



# The Kite Call

## Ohlone Audubon Society, Inc.

*A chapter of the National Audubon Society*

*Serving Southern & Eastern Alameda County CA*

*Our Mission: To celebrate and protect birds and their habitats in  
Southern and Eastern Alameda County*

[www.ohloneaudubon.org](http://www.ohloneaudubon.org)

### Calendar

- Aug 26 FIELD TRIP**  
Hayward Shoreline
- Sept 2 PELAGIC TRIP**  
Half Moon Bay
- Sept 5 GENERAL MEETING**  
Via Zoom
- Sept 9 FIELD TRIP**  
Middle Harbor, Oakland
- Sept 16 MEMBERSHIP  
APPRECIATION PICNIC**  
Shadow Cliffs, Pleasanton
- Sept 22 FIELD TRIP**  
Pt. Reyes
- Oct 3 GENERAL MEETING**  
Via Zoom

*Don't forget to register for  
PELAGIC TRIP SEPT 2, 2023*

*Condors in October!  
See Oct program details page 2*



#### ZOOM MEETING INSTRUCTIONS:

Welcome! You are invited  
to join a meeting: Ohlone Audubon  
Membership Meetings. After regis-  
tering, you will receive a confirma-  
tion email about joining the meeting.

[https://us06web.zoom.us/join/  
register/tZIsf-  
iupj4iGNwWOZRGoiFOxSO-  
ANIL8dNP#/registration](https://us06web.zoom.us/join/https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/tZIsf-iupj4iGNwWOZRGoiFOxSO-ANIL8dNP#/registration)

### MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION PICNIC!

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 16**  
Shadow Cliffs Reg Park, Pleasanton—Lago del Sol Picnic Area  
Field Trip 10:30AM Lunch Noon—RSVP Speaker 1PM

### Membership Meeting

#### The Magic of Central America: Costa Rica's Birds and Ecology

By Benny Isaac Jacobs-Schwartz

**Tuesday, September 5, 2023 7:30PM via ZOOM**  
(Click on link to the left—ZOOM meeting instructions)

Costa Rica has long been regarded as one of the top tropical birding destinations in the world and with good reason! This small Central American country is roughly the size of West Virginia yet is home to ~5% of the world's biodiversity, with 900+ species of birds, including 47 avian endemics to the country!

During this presentation, we'll visit a variety of ecosystems including the cloud forest, the Caribbean lowlands, the Pacific dry forest, and the ecological factors that have made Costa Rica the international birding mecca that it is!

**Benny** was born and raised in California and his innate love for nature was evident at a very young age. His interest in the natural world dates back to some of his earliest memories. His outdoor experiences grew rapidly through his participation in multi-week adventure programs during his summers in high school. During his youth, Benny was often seen perusing streams and creeks, listening to trees sway in the wind, and exploring wild open spaces. Continuing on this trajectory, Benny eventually fell in love with birds during a college study abroad program in Costa Rica in 2011.

*(continued on page 2)*

*(September Program continued)*

Since graduating from the University of California, Santa Cruz in 2013, Benny has passionately pursued work as an avian field biologist, international bird guide, land steward, and wildlife photographer. These positions have afforded him opportunities to work in a wide variety of locations including Central America, Yosemite, Trinidad & Tobago, Ecuador, and most recently coastal Alaska.



A selection of his photos can be seen in his self-published, ***A Field Guide to Birds of UC Santa Cruz***. When not poring through dense field guides, and chasing rare bird sightings, Benny (or BIJS as many call him) ardently pursues a variety of hobbies like surfing, mountain biking, rock-climbing, yoga, leading outdoor outings for kids, and facilitating photography clinics.

He hopes his love of the natural world will inspire others to conserve and preserve the open spaces around them!

