



The Sequoia



BULLETIN OF SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

A CHAPTER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Volume 28, No. 6

February, 1979

MEETINGS:

BOARD MEETING, FEBRUARY 1, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM at the Aldrich residence, 74 Nevada Street, Redwood City. Board members and committee chairmen should attend. Other members are welcome.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING, FEBRUARY 8, THURSDAY at the San Mateo Garden Center, located on Parkside Way--between 26th and 27th Avenues--just west of Alameda de las Pulgas in San Mateo. Coffee and cookies at 7:30 PM. Meeting commences at 8:00 PM.

Mr. Bob Paterson, naturalist and wildlife photographer from Daly City will present his program AFRICA SPECTACULAR. This will be a visit to the land of Livingstone by the magic of film and stereophonic sound. We will be treated to three views of the Zambezi River (by motor launch, by foot and by air) to see some of Africa's most spectacular animal and bird life. Next, we proceed to magnificent Victoria Falls--twice as high and one and a half times as wide as Niagara Falls. Victoria Falls from the air has to be one of the most awe-inspiring sights of the world. Make plans now to be thrilled and amazed. This will be an experience you won't forget.

Frank Allen and Charles Newman will present their traditional Bird-of-the-Month.

FIELD TRIPS:

FEBRUARY 3 and 4, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY - LOS BANOS AREA

See THE SEQUOIA for January - Page 2 - for details

LEADERS: Barbara and Hal Lucas 344-3796

FEBRUARY 6, TUESDAY BIRDERS TO BELMONT

Meet at 9:00 AM in the Safeway's parking lot on the corner of Ralston and Alameda in Belmont. We discovered some interesting birds on the Christmas Bird Count and are hoping they will remain for our morning bird walk. Around Water Dog Lake may be muddy, so wear your boots.

FEBRUARY 24, SATURDAY - CRYSTAL SPRINGS WATERSHED

The San Francisco Water Department allows only a limited number of people in the watershed, so please call Craig Benkman if you plan to attend. We will carpool, enter locked gates at 9:00 AM, and remain until 3:00 PM. Bring a sack lunch and wear warm clothes. We will meet at 8:45 at the west end of Hillcrest Blvd., in Millbrae, Just under Highway 280.

LEADER: Craig Benkman 593-0224

PRESIDENT: Stephen L. Aldrich
74 Nevada Street
Redwood City, CA 94062
Phone: 366-3603

EDITORS: Ed and Amy McElhany
1009 Laguna Avenue
Burlingame, CA 94010
Phone: 343-3219

FEBRUARY 20, TUESDAY BIRDERS TO SAWYER CAMP ROAD

Meet at 9:00 at the Crystal Springs Dam on Skyline Boulevard at the west end of Crystal Springs Road in San Mateo. We will spend the morning observing migratory ducks and geese and hoping one of our wintering Bald Eagles shows up!

NOTE: Some field trips may be cancelled in the event of rain. Contact the trip leader.

MARCH 24 and 25, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY - MONTEREY AREA AND PELAGIC TRIP

See THE SEQUOIA for December - Page 4 - for details.

There are still spaces available for those who would like to attend the pelagic boat trip portion of our Monterey birding trip led by Rich Stallcup. The good response has necessitated reserving a larger boat. The final deadline for sending in your reservation will be March 1st. See the December SEQUOIA for the coupon to send in if it is available; if not, send a note telling how many persons and your names along with a check or money order in full at the rate of \$15.00 per person to:

Jerry and Georgia Perkins
24 Bayview Court
Millbrae, CA 94030

LEADERS: Jerry and Georgia Perkins 583-7815

FIELD TRIP REPORTS:

December 30 - Christmas Bird Count and Potluck

On December 30 at 5:30 PM, group leaders of the 83 participants in the Crystal Springs area Christmas bird count stopped by the Burlingame Library to report the day's sightings. Thirty-six avid birdwatchers, chilled and weary but rosy-cheeked and genial, stayed on for a potluck supper of casseroles, salads and wine to restore their energy and to greet friends while the count was tallied.

Most were Sequoia Audubon members plus some welcome visitors from nearby Bay area points and more distant places. Mark Zumsteg from Santa Cruz and Barry Sauppe, now of Vancouver, B.C., were "migrants" whose sightings added significantly to the total list.

