravings made thousands of years ago; a day of tracking Damara Black Rhinos in the Namib Desert; incredible mammal-watching in Etosha National Park; sunset boat trips on the Okavango and Zambezi rivers; and for the grand finale, a visit to Victoria Falls that included a bungee jump.

The safari was a complete success by any measure. The photography was fantastic -- there is no doubt that Namibia in September is one of the best wildlife destinations in the world. We saw over 330 species of birds including Hartlaub's Francolin, Herero Chat, Dune Lark, Rockrunner, Pel's Fishing Owl, Shelley's Sunbird, and over 40 mammals. We had

great adventures, some planned and some unplanned.

Please join us to share our pictures and stories from our African Adventure."

### Birding Class: Waterfowl

By Alvaro Jaramillo

Thursday, March 11, 7:00 PM

We take it for granted, but San Mateo County is about as rich a place as anywhere for wintering waterfowl. We are at a prime site, a world-class place for ducks and geese. This class will touch on what makes waterfowl odd and special as far as birds go. It will also detail some of the tougher identification problems in the group while dealing with aspects of their migration, foraging behavior, and habitat needs. Some experienced birders may see ducks and geese as dull -- not so. These are among our most gorgeous, interesting, and also puzzling birds. If you are a beginner, this class will get you on the right track; if you are advanced, it will hopefully re-ignite your interest in waterfowl.

Alvaro leads birding tours of California and South America for Field Guides and has authored two birding books: *The Birds of Chile* and *New World Blackbirds: The Icterids* as well as contributing both popular and scientific articles to various publications. He also wrote the icterid chapter in *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior*.

### Accompanying Field Trip:

Saturday, March 13, time and place TBD

The field trip will be in a Bay Area location with abundant waterfowl of various species for comparison. Spotting scopes will be available for use. Open to everyone with a \$5.00 fee paid to the instructor.

Check the SAS website [www.sequoia-audubon.org](http://www.sequoia-audubon.org) for details as the date nears. They will also be announced at the class.

**Leader:** Alvaro Jaramillo  
**Beginner/Advanced Trip**

**Pillar Point – Coastside Birding**  
**Saturday, February 6, 9:00 AM – Noon**

This is the only sheltered harbor between Santa Cruz and San Francisco, so Pillar Point is a prime birding area. This area is a stopover point for shorebirds and a favorite for seabirds. Not only does the harbor usually have one or two surprises, but the nearby willows, cypress, and grassland have proven to be first-rate areas for warblers and sparrows.

**Directions:** Take Hwy 92 to Hwy 1. Follow Hwy 1 north to Capistrano Rd. and turn left at the traffic light. Turn left again at the first opportunity and we will meet in the parking lot at the east end of the harbor near the boat launch ramp. This will be a morning walking trip along the beach and rocky areas, so boots and sturdy shoes are recommended. Wear clothing in layers for cold and windy to sunny weather. Heavy rain cancels.

**Leader:** Gary Deghi 650-208-8711  
**Beginner/Advanced Trip**

**Mori Point – Pacifica Birding**  
**Sunday, February 14, 8:00 – 11:00 AM**

Celebrate and participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count! Join us February 14th at Mori Point in Pacifica for fascinating birding in a changing habitat. Mori Point has been undergoing restoration by Trails Forever, including a new boardwalk, man-made ponds for Red-legged Frogs, and plantings of native vegetation – all of which is attracting birds. California Thrashers have returned after an absence of 30 years.

**Directions:** Meet at 8 AM at the trailhead at Bradford Way, Pacifica, and dress warmly!

**Leaders:** Laurie Graham & Jeff Fairclough. fair80@comcast.net  
**Beginner/Advanced Trip**

**Follow-up field trip for the March 11 birding class.**

**Saturday, March 13, Time / place TBD**

The field trip will be in a Bay Area location with abundant waterfowl of various species for comparison. Spotting

scopes will be available for use. Open to everyone with a \$5.00 fee paid to the instructor. Check our website for details as the date nears: [www.sequoia-audubon.org](http://www.sequoia-audubon.org). Information will also be announced at the class.

