



Pacific Flyway

Newsletter of the Morro Coast Audubon Society

Volume 46 Issue 2, June 2011

Archie Corbuz Saves the Day!

During the month of April, Stephanie Little, MCAS President, received a call from a concerned Avila Beach resident who witnessed several cliff swallow nests being washed off the Avila Beach Community Center and Post Office building. The Avila Beach Civic Association, which manages the building, determined the swallow nests were a health and safety concern and therefore were washing the beginnings of all cliff swallow nests off the building before the nests had eggs. This is a legal procedure as long as there are no eggs or chicks in the nest. Stephanie was concerned by this activity because it was observed that the swallows continued to come back to the building day after day to re-build their nest only to have their nests be repeatedly washed down. These birds were expending a lot of energy for zero gain.

While MCAS does not advocate for residents or businesses to wash down cliff swallow nests, we understand people have the right to determine when they feel these birds could be a health and safety issue. After several phone calls, emails, and meetings with the Avila Beach Civic Association, Stephanie recommended the immediate installation of swallow netting around the entire perimeter of the building so that the birds could move on to another location and have a better chance of successfully nesting this season. "I'm glad the Avila Beach Civic Association consulted me to help come up with a solution that would allow the swallows to find more permanent homes while removing the health and safety concern at the Community Center," said Stephanie Little. "MCAS is always looking for ways to help the community solve these types of issues while protecting our birds and other wildlife."



Netting installation on the Avila Beach Community Center and Post Office, photo courtesy of Stephanie Little

Since the Avila Beach Civic Association did not have funding for the netting and installation, which was estimated around \$3000-\$4000, MCAS offered to help find funding to pay for this costly job. MCAS was fortunate to find Archie's Aloha Pest Management, a family-owned and operated EcoSmart business that offers full service pest control services. Archie Corbuz met with MCAS and the Civic Association and gladly offered to help install the netting at no cost! It was installed shortly after with the hopes that the swallows would be able to successfully nest this season. "Archie was great to work with and his contribution has not gone unnoticed," said Little.

MCAS wants to officially thank Archie Corbuz for generously supporting MCAS's cause to help the cliff swallows find a better nesting location. Please thank Archie by contacting him at <http://www.alohapest.com/> or 805-468-4049.

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BULLETIN

Thank You MCAS Donors!

Wade & Marianne Alexander

MCAS Office Now Open Saturdays Through September 24!

Now through September 24, come visit the MCAS office in the Marina square building at 601 Embarcadero in Morro Bay on Saturdays from 1pm to 4pm. Here you will find information about local birds and hiking trails, watch fun and informative DVDs, and purchase MCAS branded t-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, and more. Aurianna Woodson and Tamar Carmona will be staffing the office during this time. Rosalie Valvo will be at the MCAS office during regular hours each Thursday from 10am to 12 noon.

MCAS at Morro Rock on Saturdays

Join Aurianna Woodson and Tamar Carmona at Morro Rock each Saturday from 10am - 1pm. Here they will teach you and other visitors about western snowy plover conservation and other natural history information. Look for their blue display board!



*Aurianna Woodson with the MCAS blue display board,
photo courtesy of Samuel Redmond*

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

“MS MEMBERSHIP” Celebrates 30 Years with MCAS!

Yes, Rosalie Valvo, MCAS Membership Chair, recently passed the MCAS 30-year mark as she joined the Board as Corresponding Secretary in May, 1981. Over the years, Rosalie has also served as Publicity Chair, Hospitality Chair, Recording Secretary, President-Elect, and President. Although Rosalie has not been an MCAS Board member continuously throughout these 30 years, she “keeps coming back” and has been maintaining the membership list and producing mailing labels since the 1980s. Today, she e-mails the monthly Flyway links from that same database. Rosalie also picks up and sorts the MCAS mail each week and keeps the office and outreach center open every Thursday from 10-noon.



*Rosalie Valvo, photo courtesy of
Jan Surbey*

Rosalie, who grew up in Guilderland Center, NY, graduated from the State University of NY at Albany, then served over two years working for the Peace Corps in Botswana in southern Africa. Friends from that African connection led her to SLO County, where she landed a computer job, a job which prepared her well for managing the MCAS databases.

Rosalie has also shared her talents with other organizations as well: docent for the Central Coast Museum of Natural History and long-time member of the Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival Board. When not working at one of her “life-consuming” volunteer jobs, Rosalie enjoys knitting and the company of her cats. Thanks so much, Rosalie! You have been with MCAS as long as our current president, Stephanie Little, has been alive! Cheers to you!

Welcome to Our New MCAS Members!