Peter Metropulos, compiler, summarized the preliminary count of 174* species as somewhat less than last year's (perhaps attributable to slightly adverse weather this December) but with an impressive number of unusual species included.

Thanks to Frank and Jean Allen, coordinators for the event, the day's activities went smoothly. Through their arrangement, and with the generous cooperation of the Burlingame Library, a spacious room with table seating was provided at minimal expense for the enjoyable supper gathering.

*Final confirmed count was 177 species.

-- M.L.

CONSERVATION NEWS:

On January 4 was held the final meeting of the Redwood City Waterfront-Port Special Area Plan Advisory Committee. This committee, sponsored jointly by Redwood City and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) has been meeting monthly since November 1977. Its membership, supposedly representative of all those particularly concerned with the future of Redwood City's waterfront, was nevertheless weighted toward the proponents of development. It included a member and

and alternate each from San Mateo County, the Port of Redwood City, Mobil Oil Estates (Redwood Shores), the State Lands Division, the State Fish and Game Department, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Chamber of Commerce, the County Central Labor Council, the Coalition of Concerned Citizens, Leslie Salt, Ideal Basic Industries, and the Sierra Club, the only non-governmental conservation group represented. There were also two observers (non-voting) from the U.S. Corps of Engineers. BCDC and the City of Redwood City had 3 members and 3 alternates each. Redwood City's Mayor, Mario Biagi, was chairman and proved quite a fair one.

Since marsh preservation is a top priority of Sequoia Audubon and most of the remaining Bayside marshes in San Mateo County, both diked and open, are within Redwood City or its "sphere of influence," their fate is of importance to all county residents, not just to those living in Redwood City. Conclusions reached by the Committee are therefore being reported in some detail:

It was agreed that land on the east (Harbor Blvd.) side of Redwood Creek, the present site of cargo terminals, berthing facilities and warehouses, should be reserved for future Port uses. Lands on the west side of Redwood Creek (on Inner Bair Island), should not be considered for development until full use is made of the east side and present Port-priority designations on the west side should be further studied by BCDC. Dredging of Redwood Creek necessary for Port operation was studied along with the question of disposal of dredge spoils. The sub-committee report on this was adopted, which ranked dredge spoil sites. This indicated that filling of the Port's adjacent Bair Island property with spoils was not justified environmentally and that, contrary to the Port's contention, transportation of the spoils to the Corps of Engineers' Alcatraz site was the least costly.

It was further recommended that lands adjacent to Westpoint and Corkscrew Sloughs should be buffered to prevent human encroachment on the Sloughs and to protect the Wildlife Refuge on Greco Island. The area of Leslie's salt pile, which will be gradually phased out as Leslie closes down its West-Bay operations, is also to be designated for Port uses.

Agreement was not reached, however, on the future of Leslie's large area of salt ponds to the east, due mainly to the company's refusal to admit the jurisdiction of BCDC over them. Leslie also would not or could not say what plans the company has for use of the area when it is no longer needed for salt production. Shore and tidelands surrounding the areas already mentioned were not studied at all.

One other finding of the Committee was that access to the areas in question was greatly constrained by present overcrowding of Highway 101. This would restrict development of areas beyond those now developed and would limit the amount of extra development possible on already developed areas.

The Committee's report will next go to the Redwood City Council and to BCDC with a recommendation from the Committee that it be used as far as possible to guide further planning for the Port area. Considering the makeup of the Committee the report is probably as good as could be hoped for, but further input from those concerned with marsh preservation will be needed later.

The San Bruno Mountain Saddle area, which seemed safe through appropriation of \$4 million for its purchase by the State in 1977, may again be in trouble. The sale still has not gone through due to lack of

completion of appraisal, required before approval of the purchase by the Public Works Board. The State Parks Department has had approval of the purchase twice postponed, and it is now scheduled for the Public Works Board meeting in February. If action is not taken by the Board before June 30, 1979 the appropriation will automatically expire and the Saddle area park for which we all worked so hard will be lost.

