



Albatross

PHOEBASTRIA NIGRIPES

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Breeding Bird Atlas



Int'l Migratory Bird Day

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Santa Cruz Birds



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CONSERVATION NEWS

Barn Owl Nest Boxes

PARTING SHOT

Top: Anna's Hummer feeds her chick - Lisa Larson
Bottom: Western Bluebird - Pete Solè

EAST MEADOW ALERT


- By Lee Jaffe

UC Santa Cruz is planning on breaking ground on a 140-unit housing complex and child care center on the Great Meadow beginning Fall 2018 (yes, *this* year). The proposed project was originally slated for an existing housing site on the west campus—and is still titled “Student Housing West” despite the relocation to the East Meadow—but environmental issues at that location forced a last minute change of plans. The project was split in two last Fall, with part moved to the Great Meadow at the intersection of Hagar and Coolidge. For details: ches.ucsc.edu/studenthousingwest

While no one is questioning the need for more housing and related resources on the UCSC campus, many are questioning the choice of this site and the planning process. The East Meadow site was selected after other open locations were rejected because regulatory hurdles or lack of infrastructure placed these beyond reach within this project’s tight deadlines. Administrators have been clear that the attraction of the proposed East Meadow site is that it allows them to move ahead with fewer review hurdles or conditions: the ability to break ground this year outweighs other considerations.



*A beloved seasonal denizen,
Burrowing Owl - Michael Bolte*



However, moving the project to the East Meadow location comes with a raft of its own problems. For one, traffic at that intersection is already congested: adding 140 family student apartments and a child care center adds potential safety questions. Beyond daily traffic jams getting on and off campus and the safety of toddlers crossing the busy intersection to go to and from daycare, Coolidge and Hagar are emergency evacuation routes for the east campus. Though a traffic study has not yet been completed, administrators have admitted they are not sure it will have get permission or have the resources to address recommended changes.


Many campus and community members are also disturbed by the choice of the site because the incursion onto the Meadow signals an alarming change in the campus' commitment as a steward of the environment that was part of its founding vision. This is the first construction proposal for this part of the Meadow, which many assumed was protected from such projects. However the site was designated as "Campus Resource" in the 2005 Long Range Development Plan. Details: <https://facilities.soe.ucsc.edu/sites/default/files/28/2005LRDP-MAP.pdf>

This means that the campus can give itself permission to build there after filing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)—with a mandatory public comment period—followed by approval of the UC Regents. The draft EIR has just been released: see the links at "Draft Environmental Impact Report: Volume 1 and Volume 2" at the following site: <https://ppc.ucsc.edu/planning/EnvDoc.html>

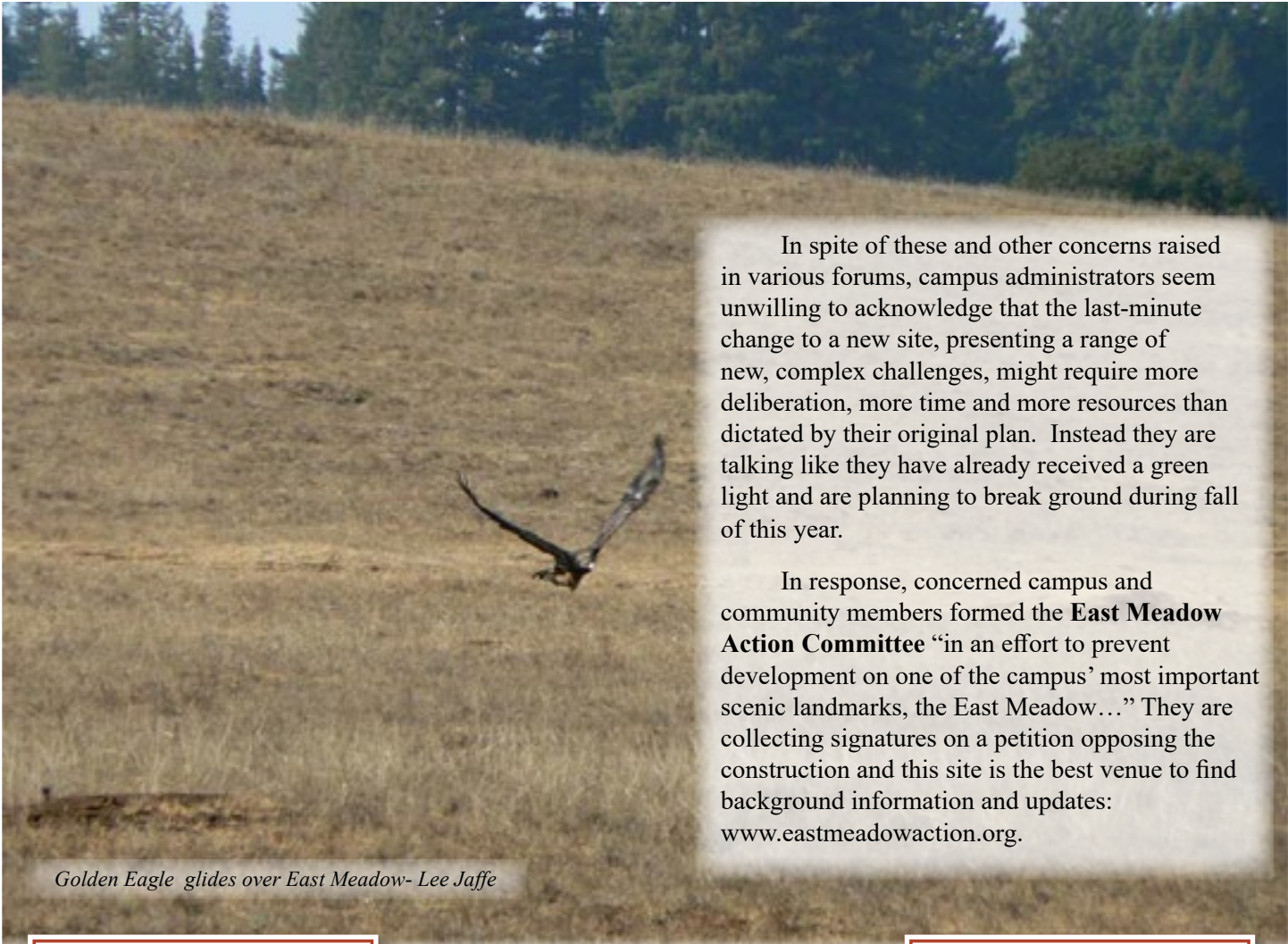
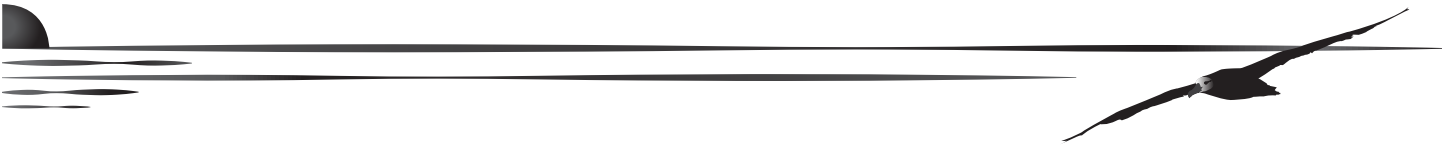
The clock has started for public comment.

