



Falcon Flyer

Promoting the preservation of birds, wildlife, and their natural habitats.

Peregrine Audubon Society provides informative and educational public programs and participates actively as an advocate for environmental conservation.

Important Information

Meetings - Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the Ukiah City Council Chambers - Ukiah Civic Center, 300 Seminary Ave., Ukiah, unless otherwise noted. From South State Street turn west on Seminary and go to the end into the parking lot. Refreshments available after the meetings. The public is always welcome.

Board meetings - Board meetings are open to the membership. You are always welcome and encouraged to participate.

Field Trips - Everyone is welcome! Details located in the calendar.

Field Trip Guidelines: These guidelines apply to all Peregrine Field Trips. Please take a moment to read them if you are new or use them to refresh your memory if you have birded with us before.

******The times listed are the departure times, not the assembly times. Please arrive early!****** Many of these trips are out of the area and require an hour or more of driving, so promptness is necessary. Due to insurance requirements, Peregrine Audubon leaders are not allowed to organize carpools. Participants are, however, encouraged to voluntarily share rides. Any carpool arrangements are private arrangements between the driver and the passengers. Drivers must carry adequate insurance coverage. Please be courteous and share gas expenses with the driver. Most trips are all day affairs but at times various people need to get back sooner. By arriving 10 minutes early, such necessary travel arrangements can be made.

To Bring: You will probably want to take a pack with lunch, water, hat and appropriate clothing - coats, rain gear, etc. - binoculars*, camera perhaps, notepad and field guides.

** Binoculars are important but loaner pairs may be available for newcomers. If you have one to loan, bring it along.*

Calendar

Meeting, Tuesday, Mar 20- Shorebirds of Mendocino with biologist and photographer Ron LeValley. Many species of shorebirds migrate through Mendocino County, even though we don't have extensive mud flats! Four species are regular nesters here: Black Oystercatcher, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper and Snowy Plover. All the others are migrants or wintering birds. There are a lot of stories to tell about these birds. Some migrate all the way from the Arctic to South America. Some winter here and further south. A few winter to the north of us, but do show up here rarely. This presentation will include all of the shorebirds: sandpipers, plovers, phalaropes, stilts, avocets and oystercatchers, including identification. At times, identifying them can be a challenge. Ron will share his photos and talk about identifying the common visitors as well as how to identify the rare ones that drop by now and again. Ron is knowledgeable about the identification and distribution of birds along the Pacific Coast, and has an extensive understanding of natural history subjects. A lifelong interest in coastal birds and mammals was enhanced by his involvement with Point Reyes Bird Observatory beginning in 1966, including serving as a biologist at the Farallon Island research station. Ron enjoys sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm for birds and photography with others. His engaging presentations are always informative and entertaining. This is an evening you will not want to miss!

Field Trip, Saturday, Mar 24- We will be birding the north end of Lake Mendocino this morning. We will be focusing on the stretch between the boat launch adjacent to the inlet, and the Pomo A day-use area. There are great views of the lake from this location, so we will be searching through the water birds for wintering ducks and grebes. Loons are a possibility here as well. Other

Continued on page 2

target birds will include wintering song birds and raptors along the lake shore. Bald Eagle is a good possibility. We will be leaving the CVS parking lot at 8 and expect to arrive at the parking area above the north boat launch at 8:30.

Meeting, Tuesday, April 17- Photography with biologist and backyard naturalist Park Steiner. Park has spent much of his life outdoors, often near water. As a youth in Wisconsin, summer days passed stalking painted turtles at the backyard pond or chasing butterflies in nearby fields. By training and proclivity, Park spent over 35 years in Mendocino County as a professional field biologist. He has always admired the beauty of Nature, the unending complexity of form, colors, patterns, and the functional perfection of the natural world. His camera, invaluable for documenting his professional work, also brings solace and closeness while exploring his “backyard”. Birds, flowers, fungi, creatures large and small – they are all subject to his scrutiny. And since we all have a “backyard”, couldn’t we get to know ours a bit more intimately? Nearly all of us take photos, be it with a phone or a camera. Photos allow us to relive that moment again and again, or to share it with others. To convey the beauty, diversity, intensity, or serenity of that moment, simple techniques can refine our photos, elevating snapshots towards more inspiring and memorable images. Park will share some photography basics while presenting his backyard “naturelogue”. See how taking a few steps one way or another, choosing the time of day, or adjusting the background behind your subject – all minor adjustments - can greatly enhance your photos.

