



# sequoia needles

Bulletin of the  
JUNE 1987

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

San Mateo County, Ca.  
Vol. 35, #10

## THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

### COSTA RICA

Ted Chandik, the well-known traveler, lecturer, tour leader and chief naturalist at the Palo Alto Baylands will share his experiences in the wildlife-rich land of Costa Rica.

Costa Rica is one of the few Central American nations with an organized environmental movement and strong support for that movement from its government. It is a land of rich contrasts with tropical jungles along its coasts, temperate highland plains and cloud forests.

Like its neighbors, this nation is noted for the numbers and variety of its birds. Unlike them, it boasts of a stable and democratic government which welcomes American visitors.

Ted's informal and inimitable talk coupled with his superb photography promises an exciting evening for all.

### POTLUCK TIME!

This month also brings us to our annual June Dinner, so dust off your favorite show-off recipes.

Please remember to bring your own utensils and plates and a paper bag in which to take them home. Those people whose last names begin with the letters *A through F* should bring a *CASSEROLE*, or other hot dish, those whose names begin with the letters *G through L*, a *SALAD* and *M through Z* should provide the *DESSERTS*.

Bring enough to serve **FIVE** times the number in your party.

Meetings are held at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside on the second Thursday of every month. The Potluck begins at 6:30 P.M., followed immediately by the General Meeting, election of officers and the program.

## NEXT MONTH'S PROGRAM

Our new year will kick off with our additional "do-it-yourself" night in which members will bring slides showing their summer activities. See the September *NEEDLES* for details.



**Cal P.A.W.**

## WILDLIFE HABITAT AND PARKLANDS INITIATIVE

RICK JOHNSON

This pawprint is the symbol for CALIFORNIANS FOR PARKS AND WILDLIFE. CalPAW is a coalition of conservation groups that is working to gather signatures to place an initiative on the June 1988 ballot. The initiative will establish a bond act to provide \$700 to \$800 million for land acquisition. It has been estimated that the repayment of the bond will work out to \$1.50 per person per year over the next 20 years. The value of these lands to ourselves and subsequent generations will far exceed that price.

The initiative will preserve an impressive list of natural treasures. Included is \$1 million allocated for expansion of Pescadero Marsh. Because this item can directly benefit the preserve, the SAS board voted to contribute \$2500 from the Pescadero Marsh Fund to the initiative campaign.

The bond designates \$8 million to acquire wetlands on the bayside south of the San Mateo Bridge. This will benefit the efforts to complete the San Francisco Bay Refuge. A similar amount is earmarked to acquire coastal lands.

Audubon members are committed to the preservation of natural habitats, and we must be willing to back that up with the funds necessary to acquire the property. This initiative gives each of us the chance to make a commitment and to contribute. SAS will be helping with fund-raising and signature gathering. We encourage you to join in.

DAN TAYLOR

Regional Vice President, National Audubon Society

The National Audubon Society has endorsed this initiative which will provide funds to permanently protect California's most endangered lands: wetlands and riparian habitat. We have decided to use the initiative process because of the refusal of the Legislature to place three important conservation bond acts on the state ballot in 1986.

The Planning and Conservation League has organized support of conservation groups for this important initiative that combines all three of last year's bond acts.

At least \$12 million is set aside for acquisition of Bay wetlands. \$12 million will be provided to the East Bay Rgnl. Park District. There is \$9 million for acquisitions on the San Mateo coast and \$3 million for Coe State Park.

**YOUR HELP IS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS BOND ACT A REALITY.** We will have to gather 600,000 signatures between now and December. If you are able to help gather signatures, please call or write Rick Johnson (571-8533) or the Audubon office (593-7368). You will also receive a petition through the mail this month from National Audubon. Please fill it out and return it immediately.

CALENDAR

June 1987

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

JUNE 4 SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 PM at the Sears Savings THURSDAY Bank, Carlmont Shopping Center, at the intersection of Ralston Avenue and the Alameda de la Pulgas in Belmont. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.

JUNE 6 NATURE WALK AT PESCADERO MARSH. Conducted by State SATURDAY Park Rangers. An easy two hour stroll through the marsh trails while a state parks ranger - assisted by PMIA docents explains its flora, fauna and dynamics. Meet at the Hwy. One bridge over Pescadero Creek at 1 P.M.

