

37th Annual Conference of Western Field Ornithologists

The 37th Annual Conference of Western Field Ornithologists will take place at the Sheraton Sonoma County-Petaluma, 745 Baywood Drive, Petaluma, CA 94954, (707) 283-2888, www.sheraton.com/petaluma. The dates are Wednesday, September 26 to Sunday, September 30, 2012. Details on the meeting are below and online at www.westernfieldornithologists.org.

The program includes:

- **Peter Pyle**, author of the two-volume *Guide to North American Birds*, the bible for all North American banders, will open the science portion of our annual conference with a plenary session on Friday, September 28. Peter will discuss the discovery and identification of one of the newest additions to the world's bird species, Bryan's Shearwater.
- Two afternoons of science sessions, Friday, September 28 and Saturday, September 29
- Photo and sound identification challenges moderated, respectively, by **Ed Harper** and **Nathan Pieplow** and **Monica Malone**
- Six workshops to enhance your field skills and knowledge will be conducted by a group of experts in their fields. (complete descriptions at the end of this document)
 - *Raptor Identification* with **Homer Hansen** and **Allen Fish**
 - *Bird Sketching* with **Keith Hansen**
 - *Shorebird Identification* with **Al Jaramillo**
 - *Molt De-mystified* with **Peter Pyle**
 - *Identification of Pelagic Birds* with **Scott Terrill** and **Jim Danzenbaker**
 - *Tracking* with **Richard Vacha**
- Welcoming reception and art show (**Keith Hansen** and **Sophie Webb** will be showing their work) on Thursday, September 27 at the **PRBO Conservation Science Headquarters** hosted by **Western Field Ornithologists**.
- Annual Banquet and Membership Meeting. **Russ Bradley** will give our **Keynote Address: *The Farallon Islands: Four Decades of Research and Conservation***, on Saturday evening, September 29. Russ is PRBO's Farallon Program Manager, has studied seabird ecology in Nova Scotia, British Columbia, Hawaii, and California, and has spent 12 field seasons working on the Farallon Islands.
- Coordinated by WFO board member **Frances Oliver**, we are offering an impressive suite of regional field trips over five days, including four pelagic trips through **Shearwater Journeys**, a post-conference two-day trip to Humboldt County with Jon Dunn and Rob Fowler, and an Owling trip on Wednesday, September 26. Full day trips will be on Thursday, September 27 and Sunday, September 30. Morning field trips will be on Friday and Saturday, September 28

and 29. Most trips are limited to 12 participants to ensure the best possible experience. Detailed descriptions of field trips are in this document and can be viewed during the online registration process. **We recommend you review the many options before beginning your registration. A Conference Planner is available for download from the WFO web site to help you choose.**

Conference Faculty and Field Trip Leaders List:

Ken Able (Workshops Coordinator and field trips)
Larry Allen (field trips)
Carol Beardmore (field trips)
Gordon Beebe (field trips)
Murray Berner (field trips)
Russell Bradley (Keynote Speaker and field trips)
Scott Carey (field trips)
Peter Colasanti (field trips)
Chris Conard (field trips)
Renee Cormier (PRBO banding trip)
Jim Danzenbaker (Pelagic ID Workshop and field trips)
Bruce Deuel (field trips)
Bill Doyle (field trips)
Jon Dunn (field trips)
Jules Evens (field trips)
Robbie Fischer (Registration Coordinator)
Allen Fish (Raptor ID Workshop and field trips)
Rob Fowler (field trips)
Kimball Garrett (field trips)
Dan Gibson (field trips)
Bob Gill (field trips)
Homer Hansen (Raptor ID Workshop)
Keith Hansen (Bird Sketching Workshop, featured artist, and field trips)
Fred Hanson (field trips)
Ed Harper (Photo ID panel Moderator and field trips)
Lauren Harter (field trips)
Cliff Hawley (field trips)
Lisa Hug (field trips)
Al Jaramillo (Shorebird ID Workshop)
Helen Kochenderfer (field trips)
Dave Krueper (field trips)
Robin Leong (field trips)
Kurt Leuschner (Workshops Coordinator and field trip)
Monica Malone (Sound ID Challenge Moderator)
Tom McCuller (field trips)
Joe Morlan (field trips)
Frances Oliver (Field Trip Coordinator, field trips)
Vince Orsini (field trips)
Ed Pandolfino (Conference Committee Chair and field trips)

Nathan Pieplow (Sound Challenge Moderator)
Linda Pittman (field trips)
Bob Power (field trips)
Peter Pyle (Molt Workshop, Plenary Speaker, and field trips)
Dave Quady (Science Sessions, ID Challenges, field trips)
Ruth Rudesill (field trips)
Jennifer Rycenga (field trips)
Annie Schwartz (field trips)
Debi Shearwater (Pelagic Trips)
Dave Shuford (field trips)
Dan Singer (field trips)
Rich Stallcup (field trips)
John Sterling (field trips)
Ron Storey (field trips)
Brian Sullivan (field trips)
Scott Terrill (Pelagic ID Workshop and field trips)
Linda Terrill (field trips)
Richard Vacha (Tracking Workshop)
David Vander Pluym (field trips)
Debbie Van Dooremolen (Science Sessions, ID Challenges, field trips)
Catherine Waters (field trips)
Bruce Webb (field trips)
Sophie Webb (featured artist and field trips)
Jay Withgott (field trips)
Karen Zumwalt (field trips)

FIELD TRIPS

Wednesday, September 26

***Owling* with Dave Quady**

Dave will visit some of the best local owling locations to listen and look for a variety of owls. Owling is NEVER predictable, but Great Horned Owl, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Western Screech-Owl, and Spotted Owl are all possible.

Meeting time and place: **7:00PM** in the Sheraton Lobby

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Thursday, September 27

Pelagic Trip from Bodega Bay

Fall is the peak time of year for seabirds and marine mammals off the central California coast. Species that we expect to encounter include: Black-footed Albatross; Northern Fulmar; Sooty, Pink-footed, Buller's and Flesh-footed shearwaters; Red Phalarope; Pomarine and Parasitic jaegers; Common Murre; Pigeon Guillemot; Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklets. Less common, or rare species we may encounter include: Laysan and Short-tailed albatrosses; Short-tailed, Great, Streaked, Cory's and Manx shearwaters; Wilson's, Fork-tailed, Leach's, Ashy and Black storm-petrels; South Polar Skua; Long-tailed jaeger; a variety of gulls, including Mew, Thayer's, Western, Bonaparte's, Sabine's, Glaucous-winged gulls and Black-legged Kittiwake; Common and Elegant terns; Xantus's Murrelet and Tufted Puffin. Marine mammals could include any of the following: blue, fin, humpback, gray, sperm, Baird's beaked whales; orca; Northern right whale dolphin; Pacific white-sided dolphin; Risso's dolphin; harbor and Dall's porpoise. Pinnipeds include California and Steller's sea lions, northern fur seal, harbor seal and northern elephant seal. A variety of loons, grebes and shorebirds will likely be found on each trip. Every one of these pelagic trips will be operating in National Marine Sanctuary areas. We hope you will join us!

Mega-rarities found during this time of year at Bodega Bay include: Short-tailed and "Shy" albatrosses; Cook's, Hawaiian, Great-winged (Gray-faced), Parkinson's and White-chinned petrels.

New Sea Angler is a very comfortable 65 foot sportfishing vessel which can hold 50 birders. She is parked next to Miss Anita. Both vessels will remain in radio contact with each other throughout the day.

All of these boat captains have years, and some decades, of experience with Shearwater Journeys. Please check in with Debi Shearwater prior to boarding the vessel. Please dress

very warmly, including waterproof outer layers, hats and gloves. It can be surprisingly very cold. NO open toed shoes allowed, even with socks. (No Teva-type footwear).

Please bring lunch and drinks for the day. Bathrooms are available on all vessels. For the comfort of all, trips are non-smoking. For the enjoyment of all, please turn off your cell phone. Bring waterproof coverings for camera gear. Seasick pills are highly recommended. For safety reasons, pregnant women cannot join these trips. Boarding ramps are not accessible for wheelchairs. Trips are not suitable for children under 15 years of age.