## October 3, 2023 Program—via Zoom

### California Condor Recovery in Northern California: Prey-go-neesh Flies Free

After a 14-year journey, the Yurok Tribe — in partnership with Redwood National and State Parks, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and many others — has successfully brought Prey-go-neesh (California Condor) home to the Pacific Northwest. This restores a critical member of our ecological community, promotes reconnection to this amazing species, and cultural revitalization for the tribal people who have long lived in relationship with him. **Tiana Williams-Claussen**, director of the Yurok Tribe Wildlife Department, and **Chris West**, the Northern California Condor Restoration Program Manager, will provide a brief introduction to the incredible Prey-go-neesh and discuss the traditional paradigm guiding the ***Yurok Tribe's efforts*** to bring the birds home to northern California and the Pacific Northwest. They will discuss the management approach the Tribe is taking for reintegrating condor into the region, and provide an update on how the newly released population is doing, flying free in Northern California once again.



#### Tiana Williams-Claussen, Director

Tiana is a member of the Yurok Nation, from the village of Wehl-kwew', and Director of the Yurok Tribe Wildlife Department. She received her Bachelor's degree in Biochemical Sciences from Harvard University and was instrumental in the creation of the Yurok Tribe Wildlife Program and the development of many of its conservation initiatives, including the effort to reintroduce California Condors to Yurok Ancestral Territory. Tiana relies on her native upbringing and formal education to bridge the beliefs, knowledge, and practices of the Yurok with those rooted in Western science, and to work toward a cohesive, well-informed perspective on holistic ecosystem management.

#### Chris West, Senior Wildlife Biologist

Chris has been involved in California Condor conservation since 1999. He began working for the Yurok Tribe and toward condor reintroduction to the Pacific Northwest in 2008, and was integral in the creation of the Yurok Tribe Wildlife Program. As Manager of the Yurok Condor Restoration Program, Chris oversees the Yurok Tribe's efforts to recover the condor in northern California and the Pacific Northwest. Chris earned his B.A. degree in Biology from the University of California at Santa Cruz and completed his M.S. degree at Humboldt State University in Wildlife Management, where he researched reintroduced California Condor behavior. Chris' passion for wildlife and wild places led him to become a certified California Hunter Education Instructor and also drives his hobbies, which include hiking, birding, bee keeping, and all types of wild foraging, including hunting and fishing.



**Follow us on Facebook!**

updates and photos from our activities that you can share with your friends! Find us by doing a Facebook search for **Ohlone Audubon Society**

**You Are Invited!***The Sara Matthews/Helen Sowers***Membership Appreciation Day****Saturday, September 16, 2023****Field trip 10:30 am—Lunch noon—Speaker 1pm****Shadow Cliffs Regional Park, Pleasanton  
Lago del Sol Picnic Area***Field Trip led by Kathy Robertson & Bob Toleno  
Speaker Carol Garberson, “Plant This—Not That”*

This is a picnic for you, our members, and in memory of *Sara Matthews* and *Helen Sowers*. You are invited to a catered (no charge!) luncheon at **Shadow Cliffs Regional Park** on Saturday **September 16, 2023**. Come and meet other members. Bring your family. (RSVP please)

**From Carol Garberson: “Plant This—Not That”**

*My family moved to Livermore in 1956 when my father came to work at Sandia. The changes in the valley since then have been phenomenal – from open ranching country, orchards and rose growing grounds to a valley covered with development. The resulting loss of habitat has resulted in the drastic loss of wildlife including birds and butterflies. A talk by Dr. Doug Tallamy on the first Bringing Back the Natives virtual garden tour, inspired us to turn our yard into a “caterpillar garden” by planting native plants as food sources for caterpillars. The hope is that the adult butterflies will come, caterpillars will thrive and eat the plants and birds will have a good food source for their nestlings.*

*I am on the board of the Alameda County Resource Conservation District which works through many avenues to help ranchers, farmers and cities restore ponds, ranch lands, creeks and much more. We are just starting to work with other groups on a project to encourage the use of native plants in municipal landscaping. As we obtain more funding, we plan to provide educational workshops on native plants and their maintenance. The first step is a “Plant This – Not That” informational sheet to show native plants that are good alternatives to non-natives in landscape settings. It will be distributed at outreach events and will be available for other groups to distribute as well.*