Two information and public comment meetings will be held: the first on Wednesday, May 2, 2018, from 6:30-8:30 PM at the Loudon Nelson Center, 301 Center St., Santa Cruz; the second on Thursday, May 3, from 5-7 PM at the Cultural Center at Merrill College on the UC Santa Cruz main campus.... Written comments on the Draft EIR may be submitted to: Alisa Klaus, UC Santa Cruz, Physical Planning & Construction, 1156 High St , Mailstop: PPDO, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, or via email to eircomment@ucsc.edu. The public review period closes on Friday, May 11, 2018, at 5 PM.

Beyond the shock of seeing construction on the iconic Meadow, there may be more substantial environmental concerns that should be addressed. Though the site was not identified in planning documents as habitat for any protected species, it is known to be hunting grounds for a variety of raptors, including Golden Eagles, Great-Horned Owls, Red-tailed Hawks, White-tailed Kites, Northern Harriers and American Kestrels. Burrowing Owls have been spotted nearby. Even if the campus makes a case that the construction will not cause any direct environmental harm at the site itself, how can they guarantee there will be no spillover —construction debris, household litter, uncontrolled domestic pets, for instance —on the adjacent protected land once the project is completed? If the campus is not willing to build sidewalks for the safety of their own children, how much can we trust them to take measures to protect birds and other wildlife?



*Coyote - Lee Jaffe
East Meadow 4/7/18
- Lisa Larson*



In spite of these and other concerns raised in various forums, campus administrators seem unwilling to acknowledge that the last-minute change to a new site, presenting a range of new, complex challenges, might require more deliberation, more time and more resources than dictated by their original plan. Instead they are talking like they have already received a green light and are planning to break ground during fall of this year.

In response, concerned campus and community members formed the **East Meadow Action Committee** “in an effort to prevent development on one of the campus’ most important scenic landmarks, the East Meadow...” They are collecting signatures on a petition opposing the construction and this site is the best venue to find background information and updates: www.eastmeadowaction.org.

Golden Eagle glides over East Meadow- Lee Jaffe



*Left: White-tailed Kite - Michael Bolte
Center: Say's Phoebe - Lisa Larson
Right - American Kestrel - Lisa Larson*

EVENTS CALENDAR

May–August 2018

Please see SCBC website Calendar for event details! Changes to event times/ place are sometimes necessary after publication. We suggest checking our Facebook page or our website Calendar for the latest information. Time permitting, we also send out a member-wide email notification. If you haven't been receiving these, please check your spam filter & let us know at: scbirdclub@gmail.com.

DATE	LOCATION	LEADER
Sunday, May 6	Loma Prieta	Alex Rinkert
Saturday, May 12	Natural Bridges (Migratory Bird Festival)	Phil Brown
Friday, May 18	Upper Struve Slough	Bob Ramer
Saturday, May 19	Anna Jean Cummings Park	Lisa Sheridan
Thursday, May 24	SCBC Meeting 7:00 PM (<i>note new time!</i>)	Hannah Nevins
Sunday, May 27	Zayante Creek Trail, Henry Cowell State Park	Phil Brown
Sunday, June 3	Rancho del Oso	Phil Brown
Sunday, June 10	Watsonville CARE Park	Nicholas Levendosky
Saturday, July 28	SCBC & Sierra Club Joint Field Trip Wilder Ranch, Old Cove Landing Trail	Phil Brown Nicholas Levendosky

A joint SCBC / Sierra Club field trip to Elkhorn Slough is tentatively planned for July 14th. Check the website calendar in June...

Santa Cruz Bird Club programs and field trips are open to the public—non-members are welcome. People needing rides to field trip sites are advised to contact Nicholas Levendosky: nlevendosky@gmail.com. Carpooling is encouraged. Dress in layers and bring liquids. Lunches are optional on half-day trips. Heavy rain cancels.

Field trips can pose hazards. Reluctantly, we have decided we must publish and implement this policy:

The Santa Cruz Bird Club or its field trip leaders cannot be responsible for damage, injury, or loss incurred by the acts or omissions of any member or visitor during Club field trips or during commutes to or from them.

Field trip participants must release the Club from any liability for such damage, injury, or loss.

Ordinarily, field trip participants sign a waiver releasing the Club from such liability, but in the absence of such a signed waiver, participation on a Club field trip in itself implies consent to and agreement with this waiver.

"Live Long and Prosper", Black-crowned_Night Heron - Jeff Roisman





Breeding Bird Atlas Update

The atlas is rising to new heights—over 80 birders are participating in the project this year. I will make a bold prediction that this year we will not just find double, but triple the number of breeding confirmations found in 2017. Keep an eye out for a mid-season summary of our efforts on the Monterey Bay Birds listserv in June. Happy atlasing until then.

