



BULLETIN OF SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY
A CHAPTER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
Volume 29, No. 4

SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
December, 1979

MEETINGS:

BOARD MEETING, DECEMBER 6, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM in the conference room of Allstate Savings & Loan office, 1820 So. Grant Street, San Mateo. Board members and committee chairmen should attend. Other members are welcome.

ADVERTISEMENT*

HOLIDAY POT LUCK

A HOLIDAY SPECIAL - available to all Audubon members, their families, and friends. . . .ONE FESTIVE POT LUCK DINNER to be served before the regular December meeting. This once a year special is being offered on December 13th at 6:30 PM at the San Mateo Garden Center.

The cost is minimal - just one of the following:

A MAIN DISH or A SALAD or A DESSERT

This is an offer you can't refuse - bring one of the above (with enough for 8 times the number in your party) along with your plates, utensils, and a serving spoon. We'll provide the wine, coffee, tea, and punch. Entertainment is under the direction of John Silliman.

To participate in this festive occasion, just call Nancy Horn at 342-9902 or Rick Baird at 574-1067. Hurry, hurry - while the openings last. Be the first in your group to take advantage of this fine offer.

RSVP's Appreciated

*We're advertising because we want you to come!

PRESIDENT: Wilma Rockman
1166 Grand Street
Redwood City, CA 94061
Phone: 366-3434

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

REGULAR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING, DECEMBER 13, THURSDAY,
8:00 PM at the San Mateo Garden Center following the Potluck Dinner.

Mr. Doug Cheeseman, an instructor at De Anza College will present "Behavior of Birds in Kenya," a fascinating portrayal of bird performance, social niches and feeding habits. See the "pecking order" of the carrion feeders and the group nesting of the weaver birds. With over 1000 species in East Africa, this is truly a photographer's delight. Mr. Cheeseman leads a group to Kenya and Tanzania each year for Nature Expeditions International and is well informed about the ecology of the region.

Frank Allen and Charles Newman will present a new chapter in their "see and hear" Bird-of-the-Month series.

FIELD TRIPS: Public invited.

For field trip information phone: 344-4577

DECEMBER 8, SATURDAY -- FOSTER CITY

Meet at the Werder Fishing Pier on the left side of Hillsdale Boulevard at 8:30 AM. The fishing pier is approximately two blocks beyond the Safeway store and Port-O'-Call Shopping Center. Ducks and shorebirds will be observed in the bay and in the marsh. Call trip leader in the event of rain.

Leader: Frank Collins 349-0503

CHRISTMAS COUNTS --- 1979

Get Ready! Get on your mark! It's almost time to GO -- on our two 1979 Christmas Bird Counts! If you haven't done so already, mark Saturday, December 15th for Ano Nuevo and Sunday, December 30 for Crystal Springs on your calendar and immediately notify Frank Allen at 344-9339 that you will count. Refer to your November SEQUOIA for count circle maps. Our compilers will make area assignments and you will be notified. We also want to hear from all of you Feeder Watchers. Check the maps and let us know what part of the Count Circle you will be in.

To report your Count results:

ANO NUEVO, DECEMBER 15: Give your count directly to Mark Zumsteg or Frank Allen. The Sequoia Phone Recorder will be working at 344-9339. Speak clearly and without pause until your report is given. You may report your count not more than two days after Count Day.

CRYSTAL SPRINGS, DECEMBER 30: Peter Metropulos will hold forth at the Compilation Potluck Dinner. Participants in the count are encouraged to attend. (Details to follow.) If you can't attend, the Sequoia Phone Recorder will be working at 344-9339. Speak clearly and without pause until your report is completed. You may report your count at the dinner or by phone within two days after the Count Day. Frank and Jean Allen will be out in the field both Count Days. Hope to see you there!

JANUARY 12,13 - SATURDAY & SUNDAY - POINT LOBOS & CARMEL RIVER

An optional overnight trip. Details in January SEQUOIA. Leaders: Georgia and Jerry Perkins.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS:

October 13 - Marin Headlands. Leaders: Georgia and Jerry Perkins. After morning showers the weather was very pleasant. Fifteen birders turned out for a day which included Rodeo Lagoon, Battery Wallace and Hawk Hill. Battery Wallace brought great views of Townsend, Black-throated Gray and Blackpoll Warblers. At Rodeo Lagoon a MacGillivray's Warbler was sighted by a few. Hawk Hill was not productive due to lack of thermals.

October 27 - Annadel State Park

In spite of the distance, 18 participants enjoyed perfect fall weather at this fine State Park, with its varied habitats. Birding was very good for this time of the year; a total of 36 species recorded including Bewick's Wren, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Solitary Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Townsend's Warbler, Brown Creeper, Western Bluebird and the Hermit Thrush. The woodpeckers were the outstanding performers, with six species showing up: Common Flicker, Nuttall's, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Red-breasted Sapsucker and the star of the show, the Pileated Woodpecker.