**Leader:** Alvaro Jaramillo  
**Beginner/Advanced Trip**

**Birding Tour of Redwood Shores**  
**Sunday, March 21, 8:30 – 11:30 AM**

There are many good birding spots in Redwood Shores in addition to the Radio Road ponds. With this area in our backyard, birders should know all the hot spots, hidden parks, lagoons, etc. Often reports show up on *PenBird* saying a species was seen at "x" location. It took me a while to learn the sites – where to look for Redhead, Barrows Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Belted Kingfisher, Green Heron, etc. So this trip will be a combination of birding and learning the back roads of Redwood Shores.

**Directions:** Meet at 8:30 AM at Starbucks by Nob Hill Market, Redwood Shores Parkway. Leave some cars there and carpool for short trips around the area.

**Leader:** Sonny Mencher. 650-814-8028



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, photo taken by Deepankar Das, December 3, 2009, 3:11 PM, at the intersection of Arbor Rd. and Creek Dr. in Menlo Park, CA

*(Rare Birds, continued from page 1)*

To complete the Goose theme, a **Cackling Goose** was seen Oct. 21 at Redwood Shores and **Greater White-fronted Geese** have been seen starting Sept. 27 – all migrating south for the winter.

Learn more about these sightings and who saw them on the SAS website: <http://sequoia-audubon.org/SMCbirds.php>

**Take a Mid-Winter Nature Break with the Great Backyard Bird Count**

Bird watchers coast-to-coast are invited to take part in the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), Friday-Monday, February 12-15. Participants in the free event will join tens of thousands of volunteers with all levels of birding experience to count birds in their own backyards, local parks, or wildlife refuges. Participants count birds for as few as 15 minutes and report their sightings online at [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org).

Each checklist submitted by these "citizen scientists" helps researchers at [Cornell Univ.'s Lab of Ornithology](http://Cornell Univ.'s Lab of Ornithology) and the [National Audubon Society](http://National Audubon Society) (NAS) learn more about how birds are doing and how to protect them. For example, the 2009 GBBC data highlighted a huge southern invasion of Pine Siskins across the eastern U.S. Over 280K Pine Siskins were sited compared to the previous high of 39K in 2005. Last year, participants completed more than 93,600 checklists online, creating the continent's largest instantaneous snapshot of bird populations ever.

One participant said, "Thank you for the opportunity to participate in citizen science. I have had my eyes opened to a whole new interest and I love it!"

For more information, visit [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org), the NAS at [citizenscience@audubon.org](mailto:citizenscience@audubon.org) or contact Cornell's Lab of Ornithology at [gbbc@cornell.edu](mailto:gbbc@cornell.edu).



(*Discovering Birdwatching, continued from page 1*)

Mountains. As we headed off towards the northwest, to the barren deserts of Damaraland, we stopped for a close look at a gorgeous pair of Secretarybirds stalking the arid grasslands. These are some of the most interesting birds I have ever seen, and although I saw them once before in South Africa, I was still impressed with their majestic beauty. We also saw a male Kori Bustard in full display, its neck massively puffed out, making bizarre rasping noises, as four females fed in the surrounding grass. One bird that I particularly enjoyed was the Monteiro's Hornbill. It looked almost cartoon-like with its huge red bill and spotted plumage. Throughout the course of the trip, we saw lots of hornbills including the Damara Red-billed and Southern Yellow-billed Hornbills which were equally beautiful. My first view of Monteiro's Hornbill was at the edge of the Erongo Mountains on our way to Omaruru where we also saw Lappet-faced Vultures passing overhead and a Red-crested Korhaan cautiously crossing the road.

Once in the game parks, our bird sightings were graced with the presence of mammals. We spent three days in Etosha National Park and one in the fantastic Mahango Game Reserve. Impala, zebra, springbok, and oryx spotted the land. Black rhinos, red hartebeest, hyenas, and kudu were soon to follow. As we made our way from one waterhole to the next, new secrets were revealed. We saw over 20 lions, nearly 50 elephants, and several herds of giraffe. It being the dry season in Namibia, most of the water had evaporated leaving few waterholes for the animals to drink from. This makes finding them easier as they frequent these holes to stay hydrated.