Field Trip, Saturday, April 28- We will be making our first visit to the Magruder Ranch in Potter Valley with our leader, Helen Magruder Menasian. The Magruder family has owned this property for 100 years. The 2,400 acres of fertile bottom land, rolling oak savannah hills and rugged chaparral rangeland provide an array of habitats for wildlife, and habitat conservation is an important component of the Magruder Ranch management. We will leave from the CVS parking lot in Ukiah at 8 am, or you can meet us at the old Potter Valley bridge site along the Russian River (1/4 mile north of Hwy 20 on Potter Valley Road) at 8:30. Bring your lunch, water, binoculars, and favorite field guides.

Field Trip, Saturday, May 12- We will be birding Potter Valley and the Eel River with George Chaniot. The primary birding is done along the scenic main stem of the Eel River with stops at the Pioneer Bridge, Trout Creek, and possibly Burris Lane. Both MacGillivray’s and Hermit Warblers are usually seen on this trip, and they can be difficult

to find elsewhere in the county. Other possible birds include Bald Eagle, White-throated Swift, and American Dipper. We will leave from the Ukiah CVS parking lot at 8:00 am, or you can meet us at the old Potter Valley bridge site along the Russian River (1/4 mile north of Hwy 20 on Potter Valley Road) at 8:30. Bring your lunch, water, binoculars, and favorite field guides.



Meeting, Tuesday, May 15- Come visit and explore the birds of Australia this evening with our old friend **Matthew Matthiessen**. Australia, the land “Down Under,” is an island, a country (the world’s sixth largest geographically) and a continent (the world’s smallest). Having no land borders, the Australian mainland—“the lowest, flattest and oldest continental landmass on Earth”—and its satellite islands collectively boast more than 37,000 miles of coastline, embracing an impressive diversity of landscapes, flora and fauna, including more than 800 species of birds. Australia is probably best known for its incredible mammals. But the country is also a premier birding destination, not only because of its avian beauty and diversity, but also because of the uniqueness of its avian population. The high number of endemic species—species that occur only there and nowhere else due to the island’s geographic isolation—makes the birding experience that much more exciting and enjoyable. In October/November 2016 Matthew visited the Australian states of New South Wales and Queensland. He will be sharing a selection of photos and stories of the birds and mammals he experienced, ranging from tiny Fairywrens, the iconic Kookaburras and Noisy Friarbirds, to massive Emus and amazing mammals, including an array of kangaroos. In addition to his World-class photographs, Matthew’s presentations are engaging and entertaining. See you there!

Donations

- Greg Giusti
- Patricia Black.
- Lynn Zwagerman
- Anonymous



Falcon Flyer Going Electronic-only

The move from paper to electronic newsletters in January seemed to be pretty smooth. If there were problems for you, please contact one of the board members. This change will save the chapter considerable time and expense, but your local membership is valued and your annual dues will continue to be put to good use. While we will continue to rely on the income from these local memberships, we will be replacing expiration notices with a yearly membership

drive. We will hold off until the start of our new season, September of 2018, to do this. If you remember when your membership expires, and wish to renew between now and then, that is good with us. Otherwise, we will be asking that everyone renew in September, 2018 when we announce our yearly membership drive. Thanks to all of you who make local membership a part of your Peregrine Audubon Society support.

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WOW! WHO BROUGHT THOSE FANTASTIC COOKIES?

If you have enjoyed the post-meeting cookie feasts (and who hasn't?), please take a moment to thank Sandy Applegate and Susan Knopf the next time you see them. They have been voluntarily providing us these wonderful treats for a number of years now. It is past time that we recognize not only their baking skills, but also their thoughtful generosity to our entire membership. Thank you Sandy and Susan!!

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Field Trip to South Coast, Jan 20

Eight Peregrine Audubon members met on a brisk, sunny January morning and caravanned in the direction of Point Arena. We saw good numbers of VARIOUS THRUSHES on Mountain View Rd. A quick stop in the conifers didn't yield any Red-breasted Nuthatches as we had seen in previous years. Descending to the coastal plain, we began to see a number of Buteos and AMERICAN KESTRELS, as expected. At Point Arena cove, despite high surf, we were able to see most of the expected birds, including RED-BREASTED MERGANSER, RED-NECKED GREBE, MEW GULL, GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL, PEREGRINE FALCON, PACIFIC & COMMON LOON, & BLACK OYSTERCATCHERS. A few folks saw ANCIENT MURRELET and/or MARBLED MURRELET. At the overlook near the lighthouse, we were able to find fairly numerous CASSIN'S AUKLETS, ANCIENT MURRELETS and RHINOCEROS AUKLETS. New-for-the-day shorebird species were limited to BLACK TURNSTONES and SURFBIRDS. A lone RED-THROATED LOON completed the expected loon day-trifecta. At the mouth of the Garcia River, we saw decent numbers of waterfowl including GADWALL & GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE, but no Tundra Swans, perhaps due to general lack of flooding on the flats. The gulls, limited in number, were strongly represented by HERRING GULL.