-- Charles Newman, Leader

November 3 -- San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Or, the day we saw a Water Pipit on a levee! Not many field trip leaders can say that their group saw thousands of birds (at a distance) and only a few Water Pipits up close.

Our excuse...excuses: it was raining (but good birders don't mind that, you say). Only two cars drove out onto the levee with 18 intrepid birders who seemed to breathe with fog-up-the-window anticipation (that's a poor excuse for not seeing birds up close, you say). But...how about the first car sliding ever so gently off the levee toward the Bay, the wet Bay, above and below? What birds do you think you could see as you put your shoulder to the fender to push and hopefully save a public vehicle from sliding into a salt pond? However could one see any bird as your feet went out from under you and your hands grabbed at slick bay mud for security?

The end of this story: Field trip suddenly ended with 16 very wet and muddy birders squeezing into the Allen's van; fingers were crossed as we backed up on a very muddy and slick levee top to a point where we were able to back and turn. All went home happily and the Allen's went home muddily. The trip was very worthwhile, we discovered what good sports the Allen's are and also the good birders who excel in pushing cars. The two we left behind? Ask the field trip leader who hesitates to lead any more trips. If it doesn't rain, we might get stuck in a dust bowl!

-- Wilma Rockman, Leader

CONSERVATION NEWS:

As usual there is good news and bad news on the political scene. The House and Senate have each passed energy bills giving the Administration close to what was asked - a crash program heavily involved in synthetic fuels. Both bills are unacceptable to conservationists because of the environmental degradation which will be caused and the extraordinary powers to supercede laws and judicial review given to the Energy Mobilization Board. Two amendments to lessen these powers in the House version of the bill failed to pass. South County Congressman McCloskey supported these amendments while Congressman Royer voted against both. The Senate bill appropriates \$34.1 billion for the whole program, \$20 billion of which will go to synthetic fuels development. It is hoped that this figure may be reduced in the joint conference committee which will reconcile the Senate bill with the much less expensive House version.

The good news is that the Endangered Species Act, which for a while appeared itself greatly endangered, was extended for another three years. The one objectionable feature in the House bill - a somewhat weakened Scientific Authority - may be improved when this bill is reconciled with the Senate version in the conference committee.

Locally, the best news for conservationists was the decisive election of Supervisor, Arlen Gregorio, a strong supporter of environmental

protection. More good news is the confirmation of federal funding allowing acquisition by the County of the Edgewood Road State College site in Redwood City for a park and acquisition by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District of the Hassler Health Home property. Funding for the latter will also be provided partly by a San Carlos City Assessment district.

We must not be lulled into complacency by this however. Constant watchfulness is needed for less than desirable developments in all parts of the County. A particularly horrendous one is proposed for the Redwood City waterfront off Harbor Boulevard of 121 single family homes floated on a 21-acre site along Redwood Creek to be excavated to four feet below mean sea level. Not only would this be inconsistent with local zoning and land-use plans, but the extra traffic generated would result in great increases in traffic congestion and air pollution.

An even larger development has been proposed for southeast Menlo Park of 412 single family homes on 72 acres at the intersection of University Avenue and Kavanaugh Drive. Since some 40% of this area qualifies as wetlands (containing pickleweed, salt grass and cattails) it is doubtful that a Corps of Engineers permit could be obtained. 47 acres of this land known as "The Back 40 Acres," has been under cultivation for three years by local residents to grow vegetables in an effort to combat inflationary food prices. Acquisition of this community farm through County Park and Recreation Proposition A funds has been proposed with possible development of the surrounding marsh as an environmental study area and park for residents of East Palo Alto and East Menlo Park.

-- Ruth Smith, Conservation Chairman

ALASKA UPDATE:

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has severely damaged the Alaska Lands Bill, leaving the way open for haphazard development. Senators Sorgiss and Roth have come up with a substitute bill which would restore needed protection. There is mounting pressure to bring the bill to the Senate floor before the end of the year. It is essential that your Senators hear from you. Please urge them to support the Sorgiss-Roth substitute, not the Committee bill. Act now while you have a chance to speak out!

Send Mailgrams to Senators Alan Cranston and S. I. Hayakawa at U.S. Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 or call them at (202) 224-3121.

For more information call the Alaska Hotline (202) 547-5550.

-- Georgia Perkins

WHAT'S GOING ON...SAN MATEO COUNTY!

"Small is Beautiful"...Farmers with less than 50 acres, and that includes backyard "farmers," who want to bypass the middleman and sell the their produce on the bayside...help is at hand.