**Please RSVP  
to Pat Gordon  
[pagpeg@aol.com](mailto:pagpeg@aol.com)**



*Members will have the opportunity to meet the board and discuss our field trips, education, programs, and conservation. Where would you like to go on a field trip? What programs would you like to see? What conservation items should we be working on? Help out with education for the next generation? We will have a table set up so you can give your input.*





**REGISTER NOW—SPACE IS LIMITED!!!!!!!  
SPECIAL EVENT: PELAGIC TRIP !**

**OHLONE AUDUBON PELAGIC TRIP!  
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 2, 2023**

**Join other OAS members on this co-promoted trip with  
Alvaro's Adventures**

Use this link for full details. Click on the **September 2** date.

**[https://www.alvarosadventures.com/uploads/1/3/2/1/132161724/pelagic\\_alvaro\\_-\\_info\\_sheet\\_new\\_cptn\\_pete\\_2023.pdf](https://www.alvarosadventures.com/uploads/1/3/2/1/132161724/pelagic_alvaro_-_info_sheet_new_cptn_pete_2023.pdf)**

**Book here: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8ah85y>**

Our annual pelagic trip returns! Alvaro Jaramillo has set up a special trip for Ohlone members to share. Cost is \$185 (due to fuel increases) this year and leaves from Half Moon Bay. The goal is to get offshore into waters off the continental shelf, heading west/southwest. A good time of the year to be out there!

Register NOW as space is limited! Please read the **excellent** fact sheet at the above link. When registering, please let Alvaro know you are with Ohlone (as he is rebating some of the trip fee back to Ohlone).

## *Field Trips*

**Hayward Regional Shoreline - Grant Avenue Staging Area**  
**Saturday, August 26, 8:30 - 11:30 am**  
**Leaders: Kathy Robertson & Mike Christopherson**  
**[katbirdca@aol.com](mailto:katbirdca@aol.com)**



Meet at the Grant Avenue staging area in San Lorenzo for a walk along the canal to the shoreline and south to reach Oro Loma Marsh. We expect to see shorebirds such as Red Knots, Short-Billed Dowitchers, Ruddy Turnstones, and Black-Bellied Plovers as well as gulls and terns and maybe a resident Osprey. Bring your scope if you have one.

**Directions:** From I-880 south take the Washington Avenue exit. Turn right on Washington and right on Grant Avenue. From I-880 north take the Hesperian Blvd. exit. Make a sharp left onto Hesperian and a right on Grant Avenue. In both cases continue west on Grant Avenue to the parking lot near the end of the road.

*Field Trips continue on page 5*

## Field Trips continued

### Half Moon Bay Pelagic Birding

Saturday September 2     **DETAILS** page 4

To purchase tickets, use this special link for Ohlone Audubon members:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8ah85y>

**Middle Harbor Shoreline Park, Oakland**  
**Saturday, September 9, Noon - 2:30pm**  
**Leader: Megan Jankowski**  
**[mindfuldocumentation@gmail.com](mailto:mindfuldocumentation@gmail.com)**

**Point Reyes Rare Bird Round-up**  
**Friday, September 22, 7am - 4pm**  
**Leaders: Bob Toleno & Juli Chamberlin**  
**[fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@ohloneaudubon.org)**

The site of the former Oakland Naval Supply Depot, this 38-acre park was opened to the public in 2004. Agencies, community representatives and scientists worked together to design the habitat restoration for the more than 150-acre water area of the harbor and the integration of the park with the habitat. It now acts as an ecological reserve of shallow bay and shoreline habitats for many species. Shorebirds will be the main target for the trip, with a possibility for some rarities (Baird's Sandpiper and Bar-tailed Godwit have been found at this location.) Terns, gulls, Ospreys, pelicans, and other piscivores will also be seen.

**Directions:** Take I-880 north toward Oakland to the 7th St exit toward West Grand Ave. Turn left onto 7th Street and head west to the stoplight at Middle Harbor Rd. Proceed through the intersection and take the first right turn into the MHSP parking lot.