JUNE 7 GAZOS CREEK AND BUTANO STATE PARK. The riparian SUNDAY corridor of Gazos Creek is one of the finest year-round birding areas of San Mateo County. From its mouth, where resting gulls and terns roost, to its origins in the redwoods, the creek is a summer home to a large number of passerine species and a representative population of hawks and owls. For even more diversity, we will also bird Butano State Park and the grasslands between the two areas. We will meet at the intersection of Hwy. 1 and Gazos Creek Road, just south of the Pigeon Point Lighthouse at 9:00 A.M. The trip should break up at lunchtime. Our leader is our Christmas Count coordinator, the author of our "Birding" column and one of best birders to be found anywhere.

LEADER: PETER METROPULOS 592-2417

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 /-----/ WELCOME! \-----\  
 : FIELD TRIPS AND THE GENERAL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO ALL :  
 : MEMBERS AND TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC. BEGINNERS ARE WELCOME :  
 : ON ALL OF OUR FIELD TRIPS. SOME TRIPS ARE DESIGNATED AS :  
 : BEGINNERS' TRIPS BECAUSE THEY ARE RELATIVELY NEARBY AND :  
 : MAY BE ENJOYED WITHOUT SPECIAL CLOTHING, EQUIPMENT OR :  
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JUNE 7 OPEN HOUSE AT THE WETLANDS VAN. This is an oppor- SUNDAY tunity for the general public to tour the State Park educational van, see a slide show on marsh and other wetland habitats and discuss related topics with State Parks personnel. This van is based at Pescadero Marsh and is used throughout the state for educational purposes. From 1 to 3 P.M. at the parking lot overlooking the marsh on Hwy. 1 just south of the bridge over Pescadero Creek.

JUNE 11 THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND POTLUCK DINNER. THURSDAY ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 1987-1988. The Potluck begins promptly at 6:30 P.M. with the meeting and elections following immediately thereafter. Our program, featuring Ted Chandik, the well-known local naturalist and tour leader, will feature slides and comments on the birds and natural environment of Costa Rica. See Page One for details. The meeting will be at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside.

JUNE 13 TRAIL CLEAN-UP DAY AT PESCADERO MARSH. Sponsored SATURDAY by the Pescadero Marsh Interpretive Association. Under the direction of State Parks rangers, we will clean up the wind-blown debris along the trail system and clear away intruding vegetation and remove exotic plants. We will meet at the Marsh Van in the parking lot just south of the bridge over Pescadero Creek on Hwy. 1 at 9:00 AM. State Parks will provide cleanup materials. Short tours of the Marsh Van will be provided.

(Continued on Page Three)

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

JEANNE PRICE

A study of ACR's Cypress Grove Preserve on Tomales Bay, which has been dormant since 1982, was reactivated in March. Docents from both Bolinas and Bouverie Preserves are participating in compiling a natural history inventory of the property. At present a handful of volunteers meets once a week to work on individual or group studies of plants, mammals, insects and birds. Anne Monk is the scientific advisor on this year round project.

The Bolinas Preserve graduated its first class of Ranch Guides the end of March. These thirty-one volunteers began their new duties April 4. From three to six guides are used each weekend the ranch is open to help the increasing number of visitors enjoy the heronry and the pond as well as understand the general ecology of Picher Canyon.

Anne Monk reports the March only Sunday Family Programs were successful enough to repeat next year. "We saw lots of happy faces coming out of the Cow Barn," she said, "where families with young children learned together about salamanders, flowers and insects and did related craft projects."

The Bolinas Preserve will be open to July 12 this year. The public is welcome to drop in on weekends and holidays until June 9. After the 9th the ranch is open every day but Monday until the end of the season. The hours are 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

MOUNTAIN LIONS

Despite overwhelming public and media opposition, the Department of Fish and Game approved the creation of a limited hunting season on the mountain lion. Under the new regulations, a total of 190 mountain lion permits will be granted under a lottery system.

Some opposition groups are advocating that their members obtain hunting licenses and apply for permits in hopes of keeping these out of the hands of the hunters. Since this involves considerable expense and requires all licensees to complete a firearms safety course, its effectiveness is questionable.

A more hopeful method of forestalling the hunt may be found in Assembly Bill 467 presented by Bev Hansen and Bill Filante. This bill would designate the mountain lion as a protected species and require Fish and Game to undertake a scientific study of population and habitat. You should make your feelings known on this bill by writing to your State Representative at the State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. No other address is necessary.

**KESTERSON SOLUTION??**

CLIFF RICHER

The United States Bureau of Reclamation has come up with its own solution to the disposition of toxic agricultural runoff from the West Valley. Considering the Bureau's history and its reactionary tilt towards large scale water projects, the solution is not surprising. Dump it off the San Mateo Coast!