Jean Berwick, Community Food and Nutrition Program, is attempting to establish a Farmers' Market in Redwood City. Although planning is at the beginning stage...permits, location, contacts, etc. you can contact Jean at 364-8181. Get out the seed catalogs and start digging!

L.C.P. (not a new pesticide) but our very own Local Coastal Program started public hearings before the Planning Commission November 14th. This is an outcome of the California Coastal Act of 1976 which replaced the original Coastal Act: Proposition 20.

Of particular interest to Audubon members will be the presentation and public reaction to the component entitled: Sensitive Habitat at 2:00 in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers at Government Center, November 28th.

As Audubon goals indicate guidelines to measure the current status of the environmental scene: "Cooperate with all organizations that seek to conserve the wildlife, land, water and air resources of the Earth's fragile biosphere...Protect nature preserves...Maintain the view that mankind is both a part of the ecological system and the steward of environmental health and vitality.

The majority of the November 14th audience represented the coast and indicated many concerns about the required planning presented by the County Staff. A great deal is at stake for the current members of the coastal area and for the future of land use in general, which will surely affect all of us.

---WR

NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING:

Ronn Storro-Patterson was our speaker. In May, 1978, Ronn worked off the north coast of Alaska as part of a bowhead whale aerial survey team. He has also been an advisor and delegate to the International Whaling Commission.

Although protection from commercial whaling for this large, Bering Sea whale began over 40 years ago, the current estimated number of bowheads is less than three thousand. The coastal Eskimos are allowed an annual quota (difficult to monitor) of killed or struck whales and are currently killing more than the reproductive rate. The IWC wants a zero quota but the Eskimo argues that hunting the bowhead is necessary to their culture and subsistence diet. It is a dilemma for all concerned (not the least the whales) since if the U.S. does not honor a moratorium it risks being inconsistent in its protection of whales generally. Ronn's aerial photography of these majestic mammals was particularly good.

Charles Newman showed the screech owl in a pileated woodpecker cavity as Bird-of-the-Month and treated us to a series of wild, shrill recorded owl notes. John Silliman added a slide of the chukar partridge taken in Colorado.

---C.G.

CALIFORNIA FISH & GAME DECALS:

The December meeting will be the last chance to purchase the decal of the "Ram." The cost is \$2.00 per decal. The money goes to worthwhile conservation projects such as the protection of the peregrines nesting at Morro Rock.

SEQUOIA AUDUBON TELEPHONE SERVICE (415) 344-4577

SEQUOIA AUDUBON NOW HAS ITS OWN TELEPHONE ANSWERING SERVICE!

The board of directors has authorized the purchase of a very fine telephone answering machine. If properly utilized by our membership it should do wonders keeping all of us informed about our chapter activities.

The machine is installed in the home of Hal and Barbara Lucas and they promise to answer your calls as promptly as possible. They will answer the telephone while they are in their home and leave the machine on to record your message in their absence. By leaving your name and telephone number you will most likely receive a return call the same day. The board feels that this service will also be an aid to our of town visitors who are interested in Sequoia activities.

The idea is to answer any and all questions concerning field trips, Sequoia activities in general and to assist in finding the right person if there is a question of suggestion. Please allow 4 rings and then the machine takes over.

Many thanks to Frank Allen for his expert selection of this fine

machine. He found the perfect one for our purpose. His tireless efforts are most appreciated.

Hal Lucas, Field Trip Chairman

CRAIG BENKMAN LETTER:

Hi, Sequoia!

Going to school in Arizona has been a good change. Seeing new birds and plants and old ones in new abundances. Driving down to Flagstaff I saw a male Lark Bunting at a rest stop near Barstow. A good omen of things to come! Before school started I managed to get down to Oak Creek Canyon and see Painted Redstarts and a Black Swift, the latter being, I believe, the first northern Arizona record. Venturing up to the San Francisco Peaks I saw Red-faced Warblers. Oh what a sight!

I started my research for my thesis before school even started, so I've been fairly well tied up. From my study sites up on the slopes of the San Francisco Peaks I've seen many birds including a Goshawk and a Peregrine Falcon.

This area is truly magnificent, the fall colors glorious. The slopes of the peaks in the sunset are like an artist's palette. Riding my bike to school (before the temperature got in the teens) was often exciting, not only avoiding cars, but in the early morning often seeing bluebirds, crossbills, Evening Grosbeaks and flocks of Pinon Jays (the latter all color banded!).

Last weekend I went to the White Mountains in Eastern Arizona and saw Gray Jays and a Great-tailed Grackle.

I better get back to studying, I have to teach a botany lab tomorrow, a test in ...