Fall migrants, including rarities, can often be found at the birding hotspots in outer Point Reyes National Seashore. This all-day, caravan-style birding trip will visit some of the prime birding locations on the outer point, such as the fish docks, lighthouse, various ranches, and Drake's Beach, where we'll have lunch. We'll plan to finish the day at the RCA building cypresses and the Inverness Tennis Club.

We will leave from Bovine Bakery in Point Reyes Station promptly at 7:15am so we can get to the outer point as early as possible. Arrive promptly at 7 (or a little before) if you want to get coffee and delicious pastries from the bakery. Wear layers—the outer point can be very chilly! Bring lunch, liquids, sunscreen, and a full gas tank. Carpool if you can, as we will try to bring as few cars as possible to the outer point, because parking is very limited in places.

**Directions:** Take the Richmond Bridge to Hwy 101 and take Lucas Valley Rd exit and turn left. Then turn right on Nicasio Valley Rd, left on Petaluma-Point Reyes Rd, and left on Shoreline Hwy (Hwy 1). Bovine Bakery is in the town of Point Reyes Station and the address is 11315 Shoreline Hwy.

### Notes from our Treasurer, Gail Ryujin:



I am happy to report that the Ohlone Audubon Society is financially sound and had another fine year.

I hope you are enjoying our Zoom presentations. We have increased the number of scholarships to four working with AWIS, Associate Women in Science. Your membership dues and contributions for the year have covered all our expenses for the *Kite Call*, membership meetings and administration expenses. All insurances, bills and sales taxes have been paid. We have filed our Federal and State returns and have paid our fees to the California Registry of Charitable Trusts. Thank you again for your generous and continued support.



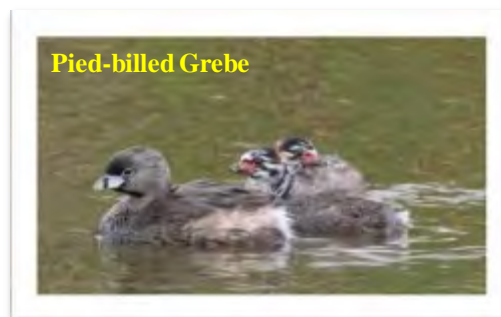
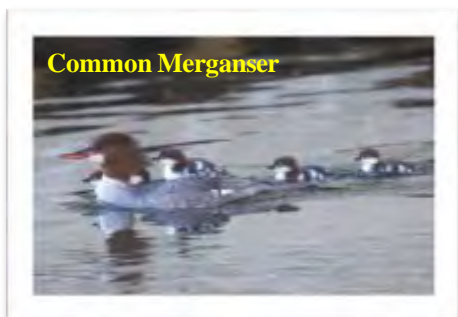
## Birding Observations

Late Summer 2023

By Vicki Robinson

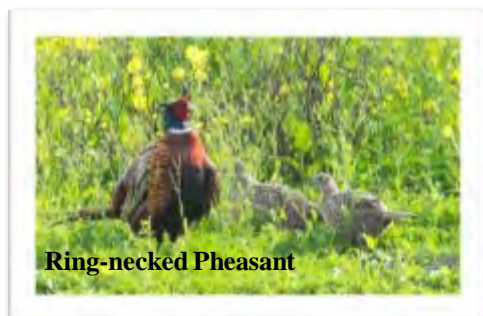
Shorebirds are starting to return to local birding shores: **Willits, Black-bellied Plovers, Short-billed and Long-billed Dowitchers, Sanderlings, Spotted Sandpipers, Least and Western Sandpipers**, and an occasional **Semipalmated Sandpiper** among the Western Sandpipers, if you look closely.

Our spring migrants have finished nesting and rearing their young. Most have moved on, but some are still tending their young. On Alameda Creek, **Common Mergansers** can be seen leading their babies in large numbers along the creek. **Pied-billed Grebes** can be seen towing their babies at Coyote Hills, and **Western Grebes** have been seen at Quarry Lakes carrying babies.



The **Blue Grosbeaks** returned to Mission Peak, for those up for an uphill hike.