The sheer brilliance of this solution is mind-boggling. The Kesterson problem was created in the first place when they were forbidden to dump this waste into the San Joaquin River or into San Francisco or Monterey Bays. What is it about our coast that somehow makes it more conducive to waste disposal? What is it in their thinking that makes it acceptable to solve a problem by "splitting the difference" between two unacceptable alternatives?

Why is it so difficult for the bureaucrats to bite the bullet and admit to the only real long term solution - proper use of the land? The principal crop of the Westlands water district is cotton - surplus cotton - Cotton which is triply subsidized. First, by water which is purchased at below its delivery cost. Second, by artificial government price supports. And, finally, by creating a waste disposal problem that must be paid for by the general public.

Let's stop flushing the poisons away so they become somebody else's problem! Let's start raising alkali-tolerant dry-land crops! Let's retire marginal land from production! Let's stop paying three times for crops we don't need!

In short, let's solve the real problems. Let's cure the disease not the symptoms.

**WILDLIFE RESCUE AUCTION**

Wildlife Rescue, Inc., with the co-sponsorship of the Palo Alto Animal Services, will be sponsoring an auction to be held on June 27, 1987 at Mitchell Park in Palo Alto.

The doors will open at 7:00 P.M. for a silent auction with the live auction at 9:00 P.M. There will be a donation of \$15. per person at the door. Champagne and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Sequoia Audubon Society has offered five copies of *San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching* and some individuals, under the sponsorship of SAS, will conduct birding tours for the highest bidders.

If you have anything which might be of value to a prospective bidder, and which you would like to convert to a tax deduction please call Pat Carroll, Program Coordinator at the Wildlife Rescue Center, 494-7926.

**CALENDAR**  
(Continued from Page Two)

June 1987						
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**JUNE 20 YUBA PASS & SIERRA VALLEY.** Three areas of sharply contrasting habitat lie within a very few miles of each other on this scenic and bird-rich trip. We have made arrangements to again use the facilities of the Sierra Nevada Field Campus of San Francisco State University so an early indication of interest is required. The Sierra Nevada Nevada Field Campus is in Yuba Pass approximately 5 miles north of Sierra City. Full accommodations at the Field Campus can be had for \$21.50 per day. This includes breakfast, a sack lunch, dinner, 24-hr. snacks and a cot and mattress in a platform tent. There are indoor and outdoor facilities with flush toilets and hot showers. Just bring your own sleeping bag and towels. If you prefer to use a motel, meals are available at \$13.50 per day. For someone arriving for dinner on Friday and staying through Sunday morning, the cost, including Sunday's sack lunch, would be \$37.00. Cash and checks are acceptable but no credit cards. Call the office or Cliff Richer to reserve.

LEADER GIL WEST

**JUNE 20 NATURE WALK AT PESCADERO MARSH.** Conducted by State Park Rangers. An easy two hour stroll through the marsh trails while a state parks ranger - assisted by PMIA docents explains its flora, fauna and dynamics. Meet at the Hwy. One bridge over Pescadero Creek at 1 P.M.

**JUNE 21 OPEN HOUSE AT THE WETLANDS VAN.** This is an opportunity for the general public to tour the State Park educational van, see a slide show on marsh and other wetland habitats and discuss related topics with State Parks personnel. This van is based at Pescadero Marsh and is used throughout the state for educational purposes. From 1 to 3 P.M. at the parking lot overlooking the marsh on Hwy. 1 just south of the bridge over Pescadero Creek.

NO SUMMER FIELD TRIPS ARE SCHEDULED AT THIS TIME. WE DO EXPECT TO HAVE ONE IN EARLY AUGUST. PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE FOR DETAILS AFTER JULY 15. WE ALSO EXPECT TO REPEAT THE SALTON SEA SAFARI OVER THE LABOR DAY WEEKEND, BUT CANNOT BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN AT THIS TIME. PLEASE CALL CLIFF RICHER, 355-4058, IF YOU HAVE ANY INTEREST IN THIS PARTICULAR TRIP.

September 1987						
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

SEP. 3 SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 PM at the Sears Savings Bank, Carlmont Shopping Center, at the intersection of Ralston Avenue and the Alameda de la Pulgas in Belmont. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.

SEP. 10 SAS GENERAL MEETING. "SHOW AND TELL" NIGHT in THURSDAY which our members bring their own slides and narrate their summer adventures. Always one of our most popular meetings. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Social Mixer at 7:30 PM, General Meeting begins at 8:00.

SEP. 12 FIELD TRIP TO THE SALINAS SEWAGE PONDS, one of the prime spots for rare and vagrant shorebirds. Led by Peter Metropulos. See September NEEDLES for details.