Letters are needed to Russell Cahill, Director
Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 2390
Sacramento, CA 95811

and to Senator John Foran
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

and to Assembly Speaker Leo McCarthy
at the State Capitol address. Ask them to speed up the appraisal and purchase of San Bruno Mountain Park before it is too late.

Ruth Smith, Conservation Chairman

BIRDING THROUGH MY KITCHEN WINDOW: By Fran Nelson

This early December day is exceptionally beautiful--so clear as to afford a magnificent view of the bay and of Mt. Diablo. The air is crisp. The only fog is a milky white layer blotting out a ravine well below the horizon.

Nearly all the leaves have fallen from the birches--all but those on the right side. Perhaps that is because of the constant source of water from the bird baths. The remaining leaves are golden and they shimmer in a gentle breeze.

The day begins for some of the birds before it is light. If they don't get something to eat before the accipiters are out hunting, it could be quite a wait.

Since my day also begins before it is light, I see some of the early avian risers which in this case consists of about twenty Golden-crowned and White-crowned Sparrows. They are scurrying about rapidly and in the dim light they look more like little rodents than birds! Two Brown Towhees join them and a few moments later about eighteen Mourning Doves arrive. They all eat ravenously until too much light makes the sparrows give way to caution as they take to the cover of nearby shrubbery. Very shortly, the Mourning Doves take off explosively as if by signal--all but two of them! Those remaining sit there looking puzzled! They are good candidates for hawk food.

After a time, since no hawk has appeared, some of the birds venture out and perch on top of the shrubs. The bravest among them run out to the food source, grab a seed and run back to their hiding places. A Fox Sparrow, a Song Sparrow and a Rufous-sided Towhee who have now joined the flock are among the brave ones.

The Scrub Jay pair is here. One of the couple is in the top of the birch with an acorn in his beak. Perhaps it is from our own little live oak which was doubtless planted by one of his predecessors several years back. I had not even noticed our tree was bearing acorns until I saw a Jay harvest one a short time ago! He will no doubt plant that acorn when it is his turn to do whatever needs doing. Right now he is guarding while his mate forages below. This is a good time for all the other birds to feed and bathe, while one Jay guards for the other. Several Lesser Goldfinches land in the birch. The breasts of the males are even brighter than the gold of the leaves.

Suddenly the whole clump of birches is jumping with activity! A flock of Bushtits has arrived and along with them are a Myrtle and an Audubon Warbler (now both just Yellow-rumped Warblers according to the latest A.O.U. list), a Chestnut-backed Chickadee and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. The Warblers are flycatching and the Kinglet seems to be everywhere at once! He is almost too fast for the novice birdwatcher to see plumage details. In fact, that is a good way to at least suspect it is a Kinglet you are trying to see, if he moving so fast you can't! The Bushtits are bustling around. They are always busy as bees. Most of them are hanging upside down at the tips of the branches. House Finches and Purple Finches have added their color and activities to the birch, some preening and some just soaking up the sunshine. The Anna Hummers are back and forth between the tree and the feeders and engaging in their favorite sport--making life miserable for each other!

The birch is the focal point of the backyard and sometimes I tend to forget there is other vegetation. In the bird-planted live oak and in the wind-planted baccharis are more Bushtits. Robins are in the bird-planted pyracantha and one is decorating the top of a tall Monterey pine back of our fence.

The Bushtits, in characteristic fashion, are ever on the move from one tree or shrub to another. The Chickadee that is moving along with them stops to glean insects from the vertical face of the reed fence en-route to the next stop.

A House Finch is clinging to a little feeder which serves up safflower seeds and is busily trying to extract one. A curious Bushtit comes in from behind him and cranes his neck to see what in the world the finch is doing! A Hummer hovers in front of my window to see what in the world I am doing!

After a while, the whole flock, a few at a time, has moved on to the south of us but it isn't long before they are all headed north again, advancing a few at a time.

Meanwhile, under the deck, the House Sparrows have taken over the seed bell. A female has the top spot and everything she can reach by stretching downward is hers! Anyone who reaches upward too high is in trouble because she gets the transgressor by the beak and hangs on tenaciously!

The Bushtits have all moved on again but the Kinglet is staying. He is apparently pleased with the quality of our bugs!