Alex Rinkert
Atlas Director



California Thrasher
- Jeff Roisman

Thanks to the many people who have graciously and generously donated to the Bird Club! Many of these have been in honor and memory of Steve Gerow. In a tribute to him, all donations are being used to support the Breeding Bird Atlas II Project. He was very supportive in getting this project up and running.

Thank you —

Susan Wall	Francis Toldi
Sara & Joe Mikles	Gloria Linder & Inman
Larry Corridon	Gallogly
Richard Griffith	In honor of Amy Patten
Elizabeth Vandyke	
David Ekdahl & Connie Vigno	

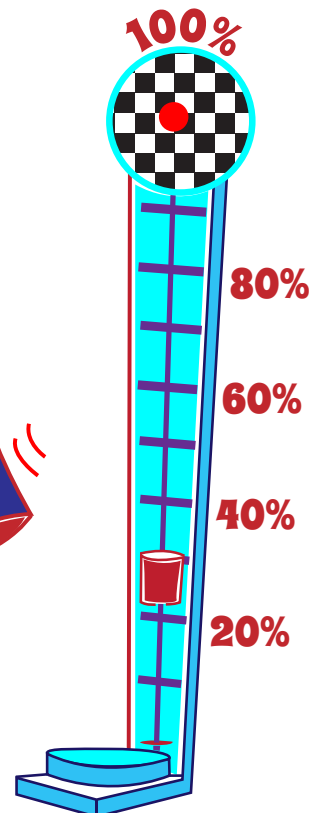
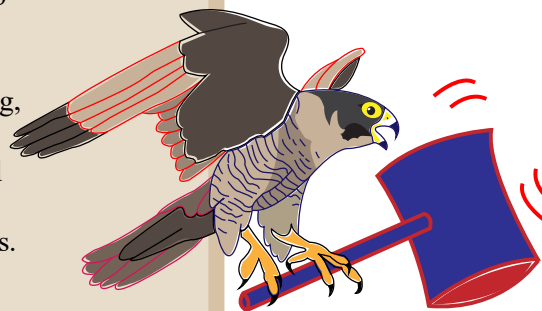
**31% of club members are participating in some form*

Goal illustration
- Lisa Larson

Santa Cruz Bird Club needs your help to complete the Breeding Bird Atlas Project!


A very generous, anonymous donor has offered to match any donations to the atlas project.

The Atlas is a multi-year, multi-phase undertaking, and it would be great if everyone in the club participated in some way. You can help by actual atlasing, or with behind-the-scenes work like research or fundraising, or by monetary donations. So far, 31% of membership has participated.



Can you help us meet our goal of 100%?

Please send check to:
Santa Cruz Bird Club Box 1304, Santa Cruz, CA 95061
Attention: Breeding Bird Atlas













On Mother's Day weekend,
Celebrate future Mothers of a different feather...
Learn about the Amazing Journeys of Migratory Birds at the
International Migratory Bird Day At Natural Bridges

On Saturday, May 12, California State Parks and Santa Cruz Bird Club invites you to fly, walk, bike or drive to the first International Migratory Bird Day at Natural Bridges State Beach. This event is **FREE** and fun for the whole family!

Early bird walks start at 8am, with everything else from **10am – 3pm**. **Call in advance to ensure a space** at the mini-workshop, the **8 or 9am** bird walks, or the bird “listens” safari.



Come learn about the hows & whys of migration, and how you can help, with:

-  A variety of guided bird walks “on the top of every hour” for different levels
-  Family bird walks led by The Bird School Project
-  Bird “listens” (bird by ear), a safari to identify birds by their calls and songs
-  Educational booths
-  Information on how to build nesting boxes
-  Ideas and plant information for creating an inviting backyard habitat
-  FREE app for identifying a bird by answering 5 questions
-  Crafts, a bird scavenger hunt, and face painting for the children
-  A mini-workshop on how to identify local birds by their call and songs
-  You can borrow binoculars if you need them for our walks, and if you have binoculars, bring them for a **free cleaning!**

In the late 1800's, people were surprised to learn that birds actually flew hundreds or thousands of miles to and from different locations. Even now, we often have no idea of how far birds travel, and how they know when and where to go on their challenging and often heroic twice-yearly journeys. These flying future mothers and their mates depend on essential stop-overs on their migratory flyways for refueling and resting. Natural Bridges, with its large variety of different habitats, is one of those vital locations on the Pacific Flyway. ***Come join the Migration, and learn how to enjoy and support the birds on their journey!***

Natural Bridges State Beach is located at the end of West Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz. Take Swift Avenue west from Highway 1, or follow West Cliff Drive north along the in-town bluffs until it ends at Natural Bridges. For more information, call the park at (831) 423-4609, or visit www.parks.ca.gov and click “N” to search for Natural Bridges State Beach.



This event is made possible by California State Parks, Santa Cruz Bird Club, California State Park Docents, and Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks

...and on the south side of town

Watsonville Wetlands Watch Presents World Migratory Bird Day

SATURDAY, MAY 12, 2018

Watsonville Wetlands Watch is hosting two fun and educational activities to celebrate The Year of the Bird including a bird walk and a beautiful photo-journal presentation.

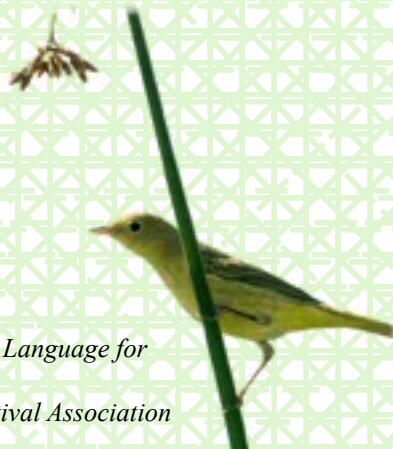
Bird Walk will take place from 10 AM to 12 noon on the paved trail system on upper Struve Slough. This tour, led by Jeff Caplan, Director of Common Language for Nature Connection, is both bi-lingual and wheelchair accessible. Other bilingual walks are also available this spring on his website. Participants will meet directly at the trail head located at the parking lot below the Body Zone in Watsonville.