Leaders: Peter Pyle, Lisa Hug, Scott & Linda Terrill, Jim Danzenbaker, and Debi Shearwater

Departure Time (for carpools from Sheraton): promptly at **5:30AM** from Sheraton Lobby
Departure Time (at the dock in Bodega Bay): **6:30AM** at Port O' Bodega Eastshore Rd, on board the NEW SEA ANGLER

Parking: Free

Return Time: Approximately 4:30PM at the dock, but could be later. Allow for delays of several hours in returning to the dock if unusual wildlife is encountered.

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$175

FUEL SURCHARGE: These rates were set on January 25, 2012. If fuel increases require a fuel surcharge, this will be collected at the dockside. Past fuel surcharges have ranged from \$0-10 per person. Expect a range of \$5-20 per person.

REFUNDS: All trips are discounted by Shearwater Journeys and NON-REFUNDABLE FOR ANY REASON. If a trip is canceled due to weather, WFO will issue a refund, less a \$10 per reservation administration fee. No refunds can be made for "no-shows", or for folks who fail to make it to the boat at the scheduled departure time.

MAP FOR BODEGA BAY BOATS:

<http://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=port+o+bodega+ca+map&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

Miss Anita and the New Sea Angler are parked right next to each other.

Pelagic Trip from Bodega Bay EXCLUSIVELY for Photographers (only SIX spots available)

If you have tried photographing pelagic birds on other trips and found it difficult with the railing lined with folks all trying to get a good look, or have been frustrated with the trip moved on before you had the chance to get the ideal shot, then THIS is a unique opportunity. Only six passengers will be on this boat and the entire focus will be on photographing pelagic birds.

Fall is the peak time of year for seabirds and marine mammals off the central California coast. Species that we expect to encounter include: Black-footed Albatross; Northern

Fulmar; Sooty, Pink-footed, Buller's and Flesh-footed shearwaters; Red Phalarope; Pomarine and Parasitic jaegers; Common Murre; Pigeon Guillemot; Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklets. Less common, or rare species we may encounter include: Laysan and Short-tailed albatrosses; Short-tailed, Great, Streaked, Cory's and Manx shearwaters; Wilson's, Fork-tailed, Leach's, Ashy and Black storm-petrels; South Polar Skua; Long-tailed jaeger; a variety of gulls, including Mew, Thayer's, Western, Bonaparte's, Sabine's, Glaucous-winged gulls and Black-legged Kittiwake; Common and Elegant terns; Xantus's Murrelet and Tufted Puffin. Marine mammals could include any of the following: blue, fin, humpback, gray, sperm, Baird's beaked whales; orca; Northern right whale dolphin; Pacific white-sided dolphin; Risso's dolphin; harbor and Dall's porpoise. Pinnipeds include California and Steller's sea lions, Northern fur seal, harbor seal and Northern elephant seal. A variety of loons, grebes and shorebirds will likely be found on each trip. Every one of these pelagic trips will be operating in National Marine Sanctuary areas. We hope you will join us!

Mega-rarities found during this time of year at Bodega Bay include: Short-tailed and "Shy" albatrosses; Cook's, Hawaiian, Great-winged (Gray-faced), Parkinson's and White-chinned Petrels.

Miss Anita is a very stable, 34 foot King Catamaran. This is a unique opportunity for photographers to get those shots they desire. The captain will maintain radio contact with the captain of the New Sea Angler, giving a distinct advantage for both birding groups.

All of these boat captains have years, and some decades, of experience with Shearwater Journeys. Please check in with Debi Shearwater prior to boarding the vessel. Please dress very warmly, including waterproof outer layers, hats and gloves. It can be surprisingly very cold. NO open toed shoes allowed, even with socks. (No Teva-type footwear).

Please bring lunch and drinks for the day. Bathrooms are available on all vessels. For the comfort of all, trips are non-smoking. For the enjoyment of all, please turn off your cell phone. Bring waterproof coverings for camera gear. Seasick pills are highly recommended. For safety reasons, pregnant women cannot join these trips. Boarding ramps are not accessible for wheelchairs. Trips are not suitable for children under 15 years of age.

Leaders: Vince Orsini, longtime Shearwater Journeys' associate. Vince knows the seabirds and has worked with photographers on past trips

Departure Time (for carpools from Sheraton): promptly at **5:30AM** from Sheraton Lobby

Departure Time (at the dock in Bodega Bay): **6:30AM** at Port O' Bodega Eastshore Rd, on board the MISS ANITA

Parking: Free

Return Time: Approximately 4:30PM at the dock, but could be later. Allow for delays of several hours in returning to the dock if unusual wildlife is encountered.

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$230

FUEL SURCHARGE: These rates were set on January 25, 2012. If fuel increases require a fuel surcharge, this will be collected at the dockside. Past fuel surcharges have ranged from \$0-10 per person. Expect a range of \$5-20 per person.

REFUNDS: All trips are discounted by Shearwater Journeys and NON-REFUNDABLE FOR ANY REASON. If a trip is canceled due to weather, WFO will issue a refund, less a \$10 per reservation administration fee. No refunds can be made for “no-shows”, or for folks who fail to make it to the boat at the scheduled departure time.

MAP FOR BODEGA BAY BOATS:

<http://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=port+o+bodega+ca+map&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

Miss Anita and the New Sea Angler are parked right next to each other.

***Outer Point Reyes* with Rich Stallcup**

Outer Pt. Reyes is a great place to bird, and late September is an ideal time to encounter both regular migrant songbirds and the many rare species for which this area is famous. West Coast specialties such as Wrentit, Tricolored Blackbird, and "Nuttall's" White-crowned Sparrows will be around. Rich will provide commentary on the ornithological and birding history of this amazing place, define the O.P., tell some stories from the “good ole days” and define the beginnings of PRBO.

No matter what the inland weather is, it can be cold and windy here so dress accordingly.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$20

***Pt. Reyes: Abbott's Lagoon* with Fred Hanson & Jay Withgott**

Flanking the Pacific Ocean and Point Reyes' Great Beach, Abbott's Lagoon attracts a host of migrant, roosting, and wintering waterbirds and threatened breeding species such as the Snowy Plover. While the upper lagoon consists mainly of fresh water, the lower lagoon tends to be brackish as a result of winter storm waves and high tides that breach the sandbar at the mouth of the lagoon. There is a one-mile trail that leads from the parking area to the lagoon. On this outing Fred will share knowledge of the numerous species drawn to a mix of coastal scrub, grassland, riparian, coastal swale, freshwater pond, brackish lagoon, dune, sandy beach, and open ocean habitats. Rarities seen here include: Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Northern Waterthrush, Snow Bunting, Red-throated Pipit, Lapland Longspurs. Moderate walking including off trail.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling

Bodega and Bodega Bay with **Ron Storey & Linda Pittman & Karen Zumwalt**

Bodega Bay is probably the hottest birding spot in Sonoma County. There are marshes, subtidal channels, rock jetties (where Surfbirds, turnstones, and sometimes Wandering Tattler might be found), and tidal mudflats which allow for excellent bird watching sites. Large offshore rocks in the bay are inhabited by Brown Pelicans, Pigeon Guillemots, and all 3 cormorants. Join Ron & Tim for a full day as we scour such renowned locations as Doran Beach, Bodega Harbor, Porto Bodega, Spud Point Marina and the Bodega Head for shorebirds, waterfowl, and other species.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling (there is a \$6 per vehicle fee for Doran Park)

Cost: \$20

Bodega Bay and Migrant Hotspots with **Peter Colasanti & Larry Allen**

Join Peter & Larry as they explore Bodega Bay, one of Sonoma County's richest bird areas. Start the day off while the sun is in the east and the winds are down with a sea watch at Bodega Head. Since it is late September, why not spend some time in Owl Canyon, looking for migrants? Then finish off the day by birding around the bay stopping off at a few spots such as Spud Point, Westside Park, Rail Ponds, Porto Bodega, and maybe Doran Park. These marshes, subtidal channels, and tidal mudflats allow for excellent bird watching sites with a wide variety of shorebirds and waterfowl. Large offshore rocks in the bay are inhabited by Brown Pelicans, Pigeon Guillemots, and all 3 cormorants. Rock jetties in the bay can have both turnstones, Surfbirds, and maybe even a Wandering Tattler. This trip is sure to net you many birds!