The capers of the birds are thoroughly enjoyable--except for the Starlings that have come in and chased the Robins and a Cedar Waxwing away from the berry bushes. Nothing momentous has happened so far today but there is a lot of activity and I am glad that there are bugs and berries and birds!

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH is a 1000-acre wildlife sanctuary and education center located on Bolinas Lagoon three miles north of Stinson Beach on State Highway 1. It is open to the public on weekends and holidays from March 1 through July 4 each year. Special visits may be arranged by phoning the Ranch, 383-1644. The Ranch is sponsored by Golden Gate, Madrone, Marin and Sequoia Audubon Societies. In 1969 the Ranch was designated by the U. S. Department of the Interior as a Registered Natural Landmark.

Sequoia Audubon will provide volunteer hosts at the Ranch on each Saturday and Sunday during the month of March. This is a total of nine days. Four volunteers are needed for each day. Host duty is a most pleasant experience and requires no special skills or expertise. Hosts greet the arriving visitors, point out the parking area, bookstore, display hall, trails and handle visitor registration. Many interesting

people visit the Ranch and often fascinating conversations result. Here is an opportunity to perform a worthwhile service in a superb natural setting among interested, dedicated people. Hosts should plan to arrive about 9:30 AM for the opening hour of 10:00 AM. The Ranch closes at 4:00 PM and hosts may depart shortly thereafter. Driving time from San Mateo is about 1½ hours. Host duty coordinator this year is Hal Lucas phone 344-3796. Call now and reserve one or more dates.

NEWS FROM THE RANCH - From Stan Picher

Audubon Canyon Ranch is happy to announce that, upon the recommendation of National Audubon Society, it has received a \$50,000 grant from the Estate of George Whittell. The grant makes possible the remodeling of the main farm house in Volunteer Canyon, the last step in the development of the Dudley S. Hubbard Education Center.

The finished building will contain sleeping quarters for adults upstairs, a restaurant kitchen, library, laboratory and a twenty by fifty assembly room to be used for dining, lectures, study and social events downstairs. It will be connected to the recently completed dormitory by a covered walk.

In anticipation of receiving this generous grant, the remodeling was started last October and will be completed by early spring. The complex will be dedicated in April and the overnight education program, under the directorship of our resident naturalist-biologist, John Kipping, will start in May. We hope that the program will be self-sustaining. Use of the Center by adult groups on weekends should make this possible.

The newly remodeled building will be named for George Whittell.

PESCADERO MARSH RANGER REPORT:

The ducks of Pescadero Marsh are in their spectacular winter plumage waiting to fill the lens of your spotting scope. Top awards go to the male shovelers, their brown side patch contrasting well with their white unders. Count on seeing a dozen different species of ducks on each visit to the Marsh this winter. Birders were treated to 12 whistling swans on December 12th. They were on the ponds in two pods for most of the day but nobody could find them on the 13th. Alas.

The 1978-79 Bird Census is continuing through June. I have not received any public input of sightings yet and would appreciate any information on sightings that Sequoia Audubon members could provide. A list of the commonly seen birds of Pescadero Marsh has been provided with this article. Please send your data to Department of Parks and Recreation, Attn. George Gray, 95 Kelly Avenue, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019.

As part of the planning process for the San Mateo Coast State Beaches, the Department of Parks and Recreation has prepared and released an "Inventory of Features." This document contains much of the information contained in Bruce Elliott's unpublished work of 1975 and describes the ecology of Pescadero Marsh as comprehensively as it has ever been done. Interested persons are invited to review the "Inventory of Features" at Ano Nuevo State Reserve.

With the advent of the winter rains, the steelhead run has begun up Pescadero Creek. On weekends and holidays, fishermen can be seen lined up near Highway 1 bridge. After talking with many of the fishermen, I have concluded that the great blue herons are having better luck.

December 18, 1978 --- George C. Gray, Pescadero Marsh Ranger -

NOTE: The list mentioned in the second paragraph above will be mailed you if you will phone Amy or Ed McClhany at 343-3219.

AUDUBON ECOLOGY CAMP OF THE WEST:

This two-week workshop is located in the beautiful Wind River Mountains of Wyoming. The purpose of the Camp is to promote a new appreciation of nature and all of its processes. The cost of \$375 includes meals, housing, field trips and instruction. Two units of college credit are available from the University of Wyoming. Anyone 18 years of age or older is eligible to attend. You need not be a member of Audubon.