Encore Presentation of Seraphina Landgrebe's "Ospreys of Harkins Slough" photo-journal presentation will take place from 2 to 3:30 PM at the Fitz WERC located at 500 Harkins Slough Road, Watsonville. Seraphina Landgrebe spent five months documenting the life of a pair of Ospreys at Harkins Slough. In this presentation, Seraphina will show the beautiful photos she captured of the Osprey's life and talk about her experience observing and photographing the Ospreys.

Admission is free 🦋 *Seating is limited*
Reserve a seat: watsonvillewetlandswatch.org



Co-sponsored by *Common Language for Nature Connection* and the *Monterey Bay Birding Festival Association*



Yellow Warbler - Lee Jaffe

SHEARWATER JOURNEYS PELAGIC TRIPS

This fall will mark the 43rd year of our pelagic trip operations on Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary! We've got a great fall line up of trips with 15 departures from Monterey. Albatross, shearwaters, storm-petrels, jaegers, Sabine's Gull, Arctic Tern and other fall migrants are waiting for you! Our "Santa Cruz County" special pelagic trip is set for Friday, September 7th. We'll spend as much time birding in Santa Cruz County on that date. We have five departures from Half Moon Bay which is also very convenient from Santa Cruz. Looking for Tufted Puffins? Try one of our wonderful trips to the Farallon Islands on August 5 or 12. We head out to the islands on a smooth catamaran, passing under the Golden Gate Bridge. Check out our new low rates on our web site. We give parking vouchers on all Monterey trips, thereby saving you an additional \$10. See: www.shearwaterjourneys.com for more information. Contact: debi@shearwaterjourneys.com. Debi is a Life Member of the Santa Cruz Bird Club.



Sabine's Gull - Beth Hamel

Monterey Seabirds

Monterey Seabirds features year-round pelagic trips for observing seabirds and marine mammals of Monterey Bay. Our experienced trip leaders and skipper, boat, and policies will all contribute to your enjoyment of a safe, comfortable and rewarding trip.

Please see our 2018 schedule. Folks can register online at: www.montereyseabirds.com. (831) 375-4658
If you have questions, contact Tim Amaral at: montereyseabirds@gmail.com.

Santa Cruz Birds

By Alex Rinkert

Including reports from January 1 to February 28, 2018

Two first county records—a Black Vulture and Gyrfalcon—were the highlights of this winter, but proved difficult for many to enjoy within Santa Cruz County as both spent most of the time in adjacent San Mateo and Monterey County. But birders were delighted by an apparent Anna's x Costa's Hummingbird hybrid, American Dippers, and a smattering of other wintering birds.

Greater White-fronted Geese were well-reported in the Pajaro Valley and on the mid-county coast (v.ob.). About 12 Snow Geese were found at various locations in the Pajaro Valley (SH, GK, ARG). The only **Ross's Geese** reported were two at Shorebirds Pond and the nearby agricultural fields from January 1-6 (BB, RR, BR, v.ob.). After an exceptional showing in fall and early winter, **Cackling Geese** were reported in more normal abundance this period. Most reports came from the Pajaro Valley, but some were on the mid-county coast. A Cackling Goose seen flying over Scotts Valley and the middle San Lorenzo Valley several times between January 1 and February 13 was rare for the mountains, and perhaps wintering locally (JS, HS, AR, PS). A flock of 61 at the confluence of Watsonville and Struve Slough on January 1 was the highest number reported (SH, EL, BM, GM), but most other flocks numbered less than ten (v.ob.).

Three **Wood Ducks** at Merk Pond on January 26 were rare at that location (RS). Three male and one female **Eurasian Wigeons** were found at various waterbodies in the Pajaro Valley (SH, EL, BM, GM, RR, BR, RW, AS, LK). The hybrid male **Eurasian x American Wigeon** continued at Pinto Lake through January 2 (HS). Nine **Blue-winged Teal** were reported, all from the Pajaro Valley or north coast except one male at Neary Lagoon on January 13 (JS). A **Canvasback** at Laguna Creek



*Black Vulture - Carole Rose
Red-breasted Merganser - Sharon Hull*

mouth was rare away from the Pajaro Valley (ST). No **Redheads** were found this period, but 14 **White-winged Scoters** scattered along the coast was a decent showing for recent years (v.ob.). Up to four **Black Scoters** were seen off the Waddell bluffs from January 15 to February 13 (AR, v.ob.). A male **Long-tailed Duck** in Soquel Creek just upstream from the mouth was enjoyed by many between January 22 and February 5 (RW, v.ob.). On February 24 a **Red-breasted Merganser** was seen on the San Lorenzo River upstream of Water Street, further than they usually venture upstream (PB et al.).

A roaming group of 12 **Wild Turkeys** was seen at Schwan Lake on February 25 (RAS), then again the following day in a backyard in Live Oak (GM), and then again on the 27th near Simpkins Swim Center (CC). There are few records of turkeys from urban areas on the mid-county coast. Six or seven **Red-necked Grebes** were reported this period (v.ob.). On January 14 an **American Bittern** was seen at Antonelli Pond, the only location they are somewhat regularly found



away from the Pajaro Valley (JS, HS, PS). Up to 6 **White-faced Ibis** were seen regularly in the Watsonville Slough system and at Pajaro Dunes (v.ob.).

On February 15, a **Black Vulture** was photographed roosting on a building at Swanton Pond before flying off to the south, providing the first record for Santa Cruz County (JS, WBT). A few days later on February 17, the vulture was seen again at Año Nuevo SP in San Mateo County (ZM), but the following day it was found back in Santa Cruz County, this time soaring over coastal Wilder Ranch SP (MB, FB). By February 22, the vulture settled at Año Nuevo SP where it stayed into early March. While at Año Nuevo the vulture was seen flying into nearby Santa Cruz County on several occasions (AR, fide NL).