## CROSS CURRENTS

*Cross Currents* is a newsletter published by the Friends of the River on an irregular basis. It provides organizations with up-to-the-minute news and information on what's happening to our California Rivers. The following is freely adapted from this source.

Protection for the Kings River is virtually assured with the passage of HR 799. This is a compromise which trades off an additional 20 feet of linear capacity at Pine Flat Reservoir for habitat conservation. From its headwaters down to 1595 feet elevation, the Kings will be designated as "Wild and Scenic". From there down to 990 feet, the river will enjoy the same protections as if it were so designated and a 48,000 acre Kings River Special Management Area will be created. The lower canyon has been omitted from the legislation - for the time being. Senate passage should be "routine" since both California Senators support the bill.

The Kern and Merced Rivers are also well on the way to earning Wild and Scenic status. Both houses have passed bills authorizing this, with the Senate's being broader in scope. It is now up to the Conference Committee.

Senator Wilson said, "On many river stretches we have reached the point where the loss to our environment outweighs any marginal gain from water and power development." Unfortunately he was also quoted as saying that the Auburn Dam was an exception "still worth building."

Even more unfortunately in the view of the Friends of the River, there are a number of other Congressmen who agree with him. Rep. Norm Shumway has introduced HR 1605, the "Auburn Dam Revival Act." The thrust of the arguments favoring the dam are directed towards flood control, but the economics are electric power and irrigation water. The Friends of the River are soliciting letters to your Congressman or to Senators Cranston and Wilson.

Another "dead" project is in process of revival. The South Fork of the American River (SOFAR) Project looked doomed when the financing fell through. Now EBASCO, the project engineers have offered to provide the financing. Details are not available on this financing, but so shaky is the project that there is danger that bankruptcy might interrupt the work - but only after irreparable environmental damage has been done. Once again the Friends of the River are suggesting letters. Write to the El Dorado National Forest, encouraging them to require surety bonding for the project. This would necessitate financing review by a third party and would provide funds for restoration of the environment if the project were abandoned.

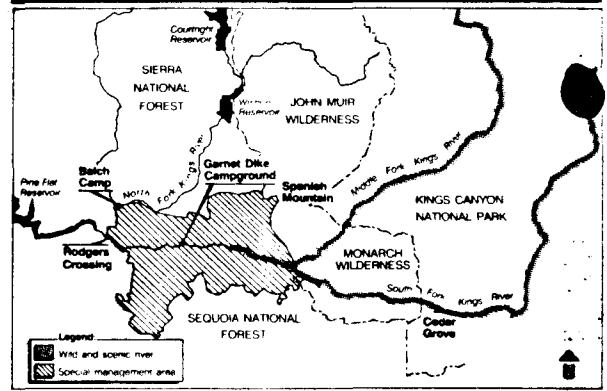
### IMPORTANT ADDRESSES

Jerald Hutchins, Supervisor, El Dorado National Forest,  
100 Forni Rd., Placerville, CA 95667  
Don Maugham, Chairman, State Water Resources Control Board,  
PO Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95801  
US Representative the Honorable \_\_\_\_\_,  
House Office Building, Washington DC 20515  
US Senator \_\_\_\_\_,  
Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510

### SPECIAL WARNING

Watch the papers for developments in connection with Assemblyman Jim Costa's package of water bills. These are insidious since they propose to ship Delta water south but offer trade-offs to many of the opponents to the Peripheral Canal and Duke's Ditch. Delta farmers will get \$100 million to repair levees. Fishermen will get funds to restore fish spawning grounds. And Valley farmers have been assured that environmental restrictions on the canal itself will be minimal. They're trying to isolate Northern environmentalists from their previous allies. Look out for this one!

## Protected areas of Kings River



## SAS CONTRIBUTIONS

The Board of Directors of Sequoia Audubon Society voted these contributions:  
FROM THE PESCADERO MARSH FUND: To the Open Space Bond Initiative Fund, to be used by the Planning and Conservation League to guarantee the bond question appearing on the June '88 ballot- \$2500.  
FROM THE GENERAL FUND: To the National Audubon Society Mono Lake Defense Fund. Half of all Birdathon contributions will also go to this fund. \$1000.

These contributions are possible because of the generosity of individual donors, because of our success in enhancing the State's involvement in Pescadero Marsh and through our ability to maintain a balanced budget for the current year.

## CAMPERSHIP AWARD

This year's recipient of the Sequoia Audubon Campership Award is Ms. Kathryn A. Smith-Penner. Ms. Smith-Penner, a resident of Campbell, teaches biology at Sequoia High School in Redwood City.

The selection was made by the Education Committee after a review of applications and essays submitted by teachers from all of the San Mateo school systems.