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling (there is a \$6 per vehicle fee for Doran Park)

Cost: \$20

Pt. Reyes: Limantour Beach and Estero with **Cliff Hawley**

This dynamic estuary is a critical feeding area for many shorebird species including Black-bellied Plovers, Willets, Marbled Godwits, Western and Least sandpipers, and dowitchers. In Drakes Bay three species of loons, White-winged Scoter, Red-necked Grebe, and Pigeon Guillemot are possible. Beautiful Heermann's Gulls should also be around. This three-mile walk through dunes, by the edge of marsh, and along the beach

will focus on the identification and behavior of a variety of shorebirds, ducks, loons, grebes, and raptors.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$20

Napa County Birding and Wine Tasting: the Luxury Big Day with **John Sterling & Bruce Deuel**

Napa County is known for its birds, gourmet food and its wine. So, have you ever thought about a day when you can enjoy all three? Then this is the trip for you!

We will start birding at hotspots around St. Helena in the heart of the world famous Napa Valley. We will be checking a few ponds followed by a hike in the forest at Bothe State Park. Afterwards we will head to the Cuvaison Winery between St. Helena and Calistoga for an early picnic lunch, catered by Holly Peterson, renowned chef of Wine and Food Dynamics and an instructor at the Culinary Institute of America. Lunch will include poached salmon, blueberry tart, multigrain salad and other items. The food will be paired with wine selected by Holly. After lunch, we will bird our way south and end the day in the Napa Marshes for shorebirds, rails and other waterbirds. We will attempt to see as many species as possible in Napa County, with the added treat of gourmet food and wine.

Departure Time: **6:30AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling (each car will need a designated non-drinking driver)

Cost: \$78, includes catered lunch and wine

PRBO Bird Banding with **Renee Cormier & PRBO Staff**

Get up close and personal with the many resident and migratory songbirds that are captured in mist nests at the PRBO's Palomarin Field Station in Bolinas. PRBO interns and staff will be banding birds, measuring and weighing them, explaining the process to visitors, and answering questions. Learn how bird banding is done and how data obtained contributes to conservation.

Departure Time: **6:30AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 4:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: Free

Hawk Hill/GGRO and Southern Marin County with **Allen Fish & Bob Power & Bruce Webb** (Swarovski Field Tech)

Hawk Hill is the western states' premiere raptor migration site located right above the Golden Gate and is just a 30 minute drive south of Petaluma. Hawk Hill is a 900-foot grassland and scrub habitat hilltop just ½ mile from the Golden Gate with an unrivalled, spectacular 360-degree view of the central San Francisco Bay and coastline.

Nineteen species of diurnal birds of prey are possible during an average fall migration, including California specialties like the White-tailed Kite and the California Red-shouldered Hawk. Other highlight species could include Merlin, Ferruginous Hawk, and Broad-winged Hawk. The field trip will be during the time for a potential peak-migration day, which could mean more than an average of 100 raptors per hour. Most common raptors species are Turkey Vulture, Cooper's, Sharp-shinned, and Red-tailed hawks. The two smaller accipiters can be abundant in late September in both juvenile and adult plumages, making Hawk Hill a superb spot to practice this difficult genus.

Non-raptor migrants for Hawk Hill may include Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Band-tailed Pigeon, three species of swift and seven swallows. Local resident birds include Wrentit, Bewick's Wren, Western Scrub-Jay, and Anna's Hummingbird.

Golden Gate Raptor Observatory volunteers have maintained a daily fall migration count here since 1982, as well as a banding program on nearby hills. Trip participants will have a chance to witness the hawk-counters in action. If banding is successful that day, at 1:00 PM, a volunteer bander will bring a live hawk to Hawk Hill for close-viewing by the public. Bruce will bring the latest Swarovski optical equipment for you to try out.

For this field trip you will need to bring your own lunch and drinks. Other items should include layered clothing for unpredictable weather, sunscreen, hat, binoculars, camera, and field guide. Portable bathrooms are available on Hawk Hill. This field trip will be co-sponsored by the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory. See www.ggro.org for previous year counts and activities.

Departure Time: **9:30AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 2:30PM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$20

Friday, September 28

A-Railing We Will Go with **Robin Leong**

Join Robin Leong for an early morning search for the voices of these elusive and rare residents of American Canyon Wetlands. Possible candidates are Sora and Virginia, Black and California Clapper rails.

We will visit a newly-opened wetland which is part of a larger complex of restored former salt ponds in the California Department of Fish & Game's Napa Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area. This area, which is also part of the San Francisco Estuary, is one of the most important staging and wintering habitat complexes in the Pacific Flyway. More than 30 species of waterfowl occur in the bay including approximately 50% of the entire Pacific Flyway wintering population of diving ducks, notably one of the largest concentrations of wintering Canvasbacks in North America, and the majority of the Pacific Flyway population of wintering Greater and Lesser scaup. Other species including Marbled Godwit, Long-billed Curlew, and the endangered Least Tern will find new nesting and foraging habitats in the tidal wetland. NOTE: Please bring walkie-talkies if you have them.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Shorebirding with **Lisa Hug**

Join Lisa Hug in a field trip to study shorebirds at Bodega Bay. Bodega Bay is one of the finest places on the West Coast to view shorebirds. We will not only identify species but also look at the plumages closely to age the birds. Learn about the timing of the different ages of shorebird migration and learn to recognize whether a Western Sandpiper is an adult breeding plumage, nonbreeding plumage, or juvenile plumage. Possible shorebirds to be expected are Surf-birds, Black Turnstones, Marbled Godwits, Whimbrels, Short-billed Dowitchers, and possibly Snowy Plovers and Red Knots, among many others. Lisa Hug is a shorebird connoisseur and the author of the visual educational CD *Feather-watching: An Interactive CD Guide for Studying Birds in the Field*. Bring layered clothing, old or waterproof shoes, drinking water, field guide, and spotting scope if available.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Ragle Ranch Regional Park with **Scott Carey & Dave Shuford**

Join Scott Carey & Dave Shuford in a leisurely morning of birding at Ragle Ranch Regional Park in Sebastopol. With a variety of habitats that include Atascadero Creek, a seasonal wetlands overgrown with blackberry vines, several redwood groves, and an old gnarled fruit-bearing pear orchard, a wide variety of birds can be found here at all times of the year. And since it is late September other migrants are sure to be found. Noted

birds found here include: Lewis' Woodpecker, Least Flycatcher, Band-tailed Pigeon, and Magnolia Warbler.

Departure Time: **6:30AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

***Spring Lake Park* with Ruth Rudesill**

Spring Lake, located in eastern Santa Rosa (Sonoma County), is known for its excellent bird diversity! Whether this is due to the variety of tree and plant species, or the draw of the lake, Spring Lake surveys routinely tally over 60 species. During the fall, many local birders regularly check the vegetation for post breeders, unusual migrants and vagrants. Ruth, who is the North American Birds subregional editor for Sonoma County, knows this area as well as anyone. So come join her for a great morning of birding.

Departure Time: **6:30AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

***Petaluma Wetlands* with Ron Storey & Jay Withgott**

For those of you that enjoy walking this is the trip for you! Start off the day at Shollenberger Park looking for shorebirds, waterfowl, rails, and any other odd bird that may be around. Shollenberger Park is located in southeastern Petaluma and it is a well-protected wetland bordered by Adobe Creek and the Petaluma River. This park has a variety of diked ponds, ample marsh vegetation and open fields, level paths - some paved, some gravel, and a few benches for viewing the marshes. A loop trail extends 2 miles around the main dike. This park has hosted some great shorebirds over time including: Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, American & Pacific golden-plovers to name a few.