**Bell's Sparrows** were again sighted at Lake Del Valle, in the hills above the camping area.



**Western Tanagers** have been seen at Gomes Park and Ardenwood.

A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was first heard by Bill Chen, our local Lake Elizabeth birder, and then many birders were able to chase the call, and some got a brief look.

**Ringed-necked Pheasants** are here all year, but much easier to see this time of year, and can be easy to spot at Coyote Hills.

A **Snow Goose** has been seen in various places along Alameda Creek.

Phalaropes have returned to various spots along the Bay, with the earliest **Red-necked Phalaropes** and then later, the **Wilson's Phalaropes**.

An ocean waterbird, a **Pigeon Guillemot**, has been seen again at Judge John Sutter Regional Park, Oakland.

The rare bird of the month was a **Costa's Hummingbird** seen at a house in Berkeley.

(All photos by V. Robinson)



## President's Corner

Summer is the doldrums for birding in our area. Even so, there have been some good birds around, including the now famous Red-headed Woodpecker over in San Francisco, Black and Arctic Terns, and quite a few American Redstarts. If you have chased any of these birds, I hope you spotted them.



I have been campaigning for one of my Nemesis Birds – the Pygmy Nuthatch. I have gone on too many birding trips where people all around me are seeing and hearing them, but not me. So I took off to the Nimitz Way in the Berkeley hills, which is one of these places. Again, zip. So I decided to try Vollmer Peak in Tilden Park, where ten had been seen the day before. Well the day I went, EBRPD decided they needed to do construction on the trail leading to the peak, so I couldn't get up there and, of course, no luck anywhere else. That's it for this campaign, but I may try again later in the year. If you have been chasing a Nemesis Bird, I hope you nailed them.

Down to serious business. Every once in a while we have turnover in our volunteers. We now have an important one. *Leslie Koenig*, who has been our webmaster and Zoom-master before I became president, asked to move on from these responsibilities. I certainly understand, and we really appreciate the great work she has done for Ohlone Audubon for so many years. We now need someone(s) to fill this gap. There are three major tasks:

- 1. Manage Ohlone's webpage**
- 2. Be our Zoom go-to person**
- 3. Post-production and posting of Zoom recordings of our membership meetings.**

These are three of the most important outreaches we have to you members. Everyone uses the website to learn about programs and field trips. Everyone loves our Zoom programs, and I get regular requests on when the recordings will be up for people who missed the meetings. Leslie has handled all of this. We can't continue this excellent level of service to our members unless folks step up to take this on. If you are at all interested and able to take on one or all of these, roles or just want to learn more, please contact me at [president@ohloneaudubon.org](mailto:president@ohloneaudubon.org), or any of our board members. You can see their email addresses on our website.

Finally the Membership Appreciation Picnic is coming up on 16 September. This is always tons of fun and will be at Shadow Cliffs again this year. Hope to see you there. Look for more details in this issue.

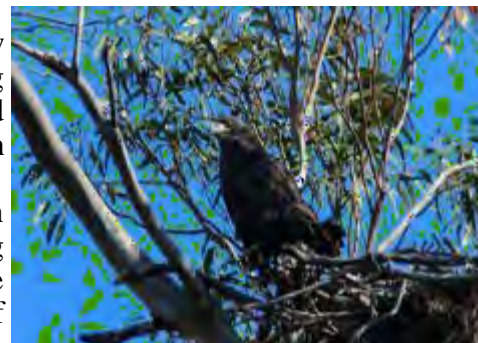
- *Bill Hoppes*

## Eaglets Take Flight at Lake Chabot



In late June, two 3-month-old Bald Eaglets flew independently (fledged) from their Lake Chabot nesting site. Fledging marks their first major step toward independence, although they will continue to rely upon their parents for food and other care for up to six weeks.

Prior to taking flight on June 28, the eaglets were seen practicing short takeoffs and landings on and around the nest, gaining strength, and improving their agility and landing ability, a practice known as "branching". This is the eighth year in a row that this pair of Bald Eagles have successfully produced offspring at Lake Chabot.