Formal presentation of the award will be made at this month's meeting.

## SUNBEAM ECO. TRIPS

Maryann Danielson is offering a series of summer field trips to study birds in a variety of habitats. The series will include:

- June 6 Birdbanding - Palomarin & ACR
- June 20 Chimney Rock at Point Reyes - Nesting gulls/oystercatchers.
- July 18 Mt. Hamilton transect to note altitudinal changes in biota.
- August 1 San Mateo County Coast for nesting summer birds.
- August 15 Bodega Bay for early migrants.

Participants may sign up for the entire series or individual trips. Preference will go to series participants. Series fee is \$45. Individual trips are \$10. For additional details call 342-6919.

**PESCADERO TREASURES**

The increased activity by State Parks' Rangers and other interested people at Pescadero Marsh is showing us what a treasure we have in the Marsh.

The heron rookery was revived last year following several years with no notable nesting success. There are at least six and possibly as many as ten active great blue heron nests. If you are at the marsh and have the opportunity to observe the nests, please report your observations to the Audubon office (593-7368) so that we can pass them on to State Parks. We need information on the location of the nests, number of active nests, number of eggs, number of chicks, etc. in as much detail as possible. Evidence suggests that black-necked stilts are nesting for the first time in recent history. The rare bank swallow has been seen over the marsh on several occasions although no nesting colony has been found.

Both Dave Augustine, State Parks Ranger, and Tim Sullivan, an off-duty ranger from the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, have found individual specimens of the endangered San Francisco garter snake.

Tim also found the rare pink sand verbena growing there.

Observers have reported large spawning steelhead in Pescadero Creek and two rare species of minnow have been noted.

Birds, reptiles, wildflowers and fish are all a part of the complex ecology of this unique resource. As more and more trained observers turn their attention to Pescadero Marsh we can expect other discoveries and additional evidence as to the value of this coastal treasure house.

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 \* BIRDING VIDEOTAPES ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR RENTAL FROM THE SAS OFFICE. \*  
 \* TECHNIQUES OF BIRDING BY Arnold Small \$2.00 per week (5 days) \*  
 \* National Audubon Society's VIDEO GUIDE TO BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA \$5.00 per week (5 days) \*  
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San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching is Sequoia Audubon Society's guide to birding sites in San Francisco and San Mateo County. More than 30 different spots are described and accompanied by maps, directions and helpful notes about each spot. A species index directs you to habitats for the birds you want to see. Order one for yourself and several as gifts! Use this form to order your copy today. AT A NEW LOW PRICE!! Only \$6.00! (Taxes, shipping and handling included).

Also available by mail - including postage and tax  
 National Geographic Field Guides-NEW EDITION SOON!  
 Birding Northern California - Jean Richmond 12.00  
 Birding at the Bottom of the Bay 8.25  
 Mono Lake Guidebooks 7.60  
 Birds of the Sacramento Area 4.50

Send checks to: Sequoia Audubon Society  
 Allow 14-18 days 720 El Camino Real #403  
 for delivery Belmont, Ca. 94002

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY ..... STATE .... ZIP .....