Since December 8, an **Osprey** pair has been attempting to build a nest in the Santa Cruz Harbor (JM, MC). They were first seen bringing sticks to a telephone pole, then to a working sailboat mast (!), but as of early April they have not managed to establish a nest. This represents the first breeding record for mid-county and the most urban area Ospreys have attempted to nest at in the county. The pair of **Bald Eagles** in Watsonville are breeding again; the female was seen incubating on the nest used in previous years by early February (GK, v.ob.). A Bald Eagle was seen flying up the San Lorenzo River along Zayante Trail in Henry Cowell Redwoods SP on February 25 (fide PM). A **Ferruginous Hawk** continued at Swanton Pond through February 3 (MB, FB, SL, CF, v.ob.). Two other Ferruginous seen at Moore



Creek Preserve on February 16 (AR, RMG) and Wilder Ranch SP on February 24 (BT) were perhaps different individuals.

A **Common Gallinule** was at Kalkar Quarry from January 29 to February 8 (RAS). Nineteen **Ancient Murrelets** on a boat trip between Soquel Cove and Pajaro Dunes on January 1 were the only ones reported (JG, DG, et al.). Five **Black-legged Kittiwakes** were found at creek mouths on

the north coast between February 25-26 (AR, NU, ST). First-cycle **Glaucous Gulls** were at Waddell Beach on January 18 (JP) Laguna Creek Beach from February

24-25 (BT, PB). A flock of 25 **Eurasian Collared-Doves** at a favored horse stable on Lockwood Lane in Scotts Valley was a high count for the mountains, especially in winter (JS).

Just three **Burrowing Owls** were reported, two at UCSC (v.ob.) and one at Hanson Slough (HC,

GM). One of the more interesting finds this period was an apparent male **Anna's x Costa's Hummingbird** hybrid. First found visiting a flowering Grevillea at Scotts Valley High School on February 7 (JS, HS);

it was seen by many through February 19 (v.ob.). While superficially resembling a Costa's, some consistent differences in the color of the gorget and the tail length relative to the primary tip length suggest hybrid ancestry with Anna's. A **Red-naped Sapsucker** visited an Acacia grove at Ben Lomond from January 6-7 (EF, DW). On February 17 a **Pileated Woodpecker** was seen at

Porter-Sesnon Property, away from usual areas of occurrence (NL et al.). Most



Photos from top:
Long-tailed Duck - Lisa Larson,
Gyr Falcon - Blake Matheson
Costa's Hybrid - Andy Knorr

other spring records of Pileated on the mid-county coast and Pajaro Valley are from mid-March to mid-April.

A male **Merlin** showing characteristics of the subspecies *F. c. richardsonii* was photographed at Struve Slough on January 7 (CF, AG). An exciting find in nearby Monterey County was a juvenile **Gyrfalcon** at the Pajaro River mouth on February 3 (BT), which later in the morning made a flight north passing by Pajaro Dunes, providing the first record for Santa Cruz County (PF, BS). A “**Tundra**” **Peregrine Falcon** (*F. p. calidus/tundrius*) was photographed at Harkins Slough (SH, EL, BM, GM). There are only a few documented records of this subspecies in the county.

Two **Tropical Kingbirds** were at Zils Road from January 7-26 (AG, CF) and one or two continued at the lower San Lorenzo River and Neary Lagoon through February (LL, SP, KS, BR, JM). Surprisingly none were reported from the Watsonville Slough system this winter marking the first time none have been reported wintering there since 2005-2006. A **kingbird sp.** was reported on January 1 near Pinto Lake, but remained unidentified (*fide* RR). Eight **Loggerhead Shrikes** were reported from a variety of expected wintering locations (v.ob.). Up to three **Horned Larks** were found in agricultural fields near Harkins Slough, the only location in the county they regularly occur in winter (SH, EL, BM, GM, RR). Small numbers of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** persisted in the lowlands through February (v.ob.), while a **White-breasted Nuthatch** was at Soquel from January 4-31 (JE).



Rock Wren - Pete Solè

A **Rock Wren** found refuge from dogs and beachgoers among the rocks of a seawall at Hidden Beach from January 3 into early February 2 (RPM, v.ob.). A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** along the San Lorenzo River at Santa Cruz Memorial Park on January 19 was away from typical wintering locations (SH).

Gnatcatchers typically winter in coastal scrub on the north coast and parts of the south county coast, as well as in the Watsonville Slough system.

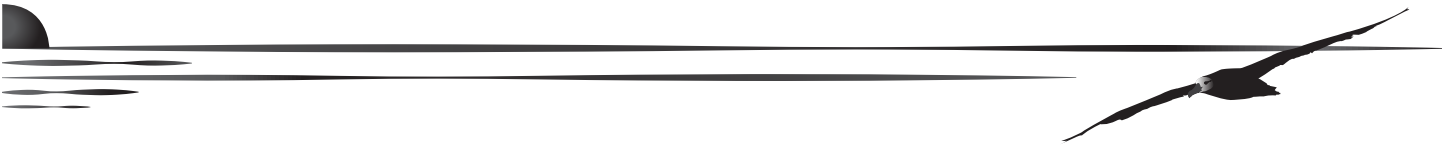
American Dippers were noted at four locations: the San Lorenzo River in downtown Boulder Creek (AR), Bear Creek (AB), the confluence of Bean and Zayante Creek (PM, RS, HS), and the San Lorenzo River in northern Henry Cowell Redwoods SP (AR, JW, NU). **American Robins** remained in low to moderate abundance and **Varied Thrushes** continued to be locally abundant in the mountains.

Bethany Curve's wintering **Black-and-white Warbler** continued through February (DF, v.ob.). A **Nashville Warbler** at Porter-Sesnon Property on February 15 was the only one found in the county this winter (GM), as was a **Yellow Warbler** on the lower San Lorenzo River on January 29 (JGa). **Palm Warblers** were reported from Watsonville Slough (NU, BR, RR) and near the Homeless Garden (AR). **Wintering Black-throated Gray Warblers** turned up at Swanton Road on January 15 (AR) and Arana Gulch on February 25 (GM).