Sequoia Audubon is offering a \$375 scholarship to cover the cost of the workshop, as it has done for many years. For a brochure describing the Camp or for an application form for the scholarship, call Louise Fletcher at 591-6804. The completed application for the scholarship must be received by her by February 20. Although the Camp offers 4 sessions, they fill quickly so reservations must be made promptly.

JANUARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:

The board of directors of Sequoia Audubon held their regular monthly meeting on January 2.

The San Mateo post office box, 5492, will be discontinued at the end of June and replaced by box 1131 in Burlingame.

An announcement of our regular monthly meeting is now appearing in the San Mateo Times.

Several board members will attend the statewide National Audubon Conference in Sacramento January 26-28. Reimbursement for a portion of the costs was approved.

Duck hunting on the Burlingame bayfront was discussed. It would appear that certain duck blinds are within Burlingame City limits and that shooting from them is therefore illegal. Firearms may not be discharged within the city limits.

BIRD SLIDES WANTED:

The Education Committee of Sequoia Audubon Society is compiling sets of slides on many species of local birds. The slides will be available for use by SAS members for teaching and speaking engagements.

When Frank Allen wanted to show birds seen on our Christmas Bird Counts, he discovered that Jean had already gathered together 378 slides from various members and sources. Your Education Committee hopes that Sequoia Audubon members will add duplicates or copies of their good slides to these so we can have a complete set of California bird photographs.

If you can contribute slides, please call
Wilma Rockman, Chairman 366-3434
or
Jean Allen 344-9339

NATURE STUDIES - COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO

Three one-unit courses, Biology 48, will be offered by College of San Mateo on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8--10 AM.

Birds of the Bay Area Feb 6 to March 13
Spring Wildflowers March 15 to April 26
Marine Life - Bay and Coast May 1 to June 7

There will be weekly field trips.

Phone 574-6268 for information
574-6165 for application
or Mary Jane Baker at 851-2759

SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

The Docent Council of the Santa Cruz Mountains Natural History Association is planning a "Docents' Day" at Big Basin Redwoods State Park on Saturday, February 24, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

"Docents' Day" will be a chance for the public to become acquainted with this outstanding volunteer program. There will be displays at Park Headquarters and Docent-led nature walks. Docents and Park Rangers will be on hand to talk about the active volunteer group.

Anyone who feels good about the natural wonders of the Santa Cruz Mountains Area's State Parks and would like to share those feelings with others will be encouraged to become a part of the Docent Council.

The day will end with a pot-luck dinner. A hot or cold dish, or dessert, for six is the ticket to attend. Come see who and what the Docents are and stay for dinner.

For more information call: Santa Cruz Mountains Area (408) 335-5858 or Sandie Guenther (408) 264-1853.

JANUARY GENERAL MEETING:

MONO LAKE NEEDS YOUR HELP! That was the theme of Ms. Sally Judy's beautiful slide presentation on that unique region east of Yosemite National Park. Ms. Judy is a member of the recently formed Mono Lake Committee, P.O. Box 2764, Oakland, CA 94602. It is being sponsored by the Santa Monica Bay Audubon Chapter. Members seek to safeguard the scenic and wildlife resources of Mono Lake.

Mono is one of North America's oldest lakes. Huge numbers of California gulls and other waterfowl, shorebirds and grebes use the area for breeding, feeding or resting. Few places on earth provide for greater numbers of birds.

However, Mono Lake is being jeopardized by the unrestricted diversion of water, begun in 1941, from its major tributary streams for use by the city of Los Angeles. Since then the lake level has fallen more than 30 feet. The Committee wants a compromise between human water usage and environmental protection and suggests maintaining the lake at its 1976 level.

The Mono Lake Committee needs your help and support in saving this irreplaceable natural treasure.

Frank Allen replaced the Bird-of-the-Month segment with a pictorial resume of the December bird count.