Continuing south along the connector trail finds us at Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility (ECWRF) which opened to the public in July 2009. The area consists of seasonal wetlands, 30 acres of polishing wetlands, uplands and over 100 acres of brackish tidal wetlands which are connected to the Petaluma River at high tides. Some upland acreage is set aside for leased production of hay crops which provide cover and food for wildlife including the endangered California Clapper Rails that nest in the area. Total walking will be ~4 miles.

Departure Time: **6:45AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling
Cost: \$10

Hudeman Slough Wetlands with **Jim Danzenbaker & Cliff Hawley**

NOTE: CHANGED TO NAPA STP DUE TO LACK OF WATER AT HUDEMAN SLOUGH

Due to the lack of water at Hudeman Slough and only a few birds being attracted to this area, we have switched this field trip to the Napa Waste Treatment Plant (AKA Napa Sewage Ponds). What better place than to go to a Sewage ponds during the fall migration! Possibilities can be Sabine's Gull, Common Tern, or? The ponds currently attract large flocks of phalaropes, nesting ducks and foraging terns. The surrounding grassland and tidal marsh has Swainson's Hawk, Golden Eagle and kite crèches. This is mostly an auto tour around the perimeter of the 500 acres of ponds. No shade, restrooms at the office.

There is a possibility of a side trip to the N. Kelly Road hawk watch if time permits.

Departure Time: **7:00 AM** **NOTE CHANGE IN DEPARTURE TIME**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Santa Rosa Creek – Willowside Road with **Bill Doyle & Gordon Beebe**

The Santa Rosa Creek, where it intersects with Willowside Road in western Santa Rosa offers a wide variety of birds at all times of the year. Unpaved, level paths along the southern edge of the creek are open to public foot traffic both west and east of Willowside Road. There is riparian growth on both sides of the path, with frequent views into the channelized stream bed. As you walk west, the graveled path turns to dirt about 1/4 mile in. Soon there is more open area to the south, with views over the fields. About 1/2 mile from Willowside Road the formal path ends at "Delta Pond", a Santa Rosa waste-water storage pond which is normally closed to the public, but since this is Bill & Helen's area for the Sonoma BBA they have access.

Departure Time: **6:45AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Shollenberger Park with **David Vander Pluym & Lauren Harter**

In just a few years this wetland has become a favorite of many birders. And with good reason, as the last tidal marsh north of San Francisco Bay it is a critically important habitat for large numbers of migrant shorebirds and waterfowl. Nesting avocets and stilts share the area with godwits, peeps and plovers, often including Pacific Golden-Plover. This can be an especially good spot for marsh species such as Virginia Rail and American Bittern. Dabbling ducks here include wigeon, pintail, Gadwall and often Blue-winged Teal. (**This trip is for those who want a more leisurely walk than the longer Petaluma Wetlands Trip.**)

Departure Time: **7:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Digiscoping with **Joe Morlan**

Digiscoping is the art of using a point-and-shoot digital camera to take bird pictures through a spotting scope. This workshop will emphasize simple techniques to improve digiscoping results during a typical birding excursion.

While we photograph some of the interesting species in the area, Joe will try to help solve technical problems and improve your techniques. We will also work on successfully hand-holding the camera to the scope. Not every camera will work effectively with every scope so we will experiment with different camera/scope combinations.

Joe is one of the nation's leading birders and has served on the CA Bird Records Committee for many years. Joe teaches very popular birding classes at the City College of San Francisco.

Departure Time: **7:30AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Saturday, September 29

Bodega Bay Shorebirding with **Joe Morlan**

Bodega Bay is one of the finest places on the West Coast to view shorebirds. We will not only identify species but also look at the plumages closely to age the birds. Possible shorebirds to be expected are Surfbirds, Black Turnstones, Marbled Godwits, Whimbrels, Short-billed Dowitchers. Snowy Plovers and Red Knots are possible as are many others.

We may also search for vagrant landbirds if the opportunity arises.

Bring layered clothing, old or waterproof shoes, drinking water, field guide, and spotting scope if available.

Joe is one of the nation's leading birders and has served on the CA Bird Records Committee for many years. Joe teaches very popular birding classes at the City College of San Francisco.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

***Giacomini Wetlands* with Jules Evens & Dave Shuford**

Join Jules & Dave for a walking tour of the newly restored Giacomini Wetlands at the south end of Tomales Bay. This recovering salt marsh is the result of a 10-year project that culminated in October 2008 with the breaching of a series of dikes and levees that had blocked the flow of saltwater to the former Giacomini Dairy. Jules will describe the restoration in detail and point out the fascinating ecological changes underway. Learn about marsh ecology, restoration, and wetlands birds. Jules & Dave will focus on identification and behavior of the diverse resident and migratory birds here. This area is good for raptors, shorebirds, rails, and maybe a migrant or two. Easy walking.

Departure Time: **6:15AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

***American Canyon Wetlands Baylands Trail* with Murray Berner & Cliff Hawley**

We will explore about three miles of the eight miles of newly created trails, part of the greater San Francisco Bay Trail system, which provide access to tidal marsh and mudflats, freshwater ponds, grassland, and the Napa River at its widest point. The 1100 acre Green Island salt evaporation ponds were restored to tidal flow in late 2010. Between the tides, ten to twenty thousand waders and waterfowl inhabit these mudflats and islets. Raptors are common. Native thickets and groves of fennel attract migrant songbirds.

Departure Time: **6:30AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Las Gallinas Ponds with **Ron Storey & David Vander Pluym & Lauren Harter**
Birders often gravitate to wastewater treatment ponds because they know good birds can be found there. Subsequently Las Gallinas is a favorite destination of Marin County birders for wading, shore, and open water birds. The 20-acre freshwater marsh/pond at Las Gallinas has water up to 6 feet deep in the center with several small islands for nesting and roosting waterfowl. These ponds are surrounded by vegetation, which is home to many chaparral and grasslands birds. On the east there are open views of the bay marsh which extends all the way to Mount Diablo. And just to the south of the ponds is Mount Tamalpais. Join trip leaders in an easy walk around the ponds. If you are lucky you might be able to spot or at least hear one of the many rails there; Sora or Virginia, California Clapper, or Black rails.

Departure Time: **6:30AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Spring Lake Park with **Tom McCuller**

Spring Lake, located in eastern Santa Rosa (Sonoma County), is known for its excellent bird diversity! Whether this is due to the variety of tree and plant species, or the draw of the lake, Spring Lake surveys routinely tally over 60 species. During the fall, many local birders regularly check the vegetation for post breeders, unusual migrants and vagrants. Tom, a weekday field trip leader for Madrone Audubon, has worked out a route around the lake that averages the most birds in the shortest space of time. So come join him for a great morning of birding.

Departure Time: **6:30AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Hudeman Slough Wetlands with **Frances Oliver & Jay Withgott**

NOTE: CHANGED TO NAPA STP DUE TO LACK OF WATER AT HUDEMAN SLOUGH

Due to the lack of water at Hudeman Slough and only a few birds being attracted to this area, we have switched this field trip to the Napa Waste Treatment Plant (AKA Napa

Sewage Ponds). What better place than to go to a Sewage ponds during the fall migration! Possibilities can be Sabine's Gull, Common Tern, or? The ponds currently attract large flocks of phalaropes, nesting ducks and foraging terns. The surrounding grassland and tidal marsh has Swainson's Hawk, Golden Eagle and kite crèches. This is mostly an auto tour around the perimeter of the 500 acres of ponds. No shade, restrooms at the office.

There is a possibility of a side trip to the N. Kelly Road hawk watch if time permits.

Departure Time: **7:00 AM** **NOTE CHANGE IN DEPARTURE TIME**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Santa Rosa Creek – Willowside Road with **Bill Doyle & Helen Kochenderfer**

The Santa Rosa Creek, where it intersects with Willowside Road in western Santa Rosa offers a wide variety of birds at all times of the year. Unpaved, level paths along the southern edge of the creek are open to public foot traffic both west and east of Willowside Road. There is riparian growth on both sides of the path, with frequent views into the channelized stream bed. As you walk west, the graveled path turns to dirt about 1/4 mile in. Soon there is more open area to the south, with views over the fields. About 1/2 mile from Willowside Road the formal path ends at "Delta Pond", a Santa Rosa waste-water storage pond which is normally closed to the public, but since this is Bill & Helen's area for the Sonoma BBA they have access.