Happy Birding,
Craig Benkman
Dept of Biological Sciences, Box 5640,
Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff,
AZ 86011

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY - WESTERN EDUCATION CENTER

SYMPOSIUM "Birds of Mexico" - February 23, 1980

This fourth annual bird symposium will be held in the Morrison Auditorium at the California Academy of Sciences and will include presentations by Alexander Sprunt IV, C. Eugene Knoder, Dr. Clyde Jones, Dr. Laurence Binford, Dr. Dan Anderson and Dr. Bernardo Villa. Admission by advance registration only. Send your check for \$4.50 per person payable to National Audubon Society to BIRDS, National Audubon Society, 376 Greenwood Beach Rd., Tiburon, CA 94920.

BOOK SALE The Book Nest at the Center will conduct a pre-Christmas sale from December 1 through 21. Peterson Field Guides reduced 20%. Binoculars, scopes reduced 25%.

The Book Nest is located at 376 Greenwood Beach Road in Tiburon and the hours are 9--5 Wednesday through Sunday.

COLOR BANDED CALIFORNIA GULLS FROM MONO LAKE:

1200 young California Gulls were banded at Mono Lake this summer in an effort to determine the wintering areas and migration routes of the Mono Lake gulls. All birds were banded before fledging with a metal Fish and Wildlife Service band and either a red or light green plastic band.

Mono Lake's future is presently being debated. It is important to gather as much data as possible on the Mono gulls' biology at all seasons. Please help by searching the California Gulls you encounter for banded birds. Please send any observations to:

David Winkler, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720.

COOPER ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY:

The third meeting of the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithological Society for the 1979-80 academic year will be held on Monday, December 10, at 8:00 PM in Room 2503 Life Sciences Building, University of California, Berkeley. Russell Greenberg, U.C. Berkeley, will present a talk entitled: "Wondering on the winter ways of wood warblers in Panama." The meeting is open to anyone with a strong interest in the biology of birds. It will be preceded by a business meeting for COS members at 7:30. (Parking: Free off-campus; \$2.00 on-campus.)

GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON - HAWAII TOUR - APRIL 5 to 14, 1980

Designed for both the beginning nature enthusiast and the advanced birder, the tour visits the rich and diverse Hawaiian Archipelago for native birds and plants and volcanic geology. From the Big Island of Hawaii, the youngest, with its volcanic moonscapes, to Maui for a hike across Haleakala caldera and snorkling at a coral reef in sight of humpbacked whales, to the oldest main island, Kauai, with its deeply fluted cliffs, lush vegetation and cascading waterfalls.

The \$400 fee includes land transportation, lodging, a snorkeling trip, naturalist guides and most food, but not air fare. Leaders are Roger Harris (533-9508) and Meryl Sundove (388-5831). For itinerary and reservations contact South American Wilderness Adventures, 1760 Solano #203, Berkeley, CA 94707 (524-5111).

OHLONE AUDUBON SOCIETY - WILDLIFE FOR ART BENEFIT

Paintings, sculpures, porcelains, photo prints and Christmas crafts. Tuesday, December 4 from 7:00 to 10:00 PM at the Adobe Art Center, 20395 San Miguel Avenue in Castro Valley.

- Be on time for each field trip.
- Include newcomers as you converse about birds.
- Remain behind the leader.
- Drive and walk only on roadways and trails.
- In protected areas collect no specimens (plants, rocks, etc.).
- Never play tape recorders in heavily-birded areas.
- Give field marks and ecological relationships in groups of mixed abilities.

- Encourage interested young birders through education.
- Talk and walk quietly in the field.
- Habitats should be left as you found them--and uncluttered.
- If possible, wear earthy colors.
- Caravan close behind without tailgating.
- Stay within sight of the group during the trip.

-- The Field Trip Committee

SEQUOIA CALENDAR

December	6	Thursday	Board Meeting
	8	Saturday	Field Trip - Foster City
	13	Thursday	Potluck Dinner & Monthly Meeting
	15	Saturday	Ano Nuevo Christmas Count
	30	Sunday	Crystal Springs Christmas Count
January	3	Thursday	Board Meeting

Membership in National Audubon Society includes the AUDUBON magazine, membership in Sequoia Audubon Society and the Sequoia bulletin, THE SEQUOIA. Please mail membership applications to Sequoia Audubon Society, Membership Chairman, P.O. Box 1131, Burlingame 94010. Change of address and request for Chapter change should be sent to BOTH National and Sequoia.

Membership: Student \$13.00. Individual \$20.00. Family \$25.00.
Subscription to the SEQUOIA only \$2.00. (No lapse notices are sent.)

DEADLINE FOR THE JANUARY SEQUOIA IS DECEMBER 15.

The editors wish one and all a very
Happy Holiday Season!
(And fun and success on the two
Christmas Counts.)

THE SEQUOIA December, 1979
Sequoia Audubon Society
P.O. BOX 1131
Burlingame, CA 94010

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