“**Slate-colored**” **Dark-eyed Juncos** were at Sunset SB on February 15 (LJ) and near Scotts Valley on February 19 (BM), while one continued through February at a feeder in Aptos (RW). Also visiting a feeder was a **Harris's Sparrow** near Kelly Lake, present from January 31 through February (NU, RW). At least 17 **White-throated Sparrows**



White-breasted Nuthatch - John Ellis



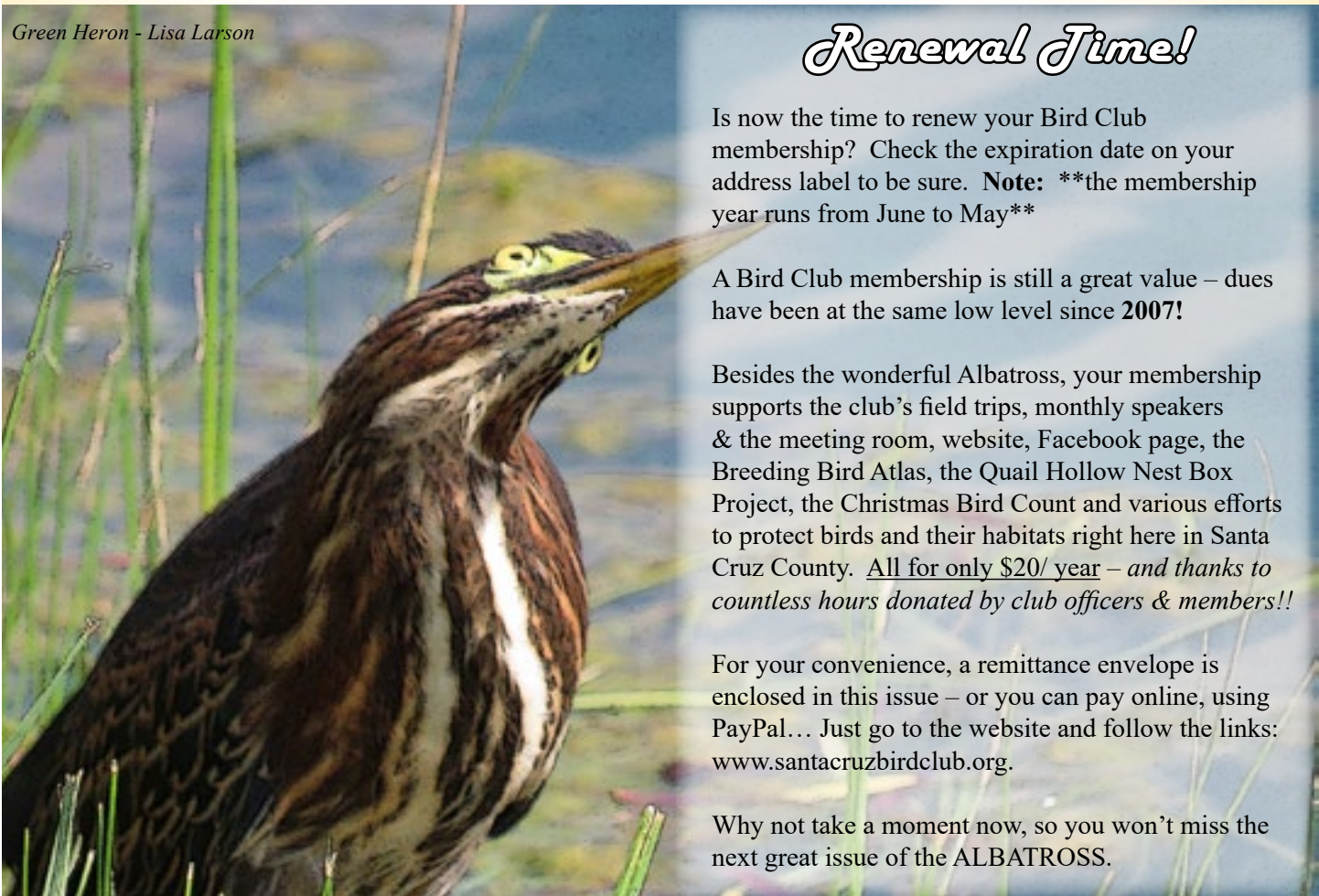
Varied Thrush - Lisa Sheridan

were reported this period (v.ob.). A **Song Sparrow** showing characteristics of the *rufina* subspecies group, most closely resembling *M. m. morphna*, was along Bean Creek near Glenwood on February 24 (AR). Four **Swamp Sparrows** were reported (DW, ST, HS, NU, RW, v.ob.). A wintering **Black-headed Grosbeak** continued at a feeder in Soquel (PS) and a **Hooded Oriole** wintering in a Watsonville neighborhood continued through February (AS).

Cited Observers: Robin Abu-Shumays, Bruce Barrett, Andrea Bechert, Francis Bolte, Mike Bolte, Phil Brown, Hugo Ceja, Chris Campton, Matthew Coale, Larry Corridon, John Ellis, Darrow Feldstein, Paul Fenwick, Eric Feuss, Craig Fosdick, Aaron Gabbe, Don Glasco, Jeff Garcia (JGa), Jennifer Green, Sharon Hull, Logan Kahle, Gary Kittleson, Lisa Larson, Earl Lebow, Nick Levendosky, Sara Lucatello, Gary Martindale, Jim Maughn, Bobbie Mayer,

Ruth McGurk, Zack Mikalonis, Jane Mio, Barbara Monahan, Jeff Poklen, Roseanne Prevost-Morgan, Bernadette Ramer, Robert Ramer, Alex Rinkert, Adam Romswinkel-Guise, Heidi Sandkuhle, Richard Sandkuhle, Pete Solé, Anne Spence, Joshua Stacy, Kitty Stein, Howard Stephenson, Brian Sullivan, Hanna Svensson, Jonah Svensson, Peter Svensson, Simon Thornhill, Bob Toleno, W. Breck Tyler, Norman Uyeda, Randy Wardle, David Wilhelm, Jim Williams, “v.ob.” means various observers. *Please enter interesting observations into eBird or report them to Alex Rinkert at arinkert12@comcast.net.*

Green Heron - Lisa Larson



Renewal Time!