Departure Time: **6:45AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$10

Shollenberger Park with **Peter Colasanti & Ed Harper**

In just a few years this wetland has become a favorite of many birders. And with good reason, as the last tidal marsh north of San Francisco Bay it is a critically important habitat for large numbers of migrant shorebirds and waterfowl. Nesting avocets and stilts share the area with godwits, peeps and plovers, often including Pacific Golden-Plover. Dabbling ducks here include wigeon, pintail, Gadwall and often Blue-winged Teal. This can be an especially good spot for marsh species such as Virginia Rail and American Bittern. A loop trail extends 2 miles around the main dike, with a number of benches available for sitting.

Departure Time: **7:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: 11:00AM
Transportation: Carpooling
Cost: \$10

Sunday, September 30

SPECIAL POST-CONFERENCE TWO-DAY TRIP

Coastal Humboldt County with **Jon Dunn & Rob Fowler**

This trip will focus on exploring and enjoying much that the height of the fall birding season has to offer in coastal Humboldt County spiced with some light inland birding along the way there. Expect to easily see many shorebirds in the lower Eel River estuary; Black-capped Chickadee and migrant vireos, flycatchers, and warblers are expected in the riparian areas along the bottoms and Gray Jay is a good possibility in the Sitka Spruce along the southern edge of the bottoms.

Monday we will bird the Arcata area and visit the well-known fall vagrant traps. We will also bird the famous dune hollow willow patches and cypresses on the north spit of Humboldt Bay that have turned up the bulk of the rare flycatchers, vireos, and warblers on the Humboldt County list. On both days schedules will be flexible to allow opportunity to chase whatever interesting rarity has been staked out or recently kicked up. ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE this time of year so keep your mind, eyes and ears open for some great birding in habitat-rich coastal Humboldt County with one of the top Humboldt County birders and WFO's own Jon Dunn.

Departure Time: **5:30AM**
Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby
Transportation: Carpooling

Costs: \$150 fee includes a box lunch on Sunday. Participants are responsible for all their meals & Sunday night's lodging. We recommend reserving a room at Howard Johnson Hotel in North Arcata (707) 826-9660, ask for the WFO rate of \$71.99 (limited number of rooms at this rate, reserve early).

Trip to conclude mid-late afternoon Monday, October 1. Return from Humboldt is up to each individual.

Half Moon Bay with **Jennifer Rycenga**

Fall is the peak time of year for both seabirds and marine mammals off the coast of central California. So start the day off with a seawatch from the Moss Beach Distillery parking lot. Scan the ocean for Sooty Shearwaters, scoters, grebes, loons, ducks, & gulls in migration. Possible shorebirds in the rocks below include Black Oystercatcher, Rock Sandpiper, Wandering Tattler, Surfbird, and Black Turnstone. Marine mammals such as

harbor Seals, harbor porpoise, sea otter, and whales (in migration) are often spotted offshore. Then from the parking lot it's just a short walk to Fitzgerald Marine Reserve where the cypress groves and willows are known spots for finding vagrant songbirds during fall migration. In fact 30 warbler species have been recorded from here!

And this is just the morning portion! So come join Jennifer in a day of birding visiting more migrant traps along the coast for warblers and vagrants. around Half Moon Bay. Whether looking for shorebirds, gulls, vagrants, or whatever is around, Jennifer is planning a great birding day.

NOTE: those on this trip may consider staying in Half Moon Bay and going on the Pelagic Trip the next morning (see below). Several options for lodging Sunday night are available in Half Moon Bay.

Departure Time and Location: **5:45AM** from Sheraton Lobby

Meeting Time and Location: **7:30AM** at Moss Beach Distillery, 140 Beach Way, Moss Beach. (Map available)

Return Time: Approximately 6:00PM if returning to Sheraton in Petaluma

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$20

***Outer Point Reyes* with Rich Stallcup**

Outer Pt. Reyes is a great place to bird, and late September is an ideal time to encounter both regular migrant songbirds and the many rare species for which this area is famous. West Coast specialties such as Wrentit, Tricolored Blackbird, and "Nuttall's" White-crowned Sparrows will be around. Rich will provide commentary on the ornithological and birding history of this amazing place, define the O.P., tell some stories from the "good ole days" and define the beginnings of PRBO.

No matter what the inland weather is, it can be cold and windy here so dress accordingly.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$20

***Outer Point Reyes TWO* with Dan Singer**

Outer Pt. Reyes is a great place to bird, and late September is an ideal time to encounter both regular migrant songbirds and the many rare species for which this area is famous. West Coast specialties such as Wrentit, Tricolored Blackbird, and "Nuttall's" White-crowned Sparrows will be around.

No matter what the inland weather is, it can be cold and windy here so dress accordingly.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$20

***Bolinas* with Keith Hansen**

Join well-known bird expert & artist, Keith Hansen on a day of birding around his home turf in Bolinas! Between Pine Gulch for migrant songbirds, Bolinas Lagoon for waterfowl, shorebirds, and raptors, and Duxbury reef for rocky-habitat shorebirds such as turnstones and Black Oystercatchers you should have a great day. And what a better edition to the day than a visit to his feeders and studio.

No matter what the inland weather is, it can be cold and windy here so dress accordingly.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$20

***Pt. Reyes: Abbott's Lagoon* with Fred Hanson & Cliff Hawley**

Flanking the Pacific Ocean and Point Reyes' Great Beach, Abbott's Lagoon attracts a host of migrant, roosting, and wintering waterbirds and threatened breeding species such as the Snowy Plover. While the upper lagoon consists mainly of fresh water, the lower lagoon tends to be brackish as a result of winter storm waves and high tides that breach the sandbar at the mouth of the lagoon. There is a one-mile trail that leads from the parking area to the lagoon. On this outing Fred will share knowledge of the numerous species drawn to a mix of coastal scrub, grassland, riparian, coastal swale, freshwater pond, brackish lagoon, dune, sandy beach, and open ocean habitats. Rarities seen here include: Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Northern Waterthrush, Snow Bunting, Red-throated Pipit, Lapland Longspurs. Moderate walking including off trail.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$20

***Bodega Bay and Migrant Hotspots* with Ed Harper & Chris Conard**

Join Ed & Chris as they explore Bodega Bay, one of Sonoma County's richest bird areas. Start the day off while the sun is in the east and the winds are down with a sea watch at

Bodega Head. Since it is late September, why not spend some time in Owl Canyon, looking for migrants? Then finish off the day by birding around the bay stopping off at a few spots such as Spud Point, Westside Park, Rail Ponds, Porto Bodega, and maybe Doran Park. These marshes, subtidal channels, and tidal mudflats allow for excellent bird watching sites with a wide variety of shorebirds and waterfowl. Large offshore rocks in the bay are inhabited by Brown Pelicans, Pigeon Guillemots, and all 3 cormorants. Rock jetties in the bay can have both turnstones, Surfbirds, and maybe even a Wandering Tattler. This trip is sure to net you many birds!

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling (there is a \$6 per vehicle fee for Doran Park)

Cost: \$20

Pt. Reyes: Limantour Beach and Estero with Ed Pandolfino

This dynamic estuary is a critical feeding area for many shorebird species including Black-bellied Plovers, Willets, Marbled Godwits, Western and Least sandpipers, and dowitchers. In Drakes Bay three species of loons, White-winged Scoter, Red-necked Grebe, and Pigeon Guillemot are possible. Beautiful Heermann's Gulls should also be around. This three-mile walk through dunes, by the edge of marsh, and along the beach will focus on the identification and behavior of a variety of shorebirds, ducks, loons, grebes, and raptors.