ALSO AVAILABLE AT MEETINGS AND SOME FIELD TRIPS

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

- From ATHERTON: JAMES L. FERGASON, WILLIAM FIELDER, JEAN S. SCHAAF, ROBERT D. SCHIFFNER
- From BELMONT: GILBERT RUSSELL, MARJORIE E. NEFF, M. H. CARMICHAEL, JOSEPH B. HARRIS, SUZANNE S. HILLARD
- From BURLINGAME: JEAN S. MC CONNELL, JEAN E. IOIART, DARLENE S. RVEDISUELI
- From DALY CITY: GINI POWELL, ELIZABETH DISQUE
- From FOSTER CITY: ROSEMARY DUNN NELSON, MS. ROSE G. REINA
- From HALF MOON BAY: MISS E. C. GLINES, CLIFF STANFIELD, ALMA G. MC DANIEL, BERESFORD GARDEN CLUB
- From HILLSBOROUGH: ROBERT N. BECK, ERWIN C. CHOU
- From MENLO PARK: MRS. W. A. MOSER, DAVID LOW, MARIA F. LUCKE, STEVE SCHMIDT, HELEN M. ROLLAND, MISS M. THOMAS, MR. AND MRS. PAUL OBRIEN, ELAINE RIVAU, HELEN E. REIST, W. WOOD, MARILYN EATON, STEPHEN L. ETTRICH
- From MONTARA: L. L. PETERS, MRS. TERRY MORFORD, DONALDINA JOUNG, DONALD H. FRICKE
- From PACIFICA: CARLOS A. LOPEZ, ROBERT W. MILLER, WILLIAM M. VELEZ
- From PESCADERO: BILL THOMPSON, JERRY S. W. HADDOX
- From REDWOOD CITY: J. K. WILES, JAN ESHELMAN, CAROLE D. MAYERS, JERRY BLAIR, NORMA BOYLE, WILLIAM M. THURSTON, HOLLY ORVIK, JANET WHITTEMORE, MICHAEL J. FERRANDO, DANIEL LAMB, DEBRA DORST, JUDITH SCHUTZ
- From SAN BRUNO: ANTHONY L. MANISCALCO, MS. JANIS HAGAN, J. P. WARD
- From SAN CARLOS: MR. GARNETT R. SMITH, INGE RICK, C. CARMODY, FREDERICK B. BENTON, MR. KAROLY NIKOLAS, MRS. E. E. WOLFERS, MARGERY L. EVANS, G. P. MAUGEIN, DEE MELLO, ROLAND PHARAZYN, GENEVIEVE F. PAUL, GERTRUDE PACHECO
- From SAN MATEO: JUDITH A. DACUMOS, VINCE BRADLEY, LESLIE N. REYNOLDS, SIGNE THORSEN, PATRICIA M. HIDE, JENNIFER MIKULIC, S. NAGUMO, JEAN MERRILL, K. BERMAN, MRS. BEA MILLER, MRS. CLARENCE W. DOYLE
- From SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO: B. GIACCHETTI, ALVIN R. KLIPFEL, BRITA M. OLSON

A hearty hello to you! Why not visit one of our meetings and let us get to know you?



**San Francisco  
 Peninsula  
 Birdwatching**

## LOOK, BUT DON'T TOUCH

### TOM AND JOANNE O'TOOLE

This spring and summer thousands of wild animals and birds will be born. They will be the new generation, and their survival depends a great deal on their mothers, their environment and *your* not interfering.

As the weather keeps improving and youngsters and adults get out more to enjoy the outdoors, there are bound to be increased contacts between people and your birds and animals. If you happen upon these babies, *don't pick them up.*

In the natural plan many animals leave their young unattended for periods of time and for a variety of reasons - to direct predators from their young, to forage for food and water or to otherwise protect them. A mother's sole concern is to raise the young and help them learn to survive.

Newborn animals have a natural camouflage and a body that gives off very little scent - thus not attracting predators. When the mother leaves she is trusting this natural protection to safeguard her offspring.

Wild animals rarely abandon their young. When you think you've found an orphan, don't kidnap it. It's probably under the watchful eye of the mother from nearby cover, too frightened to take on a two-legged intruder. And rarely are the young lost. Often too frightened to leave the place where their mother left them, the offspring are merely awaiting her return.

Frequently mothers are alerted to your presence in the area and leave their babies temporarily. In all probability she'll resume charge as soon as you leave.

Just as outdoors people are interested in camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, picnicking and being left alone when they are communing with nature, so too wildlife mothers and young want to be left alone.

It may tug at your heartstrings, or you may feel you are neglecting a "responsibility", but you'll be doing the "abandoned" baby a lifetime favor by walking away. Although it's human nature to want to "help" forlorn creatures by picking them up and taking them home where they will be "cared for," the natural mothers can do a far better job.

To be sure, baby animals are cute and cuddly, but some wildlife will not take their young back, or will even kill them if they smell of humans.

Healthwise it could be dangerous to pick up or take home baby animals. They may be carrying rabies, distemper or even bubonic plague which could affect you or your household. These lovable little foxes, raccoons, skunks, squirrels, rabbits, chipmunks and fawns also have parasites such as lice, fleas and ticks.

Removing a young animal or bird from its natural habitat is like issuing the creature a death warrant. Untrained people don't know what to feed

wildlife (their food is quite different from ours), and can cause them dietary problems, diarrhea, dehydration and, in some cases, deformity. When humans become frustrated and then release the animal or bird back into the wild, death usually occurs quickly. These animals will not have learned the skills needed to forage for food and to avoid predators.

Sadly, the life span of "adopted" young is usually much shorter than if the animal were left to its life in the wild. Many die from improper care and an incorrect diet. Others are killed in senseless accidents once they develop little or not fear of humans and their surroundings (cars, household appliances, garage machines and the like).

Cute babies eventually grow to adulthood, and some can be extremely dangerous when fully grown. They become even more dangerous when they lose their natural fear of human beings.