FARMERS PLOT TO PARALYZE PURCHASERS

Farmers in Minot, ND are trying to beat the federal dam builders at their own game. Construction of a \$100 million dam is being considered to protect farmers and the town of Minot from frequent flooding by the nearby Souris River. Some 50 farmers, unhappy about the plan that would flood their land permanently, are going to make it difficult for the government to buy the land needed for the dam. According to Rural America News Service, the farmers have subdivided one acre of the land into 4,480 parcels, one square yard each. The postage-stamp plots sell for \$20. At least a thousand plots have been sold, and the farmers hope the government will hog-tie itself in its own red tape trying to buy up each parcel.

NATURE EXPEDITIONS INTERNATIONAL:

NEI has released their 1979 schedule of American West Expeditions and short courses. A copy may be obtained by writing NEI at 599 College Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94306. The American West Expeditions include the

American Southwest, Alaska, Canyonlands, Wyoming and Hawaii. Short courses cover some 29 programs from lectures to light plane trips over Yosemite, Death Valley, Grand Canyon, an owl walk in Alum Rock Park, Mt Lassen field trip and many other fascinating topics.

PROFILE OF AN ENVIRONMENTALIST:

Two Purdue University psychologists have surveyed personal attitudes concerning ecology. They found that those who appreciated the importance of ecology were mature, responsible, outgoing, conscientious, socially adjusted, alert to other current issues and had resolved their personal concerns and were therefore able to devote their energies to larger, less personal matters.

Those who did not have an interest in ecology may be more selfish and have a competitive outlook on life.

QUOTE:

Robert B. Taylor, Chairman, Ontario Hydro, Toronto, Canada, in a talk to the Commonwealth Club of California:

Constraints on resources - whether they be capital, labor or material - are a reflection of two implacable laws of economics that apply equally in California and in Ontario. A society cannot consume more than it can produce and it cannot produce as much as it would like to consume.

FIELD TRIP REPORT:

Lake Merced - Golden Gate Park

Sixteen birders went to Lake Merced and Golden Gate Park on a cold, cloudy, damp day. It was really cold!! Our first sighting for the day was a Cackling Goose, a small race of the Canadian Goose. He (or she) stayed around for us to observe for as long as we wanted. The hard to find Wood Duck was finally sighted at Metson Lake in Golden Gate Park and they were almost close enough to hand feed. This bird is God's masterpiece as far as beauty is concerned. I believe this bird to be the prettiest thing that I have ever seen. We were indeed fortunate.

In all, there were 45 species located and positively identified. The birds ranged from the tiny bushtit to the larger birds that are so often seen in this particular area. We were amazed to find the number of eared grebes that were in the vicinity, many seen in small flocks, swimming and diving in unison.

All in all a very rewarding day for all in spite of the cold and dampness. I am very proud of the birders who are always on the trips, as they are becoming very proficient in identification and general knowledge of the habits, etc. of our feathered friends.

Hal Lucas, Field Trip Chairman

COYOTE POINT MUSEUM DOCENT TRAINING:

Volunteers interested in working with children are being sought by the Coyote Point Museum in San Mateo for the Animal Docent and Foothill Docent training programs.

Animal docents will learn about warm and cold blooded animals native to this area, how to handle them and interpretive techniques for sharing this knowledge with small groups of children.

Foothill docents will participate in a training program which will include recognition of major plants and animals of the area, basic ecology of the various habitats found in these areas, plant and animal adap-

tations and interdependence, food webs, and interpretive techniques to use with groups. Training classes will consist of lectures by speakers who are experts in their field and field trips to different locations in San Mateo County, including Huddart Park, Junipero Serra Park, Memorial Park and the San Francisco Watershed area.

Guest lecturers include Harry Batlin, Supervisor of Big Basin State Park; Diane Conradson, Associate Professor of Natural History at San Jose State; and Maryann Danielson, former Coyote Point Museum director.

Foothill training will be held on Thursdays from 9:30- 12:30 January 25 until May 3. The first class will meet at the Coyote Point Museum.

Animal docent training will be held on Tuesday, 9:30-12:30 from February 13 to April 3.

The fee for each class is \$10.00. Docents, upon completing the program are asked to volunteer an average of two tours per month.

For further information, please call the Coyote Point Museum, 573-2595.