## Conservation

### Garaventa Ranch Housing Project Moving Forward

The owners of Garaventa Hill in Livermore will move forward with their plans to sell their land to a housing developer, even if the City of Livermore offers them conservation funds as an alternative to preserve the open space. The owners are in a binding contract with developer Lafferty Communities to build 47 homes on 32 acres of the 85-acre Vasco Road site. A development proposal was stopped last

year when the “Save the Hills Group” successfully sued that the project’s environmental documents were inadequate. Lafferty Communities revived the project this March, paying the city of Livermore \$56,797 to update the development’s Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and a \$16,828 application fee to get the process rolling.

*-Bill Hoppes*

### Ruby Meadow

Ruby Meadow is a riparian oak woodland and wildlife corridor located along the San Lorenzo Creek Watershed in Castro Valley, at the border of Hayward on the block of A and Ruby Streets. Like all of the areas near and at the creeks, it needs protection.

In addition to the seven community organizations (including Ohlone Audubon Society) and numerous neighbors who came together to protect the site, the Ohlone Tribes spoke at every level of the hearing process (they spoke at the CVMAC, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors hearings) asking to preserve the sacred site as undeveloped open space. Unfortunately, the government entities sided with the developer and against the local community. The community filed a CEQA lawsuit in an effort to protect Ruby Meadow and the case was initially accepted.

The community's appeal to Save Ruby Meadow was denied by the Superior Court of Alameda County in 2021. Prior to the scheduled hearing in early June of that year, the attorney for both Alameda County and the developer (Eden Housing Inc.) filed a motion to dismiss our case. The motion was granted at court on May 27, 2021. The community was unable to obtain legal representation and did not file an appeal at the state level.

It is not too late to contact local and state legislators and representatives in order to preserve, restore, and protect Ruby Meadow (<https://www.assembly.ca.gov/>) and (<https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-bonta-announces-expansion-bureau-environmental-justice>)

California Attorney General Rob Bonta  
Contact: (916) 210-6000  
agpressooffice@doj.ca.gov

Creeks are one of the most biodiverse places in the world and are essential to addressing climate change. All riparian and oak woodland areas are interconnected and need to be protected against development, because any disturbance negatively affects the plants and wildlife they support. Human survival therefore depends on these ecosystems as well. Water is the secret of life.

*-Marilina Selva*





## Bird Names - Part 3

By Bill Hoppes

Five years ago or so I wrote a couple of articles on the origin of bird names. Since then, I have been deluged with requests (two actually) for a follow up. So here goes:

### **Brandt's Cormorant (*Urile penicillatus*)**

If you head over to the coast in our area, you are likely to see this species. Its specific name, *penicillatus* is Latin for a painter's brush (pencil of hairs), and references the white plumes on its neck and back during the early breeding season. The common name honors German naturalist Johann Friedrich von Brandt, of the Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburg, who described the species from specimens collected on expeditions to the Pacific during the early 19th century.



**Brandt's Cormorant showing the "paint brush" from which it gets its specific**

### **Brewer's Blackbird**

This common blackbird was named for Thomas Mayo Brewer (1814–1880). He was an American naturalist, who specialized in oology (the study of bird's eggs). Born in Boston, he graduated from Harvard College in 1835, and from Harvard Medical School three years later. His interest in ornithology was such that he was elected a member of the Boston Society of Natural History in 1835. He abandoned his career as a doctor after a few years to concentrate on ornithology and publishing, becoming editor of the Boston Atlas in 1840. In 1849, Brewer was placed in charge of the zoological department of the Boston Society of Natural History. As an editor, he published Alexander Wilson's *Birds of America*. In 1857, Brewer completed the first of several volumes of North American Oology. However, Brewer is best known as a joint author, with Spencer Fullerton Baird and Robert Ridgway, of *A History of North American Birds* (1874), which was the first attempt since John James Audubon's (thirty years prior) to complete the study of American ornithology. Brewer was a friend of Audubon in Audubon's later life. Audubon gave Brewer's name to a duck, a blackbird, and a mole found in Martha's vineyard.