Arroyo Grande

Jeanne C Barks
Thomas & Mary Dau
Barbara Mori
Caitlin O’Hagan
Shirley Pruett

Atascadero

Kali Beard

Cayucos

Gladys Cooper

Creston

Ellen Price

Grover Beach

Valerie Jeanne Dixon

Los Osos

Sandra Heinemann

Morro Bay

Janis L Johnson
Jeanne E Silverman
Carol Swain

Nipomo

Mary Grinnell

Oceano

Kerry Langford

Paso Robles

Kyle Austin
Robert Curry
Tilda D McChesney

Pismo Beach

Richard Baccigaluppi

Gail Lopez

San Luis Obispo

Dave Bauer
V A James
Kallia Linsteadt
Joan Rinell
Linda Sims

Templeton

Nancy Schmandt

LOCAL EVENTS, FIELD TRIPS & PROGRAMS

June Year-End Barbecue

Monday, June 20, 5:00pm - 8:00pm

El Chorro Regional Park, Mariposa Group Area (across from the SLO Botanical Garden Oak Glen Pavilion)

Plan to attend this MCAS barbecue featuring birding, good food, and live music. We've got the beat...you bring the meat (or veggies). It will be a fun event for the whole family!

5:00pm - Birding Field Trip and Optics Fest

Take a short birding walk around the park with Mike Stiles and test various brands of spotting scopes and binoculars.

6:00pm - Everyone Loves BBQ Potluck

Bring something to grill, a side dish to share, and your own reusable place-setting. Throw in your picnic tablecloth, if possible. Assorted drinks provided by MCAS hospitality.

6:30pm - 7:30pm - Live music by That Evening Sun



From left to right: Shannon Savage (vocals, guitar); Steve Kindel (vocals, guitar, bazouki); Paul Silva (vocals, guitar, mandolin); Ben Erchul (bass). Not pictured is Debra Windsong (harmonica). Photo courtesy of Mark Krames.

Save the Date! Beginner's and Children's Birding Fieldtrip July 16

More information coming soon! To get email reminders of all our upcoming fieldtrips, sign up for MCAS Alerts through http://morrocoastaudubon.org/mcas_alert_reg.php

Eureka! The Birds of San Luis Obispo County - April 2011

Many of the species mentioned in this month's report are from the north coast at Point Piedras Blancas. Richard Rowlett has returned for the annual spring gray whale cow/calf count and provides regular bird reports to the slocobirding listserve. If you have not had a chance to enjoy Richard's posts (generally on Sundays), they are available on the listserv archives at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/slocobirding/> and are well worth reading. So far this year 273 species have been reported to eBird (<http://ebird.org/content/ca>), which is three species less than for Jan-Apr last year. Abbreviations: CPNM = Carrizo Plain National Monument; and PPB = Point Piedras Blancas.

WATERFOWL THRU CORMORANTS: There were several interesting reports of northbound waterfowl from Point Piedras Blancas (all RAR). On 24 Apr a **SNOW GOOSE** was tucked into a rather late flock of 80 **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE**. An adult male **HARLEQUIN DUCK** passed by the point on 23 Apr and a male **BLACK SCOTER** was with a string of 65 Surf Scoters on 7 Apr. Three winter plumaged female **LONG-TAILED DUCKS** flying with Surf Scoters on 5 Apr and another female on 30 Apr surpassed the number seen this winter in SLO County. One of the rarer birds seen from the point this spring was an immature **YELLOW-BILLED LOON** that was diving/feeding on an upwelling line off PPB on 10 Apr (RAR). A single **SHORT-TAILED SHEARWATER** seen from a cruise ship in SLO waters on 21 Apr (RM) provided a rather late date for this species. Another rarity seen off PPB was an adult female **BROWN BOOBY** on 5 Apr (RAR) that provided the eighth county record. Though a common species in the county, the discovery of the first inland **DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT** rookery at Twitchell Reservoir (Alamo Creek) on 27 Apr (DC,MH) is noteworthy.