Some "rescued" animals have to be destroyed when they mature, as they turn mean - biting or attacking humans. These types of wildlife are frequently de-clawed and/or defanged. They then are rendered defenseless if they were to return to nature. Even those animals who survive and remain docile are of no value to the wildlife community, because they are no longer "wild" and would not be able to cope even with their own.

When "tamed" wild animals become frightened or upset, they will often bite or claw anyone near them. When they mature and mating season arrives, they frequently become mean.

In California it is against the law to keep most wildlife as pets.

Youngsters should be cautioned to leave the young alone, and told emphatically *NOT* to bring baby wildlife home. It should be explained that the mothers routinely leave their young for a great many reasons. If they happen to find a young animal with no mother in sight, they should not "save" it.

If you encounter a young animal, and you're not certain about its status, you can always check on it the next day. But unless you're absolutely certain the animal is an orphan, leave it alone.

If you know you have discovered an orphaned animal (as when the mother is killed), you should report it immediately to your local wildlife office or conservation officer.

Local game wardens and park rangers will arrange to have legitimate wildlife orphans picked up and cared for properly.

Instead of following the age-worn expression of "look" before you touch, how about "think" before you touch the young in the wild.

(Reprinted from the March-April 1987 edition of *Outdoor California* in accordance with their usual reprint policy.)

# BIRDING

PETER J. METROPULOS

APRIL brought us warm, dry weather, little fog and very few days of typical spring westerly winds. These meteorological conditions were favorable for migrant songbirds in our area but produced poor showing of seabirds from shore at Pigeon Point. Our winter resident species had for the most part left us for areas up north as hordes of colorful singing birds arrived from their wintering grounds in Central and South America.

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A few *BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSS* were sighted at Pigeon Point: four on April 11 (SF) and one on April 12 (PM, RT). Another was seen from Pescadero Beach, April 18 (PM, RT).

Most unusual was a report of a flying *RED-NECKED GREBE* seen at close range at Pigeon Point on April 11 (MP, CR).

No one reported *AMERICAN BITTERN*s from Pescadero this season, a very bad sign. However a pair was at Ano Nuevo Pt. Estimates of nesting *GREAT BLUE HERONS* at Pescadero Marsh ranged from six to nine pairs. A pair of *GREEN-BACKED HERONS* was lingering in the vicinity of Ano Nuevo Point (GS) and another was at Pescadero Marsh April 11 (LK).

Shawn Finnegan gets our "Rare-Bird-of-the-Month" Award for picking out a *TUFTED DUCK* among scaup on Belmont Slough, April 19. This rare Eurasian duck, a fine drake, soon left for parts unknown as subsequent searches failed to produce the bird. This is the third San Mateo County record.

*BLACK SCOTERS* were reported from Pigeon Point, April 11 (SF, mob), and one from Pescadero Beach on April 30 (PM).

A migrant *OSPREY* was "hang-gliding" at San Gregorio Beach April 30 (PM, RT). *RED-SHOULDERED HAWKS*, once considered rather rare as nesting birds on the Peninsula, are again on the increase. Territorial birds were found screaming "kear-kear-kear" in wooded areas from Atherton to Hillsborough. A migrant *PEREGRINE* was winging north at Half Moon Bay (TS) and El Granada (BS) April 16.

The *SNOWY PLOVER* is a bird which has decreased alarmingly in recent years throughout its range due to increased human usage of their sand dune nesting grounds. Observers are urged to report all sightings of this species during nesting season.

A wintering *GOLDEN PLOVER* (mob) was last seen in freshly-plowed fields in south Half Moon Bay on April 12 (PM, RT). This bird was of the Eurasian race *fulva*, the form normally found in coastal California during the winter. Uncommon migrants here, one *LESSER YELLOWLEGS* was at Pescadero Marsh April 12 (PM, RT) and four were at the east end of Whipple Avenue in Redwood City on April 22 (SF). Four brightly-dressed *RUDDY TURNSTONES* were at the west end of the Dumbarton Bridge on April 29 (SF). The first *RED-NECKED PHALAROPES* appeared at Pigeon Point on April 9 (BS) and our first-of-the-year *PACIFIC ASPIAN TERNS* showed up the same day.

A *BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE* was at Pigeon Point on April 11 (CR) and three on April 18 along with two *POMARINE JAEGERS* (PM, RT).

*RHINOCEROS AUKLETS* returned again to nest on Ano Nuevo Island (GS). Several pairs took up residence in artificial "auklet condos" installed by researchers.

A *POORWILL* was catching night-flying moths in El Granada on April 14 (BS).

A flock of 22 *VAUX'S SWIFTS* zoomed north over El Granada on April 16 (BS).

A male *CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD* made an appearance at an El Granada feeder on April 27 for only the third county record.