& expected PYGMY NUTHATCHES, GOLDEN-CROWNED AND RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS, CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE, BROWN CREEPER and TOWNSEND'S WARBLER. Scoping the Brush Creek estuary, we saw the continuing, and perhaps expected, TUNDRA SWANS and, near to parking spot, a small group of TREE SWALLOWS. At a pullout just North of Alder Creek we had more raptors, including WHITE-TAILED KITE, RED-TAILED & FERRUGINOUS HAWKS, but no Tri-colored Blackbirds which had been seen on the Christmas Bird Count. At Elk Creek there was a pair of AMERICAN DIPPER, which have been seen in previous years at same location. At Navarro River Beach

Campground we saw PACIFIC WRENS, and had good looks at COMMON GOLDENEYE, which are typically found there this time of year. Perhaps the most exciting sighting of the day, and the grand-finale of sorts, was a CLAY-COLORED SPARROW near the Albion Store. The bird had been previously reported by our January program speaker, Josh Engel, and was part of a mixed flock of sparrows which were coming to feed being put out by a cheerful local named Greg. Also at this location we saw TRI-COLORED BLACKBIRDS.

All told, most of us saw nearly 90 species for the day and had a great time birding on our beautiful coast. *Participants included George Chaniot, Mike Curry, George Gibbs, Ryan Keiffer, Keith Leland, Kent Leland, Dennis Slota and Chuck Vaughn.*

From the Point Arena area we headed north up Hwy 1. On Stoneboro Rd. we had a nice mixed-flock with both RED-BREASTED

Birdsbesafe Cat Collar Saves Birds . . .

and the Story of Dwight the Cat

by Pardee Bardwell

The Peregrine Audubon Society recommends that if you have a cat, KEEP IT INDOORS! There are a number of advantages to this policy:

- Your cat will not be run over by a car and become a sail cat (refer to “101 Uses of a Dead Cat”, by Simon Bond, 1993);
- Your cat will not become a munchie for a coyote or mountain lion;
- Your cat will not disappear and you will not have to put out fliers all around the neighborhood because your daughter is crying her heart out (refer to coyotes above);
- Your cat will not get torn up by the neighbor’s dog and therefore no vet bills;
- Cats can bring fleas, ticks and other gross parasites into the house (refer to the Animal Planet Show -”Monsters in my Body”);
- Your cat will not be killing birds in your yard (refer to Dave Bergston, November 2018 Peregrine Falcon Flyer article on cats being a killing machine).
- Your cat will not be leaving dead bird (sometimes dying) gifts on your couch, bed or pillow;

These last 2 items brings us to the point of this article. Our daughter is a veterinarian technician. She also ends up trying to rescue every cat in town. This then leads to her parents being suckered into taking in 2 of these rescue cats. Well, we did 8 years ago and they are strictly indoor cats.

Now we come to June 2017. Our daughter is moving and a “nice” male cat (neutered and has all his shots) has been abandoned in the apartment complex she is moving from, she has been feeding it outside, and he is in desperate need of a home for it. She already has 4 of these rescues. She cannot take him to the new place.

Negotiations begin about this “nice” cat named Dwight. We say we will only adopt this guy if he is an outside cat. We are not going to have two neutered male cats in the house marking their territory. I have a number of bird feeders in the yard and they are always being raided by

the gray squirrels. Maybe a cat in the yard will solve this problem?

So! Dwight comes to Ukiah. After two weeks in a large animal crate on the deck, Dwight is acclimated to the place, and quite a friendly guy. Now the test begins will Dwight keep the pesky squirrels away? Nope! Dwight figures out that he bird feeders are a great hunting ground. I’m feeding him enough for 2 cats and he has dry food available all the time. Doesn’t make any difference, I’m finding 1 - 2 dead birds a day. Emergency phone call to our daughter. This has to stop or Dwight goes!