Departure Time: **6:00AM**

Departure Location: Sheraton Lobby

Return Time: Approximately 5:00PM

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$20

Pelagic Trip to the Farallon Islands from Sausalito

Fall is the peak time of year for seabirds and marine mammals off the central California coast. Species that we expect to encounter include: Black-footed Albatross; Northern Fulmar; Sooty, Pink-footed, Buller's and Flesh-footed shearwaters; Red Phalarope; Pomarine and Parasitic jaegers; Common Murre; Pigeon Guillemot; Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklets. Less common, or rare species we may encounter include: Laysan and Short-tailed albatrosses; Short-tailed, Great, Streaked, Cory's and Manx shearwaters; Wilson's, Fork-tailed, Leach's, Ashy and Black storm-petrels; South Polar Skua; Long-tailed jaeger; a variety of gulls, including Mew, Thayer's, Western, Bonaparte's, Sabine's, Glaucous-winged gulls and Black-legged Kittiwake; Common and Elegant terns; Xantus's Murrelet and Tufted Puffin. Marine mammals could include any of the following: blue, fin, humpback, gray, sperm, Baird's beaked whales; orca; Northern right whale dolphin; Pacific white-sided dolphin; Risso's dolphin; harbor and Dall's porpoise. Pinnipeds include California and Steller's sea lions, Northern fur seal, harbor seal and

Northern elephant seal. Great white shark is quite possible on the Farallon Islands trip.). A variety of loons, grebes and shorebirds will likely be found on each trip. Every one of these pelagic trips will be operating in National Marine Sanctuary areas. We hope you will join us!

This pelagic trip will proceed from Sausalito and pass under California's icon, the Golden Gate Bridge. Enjoy the classic San Francisco skyline and views of Alcatraz Island en route to the islands which lie about 27 miles offshore. These islands comprise the largest breeding seabird colony in the continental US. Although breeding season will be over, we hope to encounter many of the regulars, including Tufted Puffin. This is the time of year when we could encounter a great white shark. Please note: landing on the islands is not permitted.

All of these boat captains have years, and some decades, of experience with Shearwater Journeys. Please check in with Debi Shearwater prior to boarding the vessel. Please dress very warmly, including waterproof outer layers, hats and gloves. It can be surprisingly very cold. NO open toed shoes allowed, even with socks. (No Teva-type footwear).

Please bring lunch and drinks for the day. Bathrooms are available on all vessels. For the comfort of all, trips are non-smoking. For the enjoyment of all, please turn off your cell phone. Bring waterproof coverings for camera gear. Seasick pills are highly recommended. For safety reasons, pregnant women cannot join these trips. Boarding ramps are not accessible for wheelchairs. Trips are not suitable for children under 15 years of age.

Leaders: Russ Bradley, Annie Schwartz, Peter Pyle, and Debi Shearwater

Departure Time (for carpools from Sheraton): promptly at **6:15AM**

Departure Time (at the dock in Sausalito): **7:30AM** at Clipper Yacht Harbor, 310 Harbor Drive, Sausalito.

Parking: \$2 per person. Do **not** park in front of the Fish Restaurant

Return Time: Approximately 4:30PM at the dock, but could be later. Allow for delays of hours in returning to the dock if unusual wildlife is encountered.

Transportation: Carpooling

Cost: \$145

FUEL SURCHARGE: These rates were set on January 25, 2012. If fuel increases require a fuel surcharge, this will be collected at the dockside. Past fuel surcharges have ranged from \$0-10 per person. Expect a range of \$5-20 per person.

REFUNDS: All trips are discounted by Shearwater Journeys and NON-REFUNDABLE FOR ANY REASON. If a trip is canceled due to weather, WFO will issue a refund, less a \$10 per reservation administration fee. No refunds can be made for "no-shows", or for folks who fail to make it to the boat at the scheduled departure time.

MAP FOR SAUSALITO BOAT: <http://www.clipperyacht.com/location.html>

Monday, October 1

SPECIAL POST-CONFERENCE PELAGIC TRIP

Pelagic Trip from Half Moon Bay

Fall is the peak time of year for seabirds and marine mammals off the central California coast. Species that we expect to encounter include: Black-footed Albatross; Northern Fulmar; Sooty, Pink-footed, Buller's and Flesh-footed shearwaters; Red Phalarope; Pomarine and Parasitic jaegers; Common Murre; Pigeon Guillemot; Cassin's and Rhinoceros auklets. Less common, or rare species we may encounter include: Laysan and Short-tailed albatrosses; Short-tailed, Great, Streaked, Cory's and Manx shearwaters; Wilson's, Fork-tailed, Leach's, Ashy and Black storm-petrels; South Polar Skua; Long-tailed jaeger; a variety of gulls, including Mew, Thayer's, Western, Bonaparte's, Sabine's, Glaucous-winged gulls and Black-legged Kittiwake; Common and Elegant terns; Xantus's Murrelet and Tufted Puffin. Marine mammals could include any of the following: blue, fin, humpback, gray, sperm, Baird's beaked whales; orca; Northern right whale dolphin; Pacific white-sided dolphin; Risso's dolphin; harbor and Dall's porpoise. Pinnipeds include California and Steller's sea lions, Northern fur seal, harbor seal and Northern elephant seal. This trip almost always finds Marbled Murrelet, just outside the harbor (not found on the other trips). A variety of loons, grebes and shorebirds will likely be found on each trip. Every one of these pelagic trips will be operating in National Marine Sanctuary areas. We hope you will join us!

Queen of Hearts is a very fast 53' sportfishing vessel that carries 35 birders.

Departing the harbor at Pillar Point, we will enjoy views of shorebirds along the many rocky jetties as well as the endangered Marbled Murrelet just outside the harbor. Our destination will be Pioneer Canyon about 20 miles offshore where past trips have been extremely productive. Meg-rarities recorded here have included Short-tailed Albatross, Great-winged (gray-faced) Petrel and Parkinson's Petrel.

All of these boat captains have years, and some decades, of experience with Shearwater Journeys. Please check in with Debi Shearwater prior to boarding the vessel. Please dress very warmly, including waterproof outer layers, hats and gloves. It can be surprisingly very cold. NO open toed shoes allowed, even with socks. (No Teva-type footwear).

Please bring lunch and drinks for the day. No food is available on board. Bathrooms are available on all vessels. For the comfort of all, trips are non-smoking. For the enjoyment of all, please turn off your cell phone. Bring waterproof coverings for camera gear. Seasick pills are highly recommended. For safety reasons, pregnant women cannot join these trips. Boarding ramps are not accessible for wheelchairs. Trips are not suitable for children under 15 years of age.

Leaders: Peter Pyle, Scott & Linda Terrill, and Debi Shearwater

Departure Time: **7:00 AM**

Departure Location: Johnson Pier, Pillar Point, Half Moon Bay on board **QUEEN OF HEARTS**

Parking: Free

Return Time: 4-6:30 PM, variable; Allow for delays of several hours in returning to the dock if unusual wildlife is encountered.

Lodgings: Several hotels available in and near Half Moon Bay

Cost: \$150

FUEL SURCHARGE: These rates were set on January 25, 2012. If fuel increases require a fuel surcharge, this will be collected at the dockside. Past fuel surcharges have ranged from \$0-10 per person. Expect a range of \$5-20 per person.

REFUNDS: All trips are discounted by Shearwater Journeys and NON-REFUNDABLE FOR ANY REASON. If a trip is canceled due to weather, WFO will issue a refund, less a \$10 per reservation administration fee. No refunds can be made for “no-shows”, or for folks who fail to make it to the boat at the scheduled departure time.