We spent two nights lodging on the edge of the Okavango River. The first night we swam with the lodge's pet otter and took a boat ride on which we saw herons, snipes, and several species of kingfishers. The highlight was when we stopped to watch the sunset over a herd of hippos, wading and snorting as they watched us cautiously from the corner of their eyes. On the other side of our boat, there was colony of Southern Carmine Bee-eaters. With 1,500 nests on the adjacent bank, we were surrounded by a tornado of red and blue bee-eaters. It was unbelievably breathtaking. At the second lodge we saw Meyer's Parrots, a Hartlaub's Babbler, and my favorite for this stop, the African Green Pigeon. Its lime green feathers, purple shoulders, and bright orange feet and spot on its beak would make any pigeon hater think again.



Tropical Birding Guide Josh Engel, Eileen Kay, Sarah Kay, and Larry Kay

As a grand finale, we crossed into Zambia to make a quick stop at Victoria Falls and bungee jump from the bridge crossing the gorge – a 111-meter plummet towards the Zambezi River right on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe! The jump, as expected, was an adrenalin-filled end to a spectacular vacation.

As I mentioned before, part of my father's enjoyment of birds is photographing them. I believe that because I am also a lover of photography it helped to bridge the gap between the birders and myself. I have taken away from this trip the experience of a lifetime as well as a new hobby that I can share with my parents for many years to come.

## WHITE-CHINNED PETREL SEEN ON SAS PELAGIC TRIP

BY JENNIFER RYCENGA

Sequoia Audubon's first sponsored pelagic trip exceeded all expectations when a very rare bird – the White-chinned Petrel – flew into our wake! The off-shore voyage, using the harbor at Half Moon Bay, was meant to explore the pelagic birds at the edge of the continental shelf, 30 miles out from shore. This particular trip on October 18, had weathered two postponements due to storms at sea on September 19 and October 4. When the boat did get out on the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup>, we had three expert guides – Alvaro Jaramillo, Alan Hopkins, and John Sterling – plus an avid group of 29 passengers. Our captain, Dennis Baxter, and his deck hand Phil, appreciated the enthusiasm and skill of the assembled birders, and the two of them were more than equal to the occasion when our rare visitor appeared.

The early part of the trip had a few highlights, most notably a very cooperative Laysan Albatross that came to feed with gulls and Black-footed Albatrosses at the back of our boat. But by mid-day, as we traveled south along the shelf-line, the birding had turned slow. Then Alan Hopkins, who was tossing popcorn from the back of the boat (a process called "chumming") saw a dark bird emerging in the distance behind us. Thanks to his sharp eyes and his announcement that this could be a Flesh-footed Shearwater (normally the only all-dark seabird of that size in our waters), many experienced sea birders focused on the bird. As it came closer, they could see that it was not a Flesh-footed Shearwater, but a dark petrel. Petrels of any species are highly sought-after birds in California waters, so excitement ran high. Then Alvaro Jaramillo, "eagle-eyed Coastsider" as the *Half Moon Bay Review* called him, knew from his extensive experience as a guide in South American waters, that this was a southern hemisphere bird. Urging everyone to look at the bill, he called it as a White-chinned Petrel! John Sterling, our third guide, was, with Alvaro and Leslie Flint, one of the few people on board to have seen the species before; he concentrated on getting an excellent set of photographs.

In the meantime, a rapid increase in chumming had brought

(White-chinned Petrel,, continued from page 4)

the White-chinned Petrel to sit on the waters directly behind our boat. This afforded everyone great looks at our prized visitor, especially the bill, which is yellowish-white to the tip, with a beautifully outlined brown edging. Everyone got to see and clearly identify our long-distance flyer. The White-chinned Petrel, while found throughout the southern oceans, rarely gets above the Tropic line, let alone the equator, making this a rare bird indeed. While no single cause can explain an appearance as idiosyncratic as this one, speculation includes post-breeding dispersal (heck of a long way to fly to get away from one's parents!), global climate change, and following a ship for too great of a distance. Alvaro did note that the bird was associating with some species - such as Pink-footed Shearwater - that it would be seen with in the waters off of Chile.

What the White-chinned Petrel did not know was how happy it would make this particular group of birders! Realizing what we were seeing evoked screams and shouts of happiness. To be able to see such a rare bird is the dream of everyone who boards a pelagic boat, but happens to only a very few lucky birders over the course of a lifetime.

The White-chinned Petrel sighting, if approved by the California Rare Birds Committee, will be a first-ever state record, as well as the first time that this southern hemisphere species has been seen and identified while alive in all of North America.