Is now the time to renew your Bird Club membership? Check the expiration date on your address label to be sure. **Note:** **the membership year runs from June to May**

A Bird Club membership is still a great value – dues have been at the same low level since **2007!**

Besides the wonderful Albatross, your membership supports the club’s field trips, monthly speakers & the meeting room, website, Facebook page, the Breeding Bird Atlas, the Quail Hollow Nest Box Project, the Christmas Bird Count and various efforts to protect birds and their habitats right here in Santa Cruz County. All for only \$20/ year – and thanks to countless hours donated by club officers & members!!

For your convenience, a remittance envelope is enclosed in this issue – or you can pay online, using PayPal... Just go to the website and follow the links: www.santacruzbirdclub.org.

Why not take a moment now, so you won’t miss the next great issue of the ALBATROSS.

Larkin Valley Pastoral

- By John Hickok

We bought our house in 1977, next to the historic school house. Pear trees survived in the mule pasture back then, where opossums scavenged for fruit. We used to see more king snakes, but traffic has increased seriously on the country road. I've seen several Barn Owl deaths by cars on the county road. Nevertheless, I erected a Barn Owl nest box in the pine tree on my property.

Long-tailed weasels have been trying to move into the neighborhood. A young one was killed in our backyard. I found coyote fang marks, but the weasel was not eaten. A coyote killed our old one-eyed cat Spencer also.

Since the Trabling Fire of 2008, new white plastic fences divide the pastures, and Great Egrets have learned to hunt gophers in the grass. I enjoy the white on green. Sometimes they try to land at my koi pond. A Wild Turkey flock has grown this year, up valley. On a beautiful day, we get White-tailed Kite visitors coming up from Harkins Slough. Mix in the mating calls of the neighbors' Guineafowl, peacock, and bobwhites you might get any surprise. Even a Scottish bagpipe.

I've encouraged bird life by pruning the cotoneaster berry bushes, where forty-five Cedar Waxwings camped out for a week this winter, with their train of robins and Hermit Thrushes. In the sunny backyard I planted a row of yellow torch aloes, which bring in the Hooded Orioles every summer. Several varieties of grevillia and salvia keep the resident Anna's Hummingbirds happy, and this March 15th was the return of the coppery Allen's Hummingbird! In November my persimmon tree brought in a Fox Sparrow, a pair of Wrentits, and a Townsend's Warbler. I've also had hummingbird nests, and one year a sock nest of Bushtits.



Ring-necked Pheasant - John Hickok

In the back yard, I have given up on sunflower seeds and millet which used to bring in so many doves and California Quail. But the COSTCO seed bags also brought rats: Norway Rats, not the cute Bushy-Tailed Wood Rat. These pack rats steal all of my prunes, but never come into the house. I did have a Sharp-shinned Hawk come in the front door once, and a Sora in the laundry room.

Instead of loose seed, I put out seed cakes which bring in three different species of woodpeckers, and Pygmy Nuthatches, who love the water bath. Soon the sparrows will return to Alaska. I saw the first House Finch of the season March 17th. In the summer I have set up in my backyard a photographer's blind to watch the Black-headed Grosbeaks, Purple Finches, and Pine Siskins.

I also maintain multiple Western Bluebird boxes, for five generations now. Chestnut-backed chickadees, Oak Titmice, Bewick's Wrens, and Pacific Coast Flycatchers have all nested at my house. I put up an American Kestrel box across the valley which is now in its third year of production. Larkin Valley is not a dead spot in the county's bird network. We're trying to grow it.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Dear SCBC Members,

The SCBC sent a letter to the Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee to state our support for AB2422.

This Bill would ban first and second generation anticoagulants, both of which are responsible for wildlife deaths and “sublethal” impacts that affect the ability of wildlife to survive and thrive. Want to learn more about this topic; ready to get engaged? Contact: Santa Cruz chapter, Raptors Are The Solution (SCRATS).

- Jane Mio, Conservation Officer



Barn Owl - Gail West

BARN OWL NEST BOXES

~Humane Wildlife Control

OWLS FOR NATURAL RODENT CONTROL

Reduce and control rodent populations – mice, rats, voles, moles and gophers, by sharing your property with a family of barn owls!

Barn owls are cavity nesters and take readily to man-made nests. Each owl usually consumes 3 to 4 prey items a night. That's about 4,000 prey items, mostly rodents, per year for a pair of owls and their offspring!



Humane Wildlife Control

Box 65 Moss Landing CA 95039
www.humanecontrol.com
help@humanecontrol.com
855-548-6263

OTHER RESOURCES

The Barn Owl Trust: www.barnowltrust.org.uk
The Global Owl Project: www.globalowlproject.com

OUR DESIGN

We have extensive documentation on barn owls utilizing various nest box designs, and we've adapted ours accordingly.

ESSENTIAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER:

Design	Sealing and painting
Site selection	Installation
Assembly	Bedding
Drainage	Access and maintenance
Additional Ventilation	Porch options
Sun Shields	

MAKE SURE THERE ARE NO POISON BAIT STATIONS FOR RODENTS ON OR NEAR THE PROPERTY.

See this link for more:
www.urbancarnivores.com/poisons

Please visit us for documentation, designs, assembly instructions & pricing!

Left: Barn Owl - Lisa Sheridan

New SCBC Members Welcome!

Gilles Faggio Family	Feb 2018
Tara & Gary Neier Family	Feb 2018
Steve Hill	Mar 2018
George StClair	Mar 2018
Kathleen Putnam	Mar 2018
Barbara Ingman Family	Mar 2018
Steven Taty Family	Mar 2018
Janet Edwards Family	Mar 2018
Don Nielsen	Mar 2018
Kara Quirke	Mar 2018
Brandon & Logan Southall	Mar 2018
John Click	Mar 2018
Barbara Cushing	Mar 2018
William Cook	Mar 2018
Tammy Russell	Apr 2018

VOTING FOR CLUB OFFICERS

for the 2018 - 2019 year will be at the May 24th meeting. Nominations from the floor may also be put forward then. *=incumbent

PRESIDENT: LISA SHERIDAN*

PROGRAMS: HANNAH NEVINS*

FIELD TRIPS: NICK LEVENDOSKY*

BIRD RECORDS KEEPER: ALEX RINKERT*

TREASURER: KITTY STEIN

SECRETARY: LARRY CORRIDON

EDITOR of ALBATROSS: LISA FAY LARSON*

WEBMASTER: PHIL BROWN*

CONSERVATION: JANE MIO*

MEMBERSHIP: STEPHANIE SINGER*

HOSPITALITY: NICKIE ZAVINSKY*

HISTORIAN: ELISABETH FOSTER*

ATTENTION

Santa Cruz Bird Club Members!