**Brewer's Duck-  
didn't last as a species**

In the case of Brewer's Duck, it eventually turned out to be merely a hybrid between Mallards and Gadwalls and lost its species status. In his last decade of his life, Brewer sparred with Elliott Coues over the fate of the House Sparrow, a recently introduced bird that was multiplying far faster than expected. While Coues and most ornithologists were in favor of killing many of them off, Brewer defended them. This ornithological event is known as "The Sparrow War". Brewer fought the battle until his death in 1880. Coues carried on the fight after Brewer's death. Coues was called a "murderer" by the founder of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and even social reformer and clergyman Henry Ward Beecher got involved, condemning Coues in language: "No raven shall ever bring him meat" (A reference to 1 Kings 17:6) "And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook."

*(continued on page10)*

*(Bird Names continued)***Anhinga**

Head to the Gulf Coast or Florida and these guys are common. The Anhinga, sometimes called snakebird, darter, American darter, or water turkey, is a water bird of the warmer parts of the western hemisphere. The word anhinga comes from a'ninga in the Brazilian Tupi language and means "devil bird" or "snake bird". The origin of the name is apparent when the bird is swimming; only the neck appears above water so the bird looks like a snake ready to strike.



**Anhinga looking like its  
"snake bird" image.**

**Dunlin**

The Dunlin is a small shorebird that is very common during migration and winter in our area. The English name is a dialect form of "dunling", first recorded in 1531. It derives from dun, "dull brown", with the suffix "-ling", meaning a person or thing with the given quality. So Dun (dull brown) lin (quality) or a dull brown bird. Fits.

**Gyr Falcon**

The Gyr Falcon was first described by Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus in 1758, in the tenth edition of his *Systema Naturae*, under its current binomial name *Falco rusticolus*. The genus name is the Late Latin term for a falcon, *Falco*, from falx, a sickle, referencing the talons of the bird. The species name is from the Latin *rusticolus*, a countryside-dweller, from rus, "country" and colere, "to dwell". So the scientific name means sickle-taloned country dweller. The first part of the bird's common name may come from Old High German gîr for "vulture", referring to its size in comparison with other falcons; or from the Latin gýrus for "circle" or "curved path", in turn from the Ancient Greek γῦρος, gûros, meaning "circle" – for its habit of circling as it searches for prey, distinct from the hunting behavior of other falcons in its range.

**MacGillivray's Warbler**

MacGillivray's Warbler was named by John James Audubon in honor of Scottish naturalist and ornithologist William MacGillivray (1796-1852). He was born in Old Aberdeen, where he studied Medicine at King's College, graduating in 1815. He then became an assistant Dissector in the Anatomy classes. In 1823, he became assistant to Robert Jameson, the Regius Professor of Natural History at the University of Edinburgh, and was curator of the museum of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh from 1831, resigning in 1841 to become Regius Professor of Natural History at Marischal College, Aberdeen. MacGillivray was a friend of Audubon and wrote a large part of Audubon's Ornithological Biographies from 1830 to 1839.

**Merlin**

**Not our guy**

The Merlin was first described and illustrated by the English naturalist Mark Catesby (as the "pigeon hawk") in his *Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands* published in 1729–1732. Based on this description, in 1758 Carl Linnaeus included the species in the tenth edition of his *Systema Naturae* and introduced the present binomial name, *Falco columbarius*. As with the Gyr Falcon, the genus *Falco* derives from falx, falcis, a sickle, referring to the claws of the bird. The species name *columbarius* is Latin for "of doves" from "columba", "dove" coming from its old common name "pigeon hawk". Merlins are found around the northern hemisphere and, as in many North American and Eurasian birds, were once considered several separate species. Eventually, it was recognized that they

were subspecies. In 1973, the AOU lumped them. Our bird became *Falco columbarius columbarius* and the most common Eurasian species *Falco columbarius aesalon*. There are nine subspecies in total, three in North America and six in Eurasia. Fortunately, our birds took the common name of the Eurasian birds and became Merlins.