The remainder of the voyage was also a stirring success, with the following true pelagic species being seen: Black-footed and Laysan Albatross, Northern Fulmar, Black-vented, Sooty, Pink-footed, Buller's, and Flesh-footed Shearwaters, Red Phalarope, Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers, South Polar Skua, Common Murre, and Rhinoceros and Cassin's Auklets.

The week before our trip, San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory had sponsored a trip out of Half Moon Bay harbor, too, which similarly found a hyper-rarity: a radio-tagged young Short-tailed Albatross, one of the rarest birds in the world, with only about 2,000 in existence. This county record, coupled with the White-chinned Petrel on our trip, assures that Half Moon Bay will be sustained as a pelagic port over the next few years.

Stay tuned for information about any Sequoia Audubon Society trips, as well as trips from other providers, by regularly checking the Sequoia Audubon Society homepage. You will also find a gallery of pictures of the White-chinned Petrel at that webpage: <http://www.sequoia-audubon.org/home.html>.



White-chinned Petrel taken by Kristen Olson, Oct. 18, 2009 SAS HMB Pelagic Trip.

## OTHER BIRDING ACTIVITIES

(Sequoia Audubon does not sponsor the following activities.)

### Golden Gate National Park's 2010 Endangered Species Big Year

The GGNP contains more endangered species than any other National Park in continental North America. This event is a competition that helps us consider our relationship to these lands and learn about these imperiled species. **Go to [www.wildequity.org](http://www.wildequity.org) to find out what actions you can take to help these species recover.**

### 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Godwit Days Arcata, CA

**Thursday – Sunday, April 15-21**

California's North Coast offers towering redwoods, rocky ocean coasts, wild river valleys, expansive mudflats of Humboldt Bay, and the world-renowned Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, where 271 species of birds have been sighted ... just minutes from the historic Arcata Plaza.

Held at the peak of spring migration, shorebirds abound and special opportunities are planned to see many other species, including Marbled Murrelet, Spotted Owl, and Snowy Plover. The area offers a wide array of habitats and species for your observation and enjoyment. The selection of over 100 small group field trips, lectures, workshops, boating excursions, and community activities are led by experienced local guides. Special pre- and post-festival birding trips are available that can extend your enjoyment to a full week.

Come to the Arcata Community Center at 321 Community Park Way, Arcata, CA 95521 on Friday, April 16 from 5 to 7 PM for the opening reception sponsored by local stores. Enjoy food and beverages, browse the vendor booths, and see the arts exhibition.

For further information go to [www.godwitdays.com](http://www.godwitdays.com) or for assistance with registration for Godwit Days call 1-800-908-WING or 707-826-7050.

### Heron Festival and Wildflower Brunch Clear Lake State Park, Kelseyville, CA Saturday & Sunday, April 24-25

Co-sponsored by Redbud Audubon and Clear Lake State Park, this event offers pontoon boat tours, close-up birdlife viewing, birding and nature walks, omelet brunch, children's activities, nature booth exhibits, environmental speakers, Pomo basket weaving, and much more.

For information and registration go to [www.heronfestival.org](http://www.heronfestival.org) or 707-263-8030

### First Point Reyes Birding Festival Friday – Sunday, April 23-25

This event is sponsored by the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin, the leading environmental advocacy organization in West Marin.

Point Reyes and the West Marin area are home to one of the most

(Other Birding Activities, continued from page 5)

diverse bird populations in North America. April is a great time to see and hear breeding birds and to admire shorebirds and waterfowl and many other species on their way north.

Top bird experts such as David Wimpfheimer, Keith Hansen, and Jules Evens will lead participants on trips to discover the best birding sites in the region. Displays and exhibits will expand your bird knowledge, and you can stay at one of the dozens of charming bed and breakfast or other lodging establishments. The event will also feature other walks to see the West Marin natural world, including the famous wildflower displays, butterflies, and more!

Go to <http://www.eacmarin.org> to learn more about this exciting event. Make a reservation to stay in West Marin from Friday at noon to late Sunday afternoon, since accommodations fill up early for weekends.