ECOLOGY EXPLORATIONS:

Sequoia Audubon Society and the San Mateo County Environmental Docent Council will cosponsor a field ecology series starting on Tuesday, February 13, and continuing through May. The instructors will be Leonora Main and Maryann Danielson. Emphasis will be on birds and flowers but all aspects of the environment will be included. We expect to explore the County from Bay to ocean, including trips to serpentine areas, the San Francisco Watershed, San Bruno Mountain, a private ranch in Portola Valley, Ano Nuevo/Gazos Creek and Pescadero Marsh to name a few. Trips to East Bay areas and the inner coast range will permit comparison to our local habitats. There will be at least two indoor "how to" sessions in each major interest area to assist in recognition problems and general characteristics.

Since the sessions will be alternated between plants and birds, it will be possible for a person to take the bird or the plant section only. However, enrollment preference will be given to those persons signing up for the entire course. Classes will generally run from 9:00 AM to Noon except for the longer field trips.

The anticipated fee for the series is \$20. Beginners as well as more advanced nature lovers are welcome. For further information or registration, call Maryann Danielson (342-6919) or Coyote Point Museum (573-2595).

RESULTS OF A ONE DAY SEINE AT PESCADERO MARSH: - by Maryann Danielson

In October, when Bruce Elliott of the California Fish and Game Department, met with Sequoia Audubon at Pescadero Marsh, he mentioned that little was known about the fish and invertebrates living in the ponds and sloughs in the marsh. In early December, Bob Breen (the naturalist at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve), Marjorie Neal (a docent at the Marine Reserve) and myself, seined the North Pond, the South Pond and the Lagoon to see what we could find.

Stretching out the 125-foot seine net with its one quarter inch mesh, and hauling it ashore was no small task for three people, especially where the net sank into the soft mud of the North and South Ponds. However, we did it and the results are most interesting.

In the North Pond, we found only three Armored Three-spined Stickleback, a small rather inconspicuous fish that is quite common in the coastal streams and ponds. In the water were also a few Water boatmen,

an aquatic insect. We found no invertebrates in the , which smelled of hydrogen sulfide (that rotten egg odor). Our feeling was that the North Pond was relatively sterile and could support few feeding birds.

The South Pond was less brackish than the North Pond and probably has a larger stickleback population since we saw these fish slip through the mesh as we pulled in the net. Also, there seemed to be more Water boatmen and some small amphipods. It would seem that this pond and slough could support more birds, which it seems to do, judging by casual observation. Certainly more data is needed on both the North and South Ponds.

One haul of the net in the lagoon just east of the highway bridge was tremendously productive--895 fish of four species. Most abundant was the Shiner Surfperch (475), followed by lesser numbers of Starry Flounder (338), Surf Smelt (54) and Staghorn Sculpin (28). There were some large sized Sculpin but mainly the fish were small, indicating that the lagoon and the lower Butano/Pescadero Creek drainages are probably serving as nursery areas for these fish. This data serves to point out the importance of marshes to fish productivity and should reinforce the thesis that the Pescadero Marsh area must be preserved and managed to maintain its important natural resources.

THE SEQUOIA is the newsletter of Sequoia Audubon Society and is published monthly, September through June. If you live in San Mateo County, membership in National Audubon Society includes a SEQUOIA subscription and membership in Sequoia Audubon Society. Subscription for non-members is \$2.00 per year.

If you are moving within San Mateo County, remember to send the SEQUOIA editors your change of address so you will not miss any copies. (THE SEQUOIA is sent third-class mail and is not forwarded.) If you are moving farther away and want to transfer your membership to your new Audubon chapter, include you request with your change of address to National Audubon Society as this transfer is made only upon specific direction from the subscriber.

DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH ISSUE OF THE SEQUOIA IS FEBRUARY 15.

SEQUOIA CALENDAR

- February 1 - Board Meeting
3,4 - Field Trip - Los Banos
6 - Tuesday Birders to Belmont
8 - Monthly Meeting at Garden Center
20 - Tuesday Birders to Sawyer Camp Road
24 - Field Trip - Crystal Springs Watershed

THE SEQUOIA February, 1979
Sequoia Audubon Society
P. O. Box 1131
Burlingame, CA 94010

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