The name "Merlin" is derived from the Old French esmerillon. There are related Germanic words derived through older forms such as Middle Dutch smearle, Old High German smerle and Old Icelandic smyrill. I can't find a definite meaning of these words as they relate to our birds. Definitions I have found range from "a swivel" to "a sprightly pony". If you know, let me know. Although the Merlin shares its name with the wizard, Merlin, prominent in Arthurian legendry, the bird is not named after the wizard. The wizard's name is an English version of the Welsh name "Myrddin" and is unrelated to the name of our bird. (cont'd pg 11)

*Bird Names continued***Sanderling**

The Sanderling, *Calidris alba*, is a small wading bird we can see during migration and winter in our area. The common name derives from Old English sand-yrðling meaning “sandploughman”. That seems an apt name. The genus name *Calidris* is from Ancient Greek kalidris or skalidris, a term used by Aristotle for some gray-colored water birds. The specific, *alba*, is Latin for “white”.

**Whimbrel**

Let’s end with another shorebird. The common name of the Whimbrel, *Numenius phaeopus*, is supposed to imitate the bird's call. I’ve listened to it and don’t hear the resemblance. The genus name *Numenius* is from Ancient Greek noumenios, a bird mentioned by Hesychius of Alexandria (not be confused with Hesychius of Jerusalem) who compiled a lexicon of unusual and obscure Greek words in the 5th century. Numenius is associated with curlews and the whimbrel because it appears to be derived from neos, “new” and mene “moon”, referring to these birds crescent-shaped bill. The specific epithet *phaeopus* is the Latin phaios, “dusky” and pous, “foot” so Crescent Moon Dusky Foot. Works for me.



**Whimbrel, do you see the new moon in its bill?**

**PLEASE CONSIDER AN ELECTRONIC KITE CALL!**

We are urging members to switch over to an electronically issued *Kite Call* (but you don't have to!) The benefits are a cost savings to our chapter, in both printing costs and postage. Other benefits include getting it quicker and it is **much more colorful!!!!!!** See all of these beautiful photos in color! Also, note that links are live! **GO GREEN!**

Send your request to [pagpeg@aol.com](mailto:pagpeg@aol.com)

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW?**

Look at your mailing label - it will tell you. A “RENEW?” indicates that this is your last *Kite Call*! A **cmp** means you are chapter membership paid; a **nnmp** means you are a national member only and a “JOIN LOCAL?” on your label indicates that you have joined the National Audubon Society, but alas, **not** your local **Ohlone** chapter.

**We would love to have you join us. If you receive your Kite Call electronically, look for a reminder in your email box. To renew or join us please send a \$25 check to : Pat Gordon, Membership Chair, 1922 Hillsdale Street, Hayward, CA 94541 or thru PayPal on our website [www.ohloneaudubon.org](http://www.ohloneaudubon.org)**

**To the nuthatch on the Peanut Jammer Suet**

*Nuthatch, nuthatch,  
On the “jammer”  
Get well fed  
To call with no stammer!  
So then call on with your  
“yammer”,  
“yammer, yammer”*

*Phil Gordon*



RETURN TO:  
OHLONE AUDUBON SOCIETY  
1922 HILLSDALE STREET  
HAYWARD, CA 94541

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
SAN LEANDRO, CA  
PERMIT NO. 5759



**Please renew your Ohlone membership by the date shown on your address label. For those receiving our electronic copy, an email will be sent.**  
**Direct questions about Kite Call delivery to the Membership Chair.**

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### ***Yes, I want to Join Ohlone Audubon Society!***



Please sign me up today

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Join Ohlone Audubon Society  
By mailing a \$25 check payable  
To OAS with this coupon to:

Pat Gordon  
OAS Membership  
1922 Hillside St.  
Hayward, CA 94541

I prefer to receive the Kite Call by e-mail ☐ (Recommended) Please send me e-mail updates and action alerts ☐.

Ohlone Audubon does not share our mailing list or your personal information with others.  
**National Audubon Society membership dues are separate from those of Ohlone Audubon Society.**