MAP FOR HALF MOON BAY: <http://www.fishingboat.com/findus.html>

WORKSHOPS

Friday, September 28

Workshop: *Molt De-mystified* (classroom only)

Leader: **Peter Pyle**

Time: 7:00AM – 11:00AM

Where: Pelican Room

Cost: \$20

Workshop description. Molt is one of the key aspects of the natural history of all birds and understanding molt is key to proper identification of many bird families. Peter will begin the session with a PowerPoint trip through the various angles of bird molt, clarifying the tangled historical terminology. He will present the vastly improved Humphrey-Parkes system in lay-person terms, consider the interactions between bird molt and plumage color, and illustrate the fascinating molt patterns of ducks, ptarmigan, alcids, herons, raptors, parrots, passerines, and larger birds that undergo Stafflemauser (don't know what this means? Sign up for the workshop!). He will conclude with thoughts on stable isotopes and molt, molt in tropical birds, and avenues for future research, all based on years of working with the subject and the examination of over 60,000 specimens in museum skin collections. After a short break we will focus on ageing birds in the field using molt limits and other molt-related clues, using both images and specimens. Peter encourages participants to bring specific questions they have on molt in general or in specific taxa.

Leader bio: Peter Pyle has worked for the Institute for Bird Populations (IBP) since 1996. During the late 1970's and early 1980s he worked seasonally on the Hawaii and other Pacific Forest Bird Surveys, for the Point Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO), on at-sea surveys, and for other banding projects while also travelling and birding until money ran out. In 1985 Peter became a biologist on the Farallon Islands, a post he held until 2003, where his research focused on all aspects of the island and surrounding marine ecosystem. From 1996-2003 Peter split time between PRBO and IBP, and since 2003 he has been a full-time Biologist at IBP doing scientific research, writing reports, and conducting banding workshops. Peter is also a research associate at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco and the Bishop Museum in Honolulu. Peter has authored or co-authored over 100 peer-reviewed papers, four books, and an on-line monograph of the birds of Hawaii. Among banders he is best known for his *Identification Guide to North American Birds, Parts 1 and 2*, which includes detailed criteria for ageing and sexing all North American birds in the hand and the field. In 2011 Peter described a new bird species, Bryan's Shearwater, naming it after his grandfather.

Workshop: *Bird Sketching* (classroom only)

Leader: **Keith Hansen**

Time: 8:00AM – 11:00AM

Where: Marina Overlook Room

Cost: \$20

Workshop description. Keith will help you with the basics of sketching, capturing, and learning the anatomy of birds. Even if you never sketch a bird after this class, you will learn new ways of looking at birds that will improve your ID skills and enhance your birding enjoyment.

Keith will demystify and encapsulate the basic of capturing a bird's image on paper by simply using paper, pencil and eraser. Keith will supply images of birds to work from and specimens for the anatomy elements of the class.

Workshop supplies to bring: **sketch pad, an “Art Gum Eraser”, and 2-3 different sharp pencils of various hardness.**

Leader bio: Keith Hansen had a childhood interest in birds that developed into a lifelong passion. He is a wildlife illustrator specializing in birds, and leads birding tours to Guatemala, Panama, Costa Rica, Mexico, and the Yucatan. Keith has illustrated many bird books and is currently working on *Birds of the Sierra Nevada: Their Natural History, Status and Distribution* (to be published by UC Press) and completing the last plates for a field guide to Sierra Nevada birds. Keith lives in Bolinas and works from his gallery there.

Workshop: *Shorebird Identification (classroom session)*

Workshop includes a classroom session on Friday and field session on Saturday. Registrants may sign up for the classroom session only or classroom PLUS field session. NOTE: spots for field session are limited so register early if you'd like to attend both.

Leader: **Al Jaramillo**

Time: 8:00AM – 11:00AM

Where: Great Blue Heron Room B

Cost: \$25 classroom only (Friday AM)

Cost: \$35 classroom and field session (Friday and Saturday AM)

Workshop description. Perhaps no other group of birds has inspired more written information on their identification than the shorebirds! This group has a huge following of identification-obsessed birders, and this is understandable. They can pose major challenges in the field, they are usually out in the open and readily studied in detail with a good scope, and there is always the chance to find a vagrant from a far flung region of the world. They can be somewhat intimidating for beginners, intermediate birders, or even experienced birders. There are lots and lots of shorebird species in northern California, so

we will concentrate the workshop on first understanding some generalities of shorebird identification such as behavior, size, structure, and age-related plumages. We will tackle a selection of shorebird species which cause identification problems and resolve how to best tackle each of these species. We will try to simplify the identification process as much as possible. Shorebird identification is not as challenging as one may think. One just needs to put in the hours looking at them. This workshop will get you on your way, with tips on what to look for and what to concentrate on. You can spend the rest of the season enjoying these marvelous birds, getting more confident with their identification, and prepare yourself to find those rarities that generate so much excitement.

Leader bio: Al was born in Chile but began birding in Toronto, where he lived as a youth. He was trained in ecology and evolution with a particular interest in bird behavior. Research forays and backpacking trips introduced Alvaro to the riches of the Neotropics, where he has traveled extensively. He is the author of the *Birds of Chile*, an authoritative yet portable field guide to Chile's birds, and the "Helm" guide to *New World Blackbirds*. Alvaro writes the Identify Yourself column in Bird Watcher's Digest. Among various projects, he has written part of the Emberizid sparrow chapter for the *Handbook of Birds of the World*, and is writing a photo guide to the birds and wildlife of Patagonia. He runs a birding and nature tour company, Alvaro's Adventures, where the focus is to have fun, learn a thing or two, and truly enjoy nature. Trips are international and include a schedule of Northern California pelagic trips. Alvaro lives with his family in Half Moon Bay, California, where he loves the gull watching!

Saturday, September 29

Workshop: *Raptor Identification* (classroom session)

Workshop includes this classroom session on Saturday and a field session on Sunday. Registrants may sign up for the classroom session only or classroom PLUS field session. NOTE: spots for field session are limited so register early if you'd like to attend both.

Leaders: **Homer Hansen** and **Allen Fish**

Time: 8:00AM – 11:00AM

Where: Pelican Room

Cost: \$25 classroom only (Saturday AM)

Cost: \$35 classroom and field session (Saturday AM and Sunday full day)

Workshop description. Birds of prey are one of the most watched groups of birds worldwide. Homer will introduce you to the orders and families comprising our western diurnal raptors and presents family and generic structural and plumage characteristics useful for identification. The workshop will also cover the differences between the two orders of raptors and other interesting topics such as sexual dimorphism and hunting behaviors.

Leader bios: Homer Hansen is chairman of the annual Wings Over Willcox Birding and Nature Festival and is a native of southeastern Arizona. Homer earned his B.S. in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology from the University of Arizona and is the president and owner of Aplomado Environmental providing services to characterize and remove contaminants from soil and groundwater. Homer has presented many workshops on sparrows, raptors, flycatchers, warblers, and bird ecology over the past two decades and has led many birding tours in Arizona. He is the author of the G.I.S.S. Series bird identification guides and also instructs advanced birding for a wide variety of organizations and institutions. He especially enjoys the challenges of complex identifications and loves to learn about the nature of birds.

Allen Fish has directed the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory since its founding in 1985. He has an extensive background in avian field studies, and has taught raptor biology at the University of California, Davis, and at California Academy of Sciences. In 2003, he was given the Maurice Broun Award for contributions to raptor conservation biology.

Workshop: *Shorebird Identification (field session)*

Workshop includes a classroom session on Friday and this field session on Saturday. Registrants may sign up for the classroom session only or classroom PLUS field session. NOTE: spots for field session are limited so register early if you'd like to attend both.

Leaders: **Al Jaramillo & Bruce Webb** (Swarovski Field Tech)

Time: 7:00AM – 11:00AM

Where: Meet in the Hotel Lobby

Transportation: Carpooling to Shollenberger Marsh (1.5 miles from Hotel)

Cost: \$25 classroom only (Friday AM)

Cost: \$35 classroom and field session (Friday and Saturday AM)

Workshop description. We will proceed to Shollenberger Marsh, only a short distance from the meeting hotel. We should have a considerable variety of shorebirds to study at leisure on these tidal mudflats. The emphasis of the field portion of the workshop will be to review under field conditions the concepts discussed in the classroom session. We will put into practice the skills we learned in the classroom, focusing on those species and identification problems that we discussed on Friday. If you have a scope, bring it and dress in layers. We will be walking a short distance on flat dirt pathways.