Our daughter is desperate, because dad’s not fooling, his bird feeders are sacred. She comes up with the “BIRD-BESAFE CAT COLLAR”. She orders it to be shipped overnight. The bright colors and size make it look like a clown collar and Dwight does look like a buffoon. He deserves it after killing the birds. He does not seem mind it and does not try to get it off. We install it over a breakaway collar so Dwight cannot be strangled. Amazingly enough now the birds can see him from across the yard and keep their distance. The squirrels can see him from across the yard and they keep their distance. Dwight is now the loneliest cat in town. We have not had one bird kill in 6 months! The advertisement for the collar says the collar reduces birds caught by 87%. I would say their advertising is being modest. I never would have thought the collar would work so well. Dwight in his collar and the information for the collar is shown below. Cost for the BIRDBESAFE CAT COLLAR is \$10 and a Break-a-way collar is \$8. The collar is available from Amazon in various wild colors.



PROPOSITION 68

Audubon California has long fought to protect California's birds and natural landscapes – and encourage more people to experience these treasures – and that is why our organization emphatically supports Proposition 68 -- the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018. The measure will go before voters on June 5.

Background: This critical opportunity comes at a time when millions of Californians don't have access to safe parks, trails, and recreation areas. Demand for local parks has exceeded available funding by a factor of 8-to-1, with particularly high need in urban, disadvantaged communities. Moreover, the cycle of drought and extreme weather is already taking a toll on California's natural treasures, and threatened our communities with flooding and ecological degradation. These same forces have also exposed our state's antiquated water infrastructure, bringing into doubt our ability to provide clean, safe, and reliable drinking water to our residents. Lastly, with most of the bond funding for vital conservation programs running out in the last few years, it is time for Californians to make the next investment in the protection of the natural resources that have made us the envy of the world.

The opportunity: Audubon California was part of a broad coalition of organizations working closely with lawmakers to put the \$4 billion parks and water bond on the June 5, 2018, primary ballot in California. The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018 will support of

parks, protect natural resources and wildlife, increase drought and flood protection, and supply safe, clean water throughout the state.

The parks and water bond includes funding for a broad array of conservation priorities:

\$2.83 billion for parks and natural resources funding

- Investments in park-poor neighborhoods
- Much-needed maintenance for state parks
- Trails and creek restoration
- Funding for critical restoration at the Salton Sea

\$1.27 billion for water reliability

- Clean drinking water projects
- Groundwater clean-up and sustainability
- Flood protection, including multi-benefit flood projects

\$767 million for state conservancies

- Vital landscape-scale conservation work
- Ocean, bay, and coastal protection

\$442 million for climate adaptation

- Projects to ensure habitat connectivity
- Collaborations on climate-smart farm practices
- Rivers and waterways restoration

PELAGIC BIRDING TRIP PLANNED FOR MAY 13

A group of local birding enthusiasts are planning a pelagic trip out of Fort Bragg for Sunday, May 13. This will be an all-day trip, lasting from about 7 am until 5 pm. We hope to get out 30 to 40 miles, weather permitting. We have Rob Fowler and Todd Easterla confirmed as leaders. The cost will be no more than \$150/participant. On past May trips we have seen species such as Laysan and Black-footed Albatross, Northern Fulmar, several species of Shearwater and Storm-Petrel, 3 species of Jaeger, Tufted Puffin, Black-legged Kittiwake, Sabine's Gull, and Common and Arctic Tern. Of course, among these more "expected" birds, we are always hoping to find that extremely rare bird. May trips have also turned up Short-tailed Albatross, Murphy's, Manx, and Hawaiian Petrel, Thick-billed Murre, Black Tern, etc. There are spaces on the boat and if you are interested in going out with us, contact Chuck Vaughn (cevaughn@pacific.net).

Peregrine Audubon needs your help!

Please support local Peregrine conservation and educational programs with your tax deductible donation. All money goes directly to Peregrine projects and none to administrative costs.

Please accept my contribution of \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make checks payable to Peregrine Audubon Society
PO Box 311, Ukiah, CA 95482

How would you like this donation to be acknowledged
in the newsletter? _____

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Peregrine Audubon Society *Local Membership Only*

- Yes, I'd like to join the **Peregrine Audubon Society** - \$20
- Check box if you do not wish to receive the *Falcon Flier*.
National Audubon Society members already receive a complementary newsletter.

Please send \$20 for membership payable to:

Peregrine Audubon Society
P.O. Box 311
Ukiah, CA 95482

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(We will not share your email with anyone)

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