IBIS THRU ALCIDS: A flock of 65 **WHITE-FACED IBIS** along Bitterwater Road at Grant Lake on 16 Apr (TME,MLS) was the largest concentration ever noted in the county, but not too surprising given the numbers present in the Central Valley. **SWAINSON'S HAWK** numbers have increased in the Central Valley and that probably accounts for the eight reports totaling 13 birds in Apr (mob). Two pairs nested in eastern SLO County last year (the first in over 30 years) so it's worth watching any lingering into May for potential breeding. Three **BLACK-NECKED STILTS** in a small pond along Hwy 33 on 28 Apr (MLS) were spring transients. A huge movement of phalaropes off PPB 20-22 Apr (RAR), probably dominated by **RED-NECKED** with lesser number of **RED**, described as "unestimatable" nevertheless was felt to contain 1-2 million birds. **FRANKLIN'S GULLS** flew past PPB with single adults on 14 and 15 Apr and an adult and sub-adult on 28 Apr (RAR). A "chalky white" second year **GLAUCOUS GULL** hung around PPB 5-30+ Apr and a tan first-year immature was seen

there on 15 Apr (RAR). Rounding out the gulls off PPB was a **BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE** on 6 Apr (RAR). A single **BLACK SKIMMER** was at Morro Bay on 16 Apr (B&RR). **ANCIENT MURRELETS** were also on the move with a high count of 40 passing PPB on 24 Apr (RAR).

HUMMINGBIRDS THRU THRUSH: There was a concentration of hummingbirds along the coast this spring with all six of our breeding species appearing at PPB (RAR). Above average numbers of **CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRDS** continued along the coast with eight recorded 1-15 Apr including two males in Arroyo Grande on 10 Apr (CDL,MLS) and two males and a female at PPB on 14 Apr (RAR). The only **HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER** reported was one at a Santa Margarita Ranch on 27 Apr (MLS,KLP). Ten reports of 12 **COMMON RAVENS** from the coast is unprecedented; there are undocumented reports of nesting on the south coast, but so far none from the north coast. At least three migrant **BANK SWALLOWS** were at PPB on 3 Apr (RAR). A **VARIED THRUSH** at PPB on 1 Apr (RAR) was the first to be recorded there and the county's latest report this year.

SPARROWS THRU ORIOLE: Three **BREWER'S SPARROWS** were along the Lawson Spring Cutoff Road on the CPNM on 19 Apr (MLS,DGS) where they have yet to be confirmed as breeders. There were only two reports of **WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS**, one at Heritage Ranch on 4 Apr (KIK) and another in Los Osos on 26 Apr (MDS). A molting male **SUMMER TANAGER** was singing near the intersection of Pecho and Binscarth in Los Osos 5-7 Apr (JSR). Transient **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRDS** reported were a male along the southern end of Soda Lake Road, CPNM, on 13 Apr (KS) and three males along River Road near San Miguel on 24 Apr (LH). Though common along the coast during the breeding season, **HOODED ORIOLE** is rarely reported from eastern portion of the county where one was at a ranch near the southern end of Soda Lake Road, CPNM, on 13 Apr (KS). Small numbers of **SCOTT'S ORIOLE** are believed to breed in the southeastern part of the county; a singing male was found above Quail Spring, CPNM, on 19 Apr (MLS,DGS).

OBSERVERS: Thanks to the many birders who report their sightings including those cited above: Bill A. Bouton, Dave Compton, Tom M. Edell, Laird Henkel, Mark Holmgren, Kathleen I. Kent, Cheryl D. Lish, Ryan Merrill, Kaaren L. Perry, Bob and Robbie Revel, Richard A. Rowlett, Jim S. Royer, Brad K. Schram, Kathy Sharum, Maggie L. Smith, Mike D. Stiles, and Douglas G. Stinson. For seasonal status information about birds mentioned in this report, consult the Morro Coast Audubon publication "The Birds of San Luis Obispo County, California" or contact Tom Edell at (805) 995-1691 or tedell@aol.com...

-Tom Edell

Morro Coast Audubon Society Membership Application

NAME _____ EMAIL _____ PH _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

What type of membership would you like?

Morro Coast Audubon Society and National Audubon Society combined membership

(includes the Pacific Flyway newsletter and Audubon magazine)

___ \$15 Students/Seniors

___ \$20 New/Intro

Make check payable to National Audubon Society.

Morro Coast Audubon Society membership only

(includes the Pacific Flyway newsletter)

___ \$20 New or renewal

Make check payable to MCAS.

MCAS Membership Details

Please mark all that apply:

___ I'd like to receive occasional "MCAS Alert!" email notifications of news and events.

___ I would like to be contacted about volunteer opportunities.

___ I would like to receive information about the MCAS planned giving program.

For questions, contact the Membership Chair. (Contact information on page 2.)

For both membership types, mail form & check to: MCAS, PO Box 1507, Morro Bay, CA 93443

To check the status of your National Audubon Society membership or request changes call 1.800.274.4201



MORRO COAST
AUDUBON
SOCIETY

MISSION:

To promote the appreciation, conservation and restoration of ecosystems, focusing on the biological diversity of birds, other wildlife, and their habitats, particularly in San Luis Obispo County.

Morro Coast Audubon Society

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