Please consider the following Pros and Cons of digital vs printed edition of the Albatross:



PROS:

- Saves Trees. Green (some of our favorite birds really need trees)
- Decreases fossil fuel use and decreases traffic impacts by not needing to drive to printers or drop off at post office to be mailed.
- More flexibility with the amount and type of content that can be included.
- Less stress & less time commitment for the volunteer editor (Print version requires a lot of re-formatting to create the color online version.)
- Saves the club money that can be used instead for donations to:
 - ◆ Donations to bird projects in classroom for children
 - ◆ Fund/donate to bird science projects at UCSC
 - ◆ Donate toward educational material for county and city parks for signs or educational material about birds
 - ◆ Donate toward conservation projects in our parks or the community
 - ◆ Donate bird boxes, for use by owls or cavity nesters.

CONS:

- Will not have “in hand” printed edition to read when not on computer.
- No tangible service provided to club members.
- Does not appeal to readers who prefer the hard copy or may not be computer users.
- Communities that do not read on-line have or have access to computer have copies.

Going digital is being considered. We would like to get a reading on our the preferences of our members before any changes are made.

GOING GREEN—IT'S FOR THE BIRDS!

Spotted Sandpiper - Lias Larson

DEADLINE

FOR SUBMISSIONS
FOR **SEP/OCT** ISSUE
AUG 1, 2018



Doin' his job, Turkey Vulture - Lisa Larson

Mark your calendars!

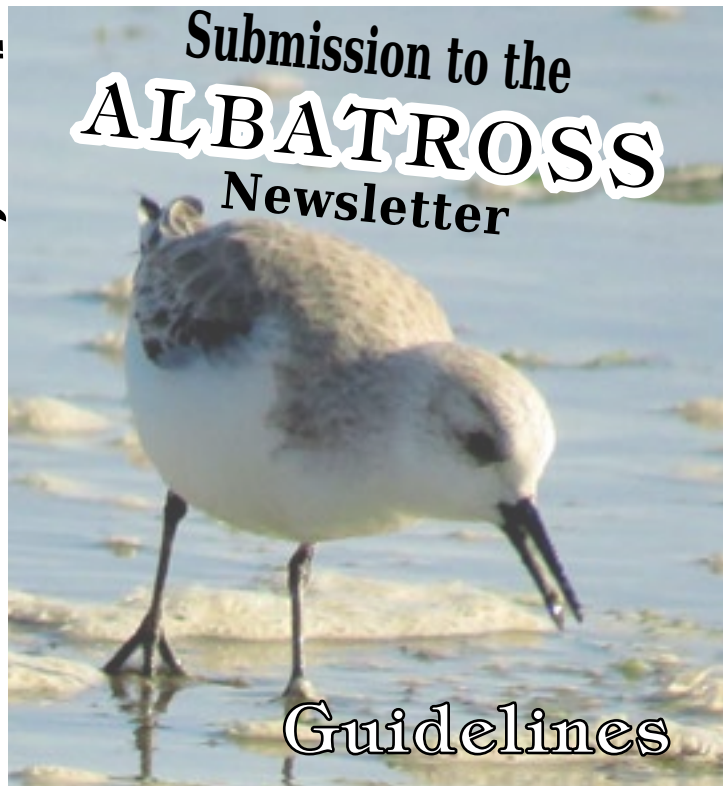
2018 Monterey Bay Birding Festival
is being held September 28 – 30th



Presenters!
Field Trips!
Workshops!
BIRDS!



Submission to the **ALBATROSS** Newsletter



Guidelines

In addition to regular features—*Events Calendar*, photos for *Santa Cruz Birds*, *Birders Notebook* and *Parting Shot*—the newsletter can include almost anything related to birding in general and to local birding in particular. Depending on space, submissions of any of the following are **needed**:

- Feature articles
- Birding event announcements
- Stories about birds, birding, or birders
- Reviews of birding literature or guides
- Conservation & outreach reports/stories
- Birding tips, descriptions of local sites
- Poetry, quotes, field sketches, artwork or photos
- Photos of BIRDS or people at our events (jpg, tif)

If you wish to submit an article, please contact the editor about it **AT LEAST 2 weeks before** the submission deadline.

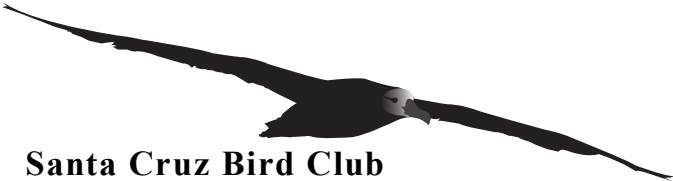
I accept plain text, Word, or PDF files. Send items by email to: scbirdclubeditor@gmail.com

~Lisa Fay Larson, Editor

Sanderling - Lisa Larson

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PARTING SHOT: "TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE"
WHITE-FACED IBIS - CATHY SUMMA WOLFE



ALBATROSS

is published five times a year
by the Santa Cruz Bird Club.
See the online version and past
issues on the SCBC website,
santacruzbirdclub.org

Join the Santa Cruz Bird Club

Enjoy walks in and around the County of Santa Cruz, discounted boat trips on Monterey Bay, summer picnics and annual dinners, meetings September through May featuring informative, illustrated talks on wild birds and related topics, and receive the bimonthly newsletter, *Albatross*. Santa Cruz Bird Club memberships run June-May.

Dues are \$20 Individual, \$25 Family, \$5 Youth, \$400 Life.

To pay with PayPal: santacruzbirdclub.org/join-or-renew-online.

Or make checks payable to Santa Cruz Bird Club and mail to:

Box 1304, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, Attention: Membership.