Leader bios: Al was born in Chile but began birding in Toronto, where he lived as a youth. He was trained in ecology and evolution with a particular interest in bird behavior. Research forays and backpacking trips introduced Alvaro to the riches of the Neotropics, where he has traveled extensively. He is the author of the *Birds of Chile*, an authoritative yet portable field guide to Chile's birds, and the "Helm" guide to *New World Blackbirds*.

Alvaro writes the Identify Yourself column in Bird Watcher's Digest. Among various projects he has written part of the Emberizid sparrow chapter for the *Handbook of Birds of the World*, and is writing a photo guide to the birds and wildlife of Patagonia. He runs a birding and nature tour company Alvaro's Adventures, where the focus is to have fun, learn a thing or two, and truly enjoy nature. Trips are international and include a schedule of Northern California pelagic trips. Alvaro lives with his family in Half Moon Bay, California where he loves the gull watching!

Bruce Webb, a Swarovski Optik Field Tech, teaches digiscoping and advises birders on choosing optics. He is also the U.S. distributor of Wildlife Recorder birding software and Nature Lister - an eBird-friendly birding app for Android phones.

Workshop: ***Tracking Birds and other Wildlife in the Field*** (classroom/field session)

Leader: **Richard Vacha**

Time: 7:00AM – 11:00AM

Where: Marina Overlook Room (classroom first, then carpool to Shollenberger Marsh, 1.5 miles from Hotel for field session)

Cost: \$20

Workshop description. This introduction to the art of tracking will begin with a short discussion of what tracking and nature awareness actually is. With an emphasis on bird tracks, we will take a brief look at the characteristics of tracks, foot morphology, track families, and the links between ecological niche and foot design. We will consider how birds and mammals actually move to create their typical gait patterns, and we will discuss the importance of sign tracking and how to use observations of cough pellets and droppings (scat), feeding sign and kill-site analysis, feather identification, caches, digs, nests, etc. to build an awareness of animal activity and relationships. We will spend a little time practicing some of the basic techniques of awareness and movement on the landscape, such as fox-walking and wide-angle vision, with a short discussion of how to work with the dynamics of perception. Then we will proceed to nearby Shollenberger Park (by carpool, 1.5 away) for an exploration of the signs and tracks of local birds and other animals.

Leader bio: Richard Vacha has been a nature and outdoor enthusiast since early childhood. When he began studying at Tom Brown's Tracker School in the early 1990's, he was introduced to the knowledge of some of the world's greatest tracking cultures along with a wide range of skills, from micro-analysis of individual tracks, to deep awareness of the interconnectedness in nature, and the techniques of opening the mind and learning to see. In 2006, Richard founded the Marin County Tracking Club and has been leading a growing community of Bay Area trackers into the world of nature awareness since then. He leads Point Reyes Field Seminars on tracking, offers lectures and workshops to schools and other organizations and offers private tracking sessions to small groups on an appointment basis. In 2009, he attained a Class III rating in the

International Cybertracker certification program. For the past three years, Richard writes a well-received monthly column for the West Marin Citizen, Tracking Notes, and he is currently working to publish this material in book form. In late 2011, Richard founded the Pt. Reyes Tracking School and is launching an all-year curriculum of tracking classes, further outreach seminars and workshops, and professional field surveys for land and wildlife management programs.

Workshop: ***Identification of Pelagic Birds*** (classroom session only)

Leaders: **Jim Danzenbaker** and **Scott Terrill**

Time: 8:00AM – 11:00AM

Where: Great Blue Heron Room B

Cost: \$25

Workshop description. The ocean is full of interesting bird species ranging from shearwaters to jaegers to phalaropes. In order to get a good look at these specialized birds, a pelagic trip is required. This talk will cover many facets of pelagic birding from species identification to bird behavior, with special attention paid to difficult identification problems. We will also discuss important aspects of preparation for a pelagic trip. In order to fully enjoy the pelagic trip itself, we will discuss protocol on board as well as other ways to gain the most from your pelagic experience.

Leader bios: **Scott Terrill** received his B.S. and M.S. in Zoology at Arizona State University and his Ph.D. in Avian Ecology from the State University of New York at Albany. He has published over 30 scientific papers on birds and contributed to several books. He served on the California Bird Records Committee for 15 years and was the Northern California Regional Editor for the seabird sections of *North American Birds* for 10 years. With his wife Linda, he has led pelagic trips for Shearwater Journeys for over 20 years and spent hundreds of days at sea. Scott has spent time in the Pacific, the Atlantic, and the Southern Oceans.

Jim Danzenbaker is an avid birder whose long naturalist and ornithological experience started when he was just a youngster birding on the New Jersey coast. One of Jim's specialties is leading birding trips to the Neotropics, especially to Panama. He has also been an ornithologist on 10 Antarctica expeditions, identifying seabirds and presenting seabird and penguin biology lectures. He has led many pelagic trips in Northern California for Shearwater Journeys and found the first Great-winged Petrel in North American waters. People who travel with him appreciate his friendliness, enthusiasm for finding wildlife, and willingness to share information. Jim is Sales Manager for the Americas at Kowa Sporting Optics and lives in Battle Ground, Washington.

Sunday, September 30

Workshop: ***Raptor Identification*** (field session)

Workshop includes this classroom session on Saturday and a field session on Sunday. Registrants may sign up for the classroom session only or classroom PLUS field session. NOTE: spots for field session are limited so register early if you'd like to attend both.

Leaders: **Homer Hansen** and **Allen Fish**

Time: 8:45AM – 2:30PM

Where: Meet in Hotel Lobby,

Transportation: Carpooling to Hawk Hill

Cost: \$25 classroom only (Saturday AM)

Cost: \$35 classroom and field session (Saturday AM and Sunday full day)

Workshop description. Homer Hansen and Allen Fish will lead a field trip to Hawk Hill, in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Hawk Hill is the western states' premiere raptor migration site located right above the Golden Gate and is just 30 minutes drive south of Petaluma. Hawk Hill is a 900-foot grassland and scrub habitat hilltop just ½ mile from the Golden Gate with an unrivalled, spectacular 360-degree view of the central San Francisco Bay and coastline.

Nineteen species of diurnal birds of prey are possible during an average fall migration, including California specialties like the White-tailed Kite and the California Red-shouldered Hawk. Other highlight species could include Merlin, Ferruginous Hawk, and Broad-winged Hawk. The field trip will be during the time for a potential peak-migration day, which could mean more than an average of 100 raptors per hour. Most common raptors species are Turkey Vulture, Cooper's, Sharp-shinned, and Red-tailed hawks. The two smaller accipiters can be abundant in late September in both juvenile and adult plumages, making Hawk Hill a superb spot to practice this difficult genus.

Non-raptor migrants for Hawk Hill may include Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Band-tailed Pigeon, White-throated, Vaux's, and Black swifts and seven swallows. Local residential birds include Wrentit, Bewick's Wren, Western Scrub-Jay, and Anna's Hummingbird.

Golden Gate Raptor Observatory volunteers have maintained a daily fall migration count here since 1982, as well as a banding program on nearby hills. Trip participants will have a chance to witness the hawk-counters in action. If banding is successful that day, at 1:00 PM, a volunteer bander will bring a live hawk to Hawk Hill for close-viewing by the public.

Leader bios: Homer Hansen is the chairman of the annual Wings Over Willcox Birding and Nature festival and is a native of southeastern Arizona. Homer earned his B.S. in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology from the University of Arizona and is the president and owner of Aplomado Environmental providing services to characterize and remove contaminants from soil and groundwater. Homer has presented many workshops on sparrows, raptors, flycatchers, warblers, and bird ecology over the past two decades and

has lead many birding tours in Arizona. He is the author of the G.I.S.S. Series bird identification guides and also instructs advanced birding for a wide variety of organizations and institutions. He especially enjoys the challenges of complex identifications and loves to learn about the nature of birds.

Allen Fish has directed the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory since its founding in 1985. He has an extensive background in avian field studies, and has taught raptor biology at the University of California, Davis, and at California Academy of Sciences. In 2003, he was given the Maurice Broun Award for contributions to raptor conservation biology.