### **16th Annual Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival, Weldon, CA**

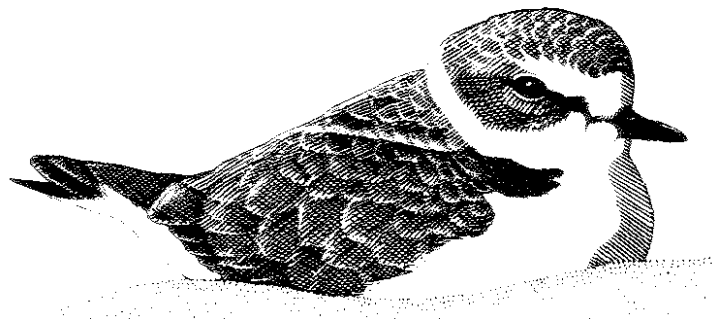
**Saturday and Sunday, May 1 and 2**

Audubon-California's Kern River Preserve in Weldon hosts numerous free events including bird walks led by Kerncrest Audubon Society volunteers, bird banding with the Southern Sierra Research Station, and information booths and exhibits located in the large, shaded front yard of Preserve Headquarters.

The Kern River Valley is one of nature's most diverse homes: 350 bird species (c. 233 species per Nature Fest and over 200 nesting species!). Spring bird migration creates an exciting time for birders visiting the Kern Valley Spring Nature Festival. The region, centered on the Kern River Valley, hosts 138 butterfly species (68%+ of California's lepidoptera), 2,000+ species of plants (a third of California's flora), and the highest mammal diversity in the United States (115 species)!

Field trips are limited to between five and twenty people to insure the highest quality and most enjoyable birding and natural history experience possible. The Festival offers a variety of trips and activities for all interests and age levels. The Kern River Valley abounds with additional recreational opportunities. The Kern River Fish Hatchery and the Kern Valley Historical Museum are open on every weekend.

For more information go to <http://www.kern.audubon.org/KRVSNF.htm>



Snowy Plover

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

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### **Snowy Plover Habitat Restoration**

The fourth Sunday of each month Clark Natwick of Pacifica has been restoring Snowy Plover habitat at Pacifica State Beach (Linda Mar). Sometimes he works alone when there are no others, sometimes there are a dozen. The work mostly involves pulling out non-native ice plant, putting it in wheelbarrows and taking it to the side of Highway 1 where the State Parks crew pick it up. The work may also involve planting native vegetation.

Meet at the statue in the Community Center parking lot on Highway 1 just across the highway from the beach in the southern part of Pacifica at 10 AM and work for 1-2 hours.

**For more information contact Bill Collins. Email: [94116bc@gmail.com](mailto:94116bc@gmail.com) Phone: 650-359-3619**

### **Field Trip Chairperson**

This position involves planning field trips and sending write-ups to the Program Coordinator for publication in the newsletter and website.

**For more information contact Sue Cossins. Email: [sasue@earthlink.net](mailto:sasue@earthlink.net) Phone: 650-347-9358**

### **Hospitality Co-chairperson at Our Monthly Meetings**

Help to greet visitors and new members and assist with refreshments at our monthly general meetings. We meet on the second Thursday evening of every month, September through June. Approximately three hours a month: 6:00 – 9:00 PM at the San Mateo Garden Center

**For more information contact Eileen Kay. Email: [ek792@aol.com](mailto:ek792@aol.com) Phone: 650-592-4626**

### **Friends of Bayfront Park, Menlo Park**

Friends of Bayfront Park offers monthly "bird mornings" at the park, from 9-11 AM on the second Saturday of each month. Besides the usual bird books, and the park list, we bring Kaufmann's *Las Aves de Norteamerica* as many park visitors are not primary English speakers. If you have friends who live nearby and who aren't "real birders" but who'd like to see birds through a scope or learn a little more about them, please invite them to drop by. Families welcome, too. Meet along the entrance road by the tidal pond.

**Volunteers needed to help on February 13<sup>th</sup> and March 13<sup>th</sup> (and throughout the year) contact Chris MacIntosh: [cmaci@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cmaci@sbcglobal.net). Phone: 650-325-7841.**

Come and bird our hilly corner of the bay and see what you can find!





**YOUR CONSERVATION COMMITTEE AT WORK**

by Nancy Arbuckle

**YOU CAN HELP STOP CARGILLVILLE, A CITY OF 30,000 TO BE BUILT ON THE BAY!**

Dear Fellow Birders,

Please join the over 1800 individuals and organizations that have signed [Save The Bay's petition](#) demanding full restoration of the Redwood City salt ponds, and rejection of the massive "Cargillville" development.