At the end of April there was still a pair of *LEWIS' WOODPECKERS* at Searsville Lake and another pair lingering at Filoli Estate (HO).

Encouraging news from our *BANK SWALLOW* colony at Ano Nuevo Point! There are now approximately 150 active nest-holes in use - a fantastic concentration (GS). Others were seen at Pescadero Marsh, but these may have been migrants. A *PURPLE MARTIN* was at Pigeon Point April 9 (BS) and another was at Pescadero Marsh on April 30 (PM).

A migrant *BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER* was in an Atherton garden on April 11 (PM).

Rather rare along the coast during spring, a *NASHVILLE WARBLER* was at Gazos Creek on April 9 (BS). A singing male *HERMIT WARBLER* was on territory at the summit of Kings Mt. Road in Woodside on April 26 (PM). Another spring migrant was a singing *MacGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER* at El Granada on April 16 (BS) and very rare anywhere along the coast, a migrant *YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT* was found in El Granada on April 28 (BS).

*LAZULI BUNTINGS* were reported widely, including a showy male at Filoli Estate on April 30 (HO). The first *CHIPPING SPARROW* to be spotted was at El Granada April 16 (BS). *GRASSHOPPER SPARROWS* are very localized in their appearance; two were at Stage Road and four were at Cloverdale Road near Pescadero on April 9 (BS). A *WHITE-THROATED SPARROW* which wintered in a Belmont yard was seen as late as April 22 (FN).

A male *YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD* was at the east end of Marsh Road in Redwood City on April 20 (BG) for one of a few spring records for San Mateo County. A male *HOODED ORIOLE* in Belmont, March 30, was a bit early (FN). Another in El Granada on April 16 was our first-ever report from the coast.

A lone *EVENING GROSBEEK* at Harcross Road in Woodside, April 6 (PM) was a left-over from a good winter invasion.

## OBSERVERS

Shawn Finnegan, Betty Groce, Linda Kypta,  
Peter Metropulos, Fran Nelson, Hadley Osborn,  
Matt Peterson, Cliff Richer, Barry Sauppe,  
Gary Strachen, Ron Thorne and many observers.

TO REPORT RARE OR NOTEWORTHY BIRD SIGHTINGS,  
CALL 592-2417

**GIFTS AND BEQUESTS**

Sequoia Audubon Society welcomes gifts in general or on behalf of, or in memory of relatives or friends. Such gifts may be designated for education, for Pescadero Marsh development or for any other specific purpose. All other gifts will be used for the advancement of the objectives of the Sequoia Audubon Society at the discretion of the Board of Directors. All gifts are tax-deductible. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to the Sequoia Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in Sequoia Needles and personally on behalf of Sequoia Audubon Society.

"FOR VELLA'S LITTLE FRIENDS"  
from  
VELLA B. COGHLAN

**OFFICER NOMINEES**

The nominating committee proposes the following list of candidates which they recommend to membership as their officers for the forthcoming year.

For President: Linda Kypta  
For Vice-President: Cliff Richer  
For Secretary: Ed McElhany  
For Treasurer: Colleen Horner

For Directors: Full terms of three years  
Steve Schafer  
Rick Baird

For Director: To fill the unexpired term of the position to be vacated by Cliff Richer:  
Gail Smittison

The selections of the Nominating Committee are recommendations only and other nominations may be made from the floor so long as the nominee agrees to having his or her name placed in nomination.

The officers and the directors of Sequoia Audubon Society thank the Nominating Committee for their many hours of work.

OFFICERS:	DIRECTORS:	STANDING COMMITTEES:	
President: Linda Kypta 591-9053	Elected for Term Ending:	ACR Host: John Silliman 585-3232	Wknd Field Trips: Cliff Richer 355-4058
Past Pres.: John Silliman 585-3232	June '87	Bird Sightings: Peter Metropulos	Mid-week Trips: Elgin Juri 325-7470
Vice-Pres.: Charles Newman 697-5601	June '88	& Christmas Count: 592-2417	Program: Charles Newman 697-5601
Secretary: Ed Mc Elhany 343-3219	June '89	Conservation: Rick Johnson 571-8533	Hospitality: Jo McCartney 583-1308
Treasurer: Colleen Horner 366-4282		Finance: Mary Bresler 994-3587	Publicity: Win Dye 591-8674
		Membership: Rick Baird	SNHS: Sharon How 365-3369
		Education: Nadine Holmberg	NEEDLES Editor: Cliff Richer 355-4058
STAFF: Nadine Holmberg 593-7368			SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICE 593-7368
			Rare Bird Alert 528-0288

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