Please help us add to the petition today <http://www.savesfbay.org/redwoodcity> and spread the word. We particularly need to add to the hundreds of Redwood City residents who have already signed on.

Thank you!

**SIGN THE PETITION**

Please join Save the Bay, Sierra Club, the Center for Biological Diversity, Sequoia Audubon Society, Endangered Species Coalition, SF Baykeeper, Friends of Redwood City, and over 1800 other groups and individuals by signing our petition:

**We oppose Cargill and DMB's massive Bay salt pond development in Redwood City. The project would put new development in the path of rising sea levels and destroy Bay shoreline open space that should be restored. This is not an infill site and is not the place for housing and commercial development; Redwood City should continue its smart growth redevelopment downtown. We urge Redwood City, state and federal agencies to reject the project and promote full restoration and protection of habitat and open space on this site.**

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**SHARP PARK RESTORATION EFFORTS CONTINUE**

A coalition of restoration advocates met with Congresswoman Jackie Speier to enlist her support in saving endangered species and opening up public access to Sharp Park by pursuing an all-restoration alternative to the existing under-utilized and money-losing golf course. Our goal, supported by a majority of the SF Board of Supervisors under whose jurisdiction the San Mateo County-based park lies, is a better public park at Sharp Park -- a park that protects the environment and provides recreational opportunities we can all enjoy.

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**SAS BOARD ENDORSES STATE PARKS AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION TRUST FUND ACT OF 2010**

The Board has endorsed a statewide ballot measure, slated for November 2010, which would create a trust fund that would provide a stable, reliable, and adequate source of funding for the state park system. Funding for the Trust Fund would come from an \$18 annual State Park Access Pass surcharge on all California vehicles, including motorcycles and recreational vehicles. Vehicles subject to the surcharge would receive **free, year-round admission** to all state parks throughout the year. Californians will no longer pay day use fees at any state parks.

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**MISSION STATEMENT MAKEOVER!**

Recently, the SAS Board of Directors reviewed the Bylaws of which the Mission Statement is a part. Revising the Mission Statement means amending the Bylaws. The Bylaws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at a regular meeting. Notice in writing summarizing the proposed amendment must be sent at least 15 days prior to the meeting date to members at their last known postal addresses. We are sending it in this issue of the Needles. The vote will take place at the May 13, 2010 General Meeting.

**Proposed Revised Mission Statement:**

*The Sequoia Audubon Society protects native birds and other wildlife and their ecosystems in San Mateo County, by engaging people of all ages in conservation, education, advocacy, and enjoyment.*

SAS appreciates your tax-deductible donations which help fund the Chapter's education, conservation and ongoing activities

**SEND TO:**  
 Sequoia Audubon Society  
 PO Box 620292  
 Woodside  
 CA 94062-0292

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount \_\_\_\_\_

**Sequoia Audubon Society**

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**Time Valued Material—Please Do Not Delay**

**IF YOU SPOT AN OILED BIRD**

BY JUDY SPITLER

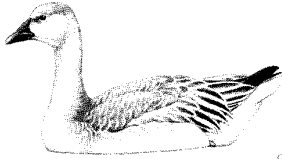
As birders we might be the first to see a problem and get authorities into the area.

Concerning any oiled birds spotted in the area, Jay Holcomb, Executive Director of the International Bird Research Rescue Center (IBRRC) in Cordelia, asked me to request that you call IBRRC directly so they can assess the situation and, hopefully, rescue any beached birds. They are the oiled-bird experts not only in California, but also the world.

IBRRC telephone: 707-207-0380 or Jay's email: [jay.holcomb@ibrcc.org](mailto:jay.holcomb@ibrcc.org)

Also, if you do end up with an injured/oiled bird, remember you can take it to Peninsula Humane Society/SPCA Wildlife Department. They are at 12 Airport Blvd -- right beside Coyote Point. They are a member of the California Oiled Wildlife Care Network and, after stabilizing the bird, they will get it to IBRRC.

(Appeared in *PenBird* on 12/13/09)



Snow Goose

**THE BIRD BOX**  
**RARE BIRD ALERT**  
**415-681-7422**



**Mission Statement**

*The mission of Sequoia Audubon Society is to participate in environmental education and conservation, and in the restoration, preservation, protection and enjoyment of our native natural resources with emphasis on birds and their habitats.*