

The Sequoia



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BULLETIN OF SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY A BRANCH OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

President: Albert T. Bergeron, 251 Killdeer Court, Foster City,
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MEETINGS:

NOVEMBER 2, THURSDAY 7:30 PM -- BOARD MEETING at the home of President Bergeron. Board members and committee chairpersons should attend. Others members welcome.

NOVEMBER 9, THURSDAY 8:00 PM -- REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING at Roosevelt School, Broadway and Vancouver Avenue in Burlingame. Mr. Kent Dedrick, President, Committee for Green Foothills, will speak on "Continuing Crisis; San Mateo County and the Environment." The unique natural assets of San Mateo County pose tremendous conservation problems. The ocean beaches and shore line, San Francisco Bay shoreline, the Santa Cruz Mountains and foothills, San Bruno Mountain all require constant attention to prevent their being over-run by development pressures. Mr. Dedrick has long been in the forefront of Peninsula conservation efforts and is particularly well qualified to tell us of these problems.

FIELD TRIPS

NOVEMBER 11, SATURDAY -- Coyote Hills Regional Park, near Newark
Leader: Norman Kidder

Meet in the Picnic Area at 8:15 a.m. for early song birding. In addition to birding we will visit the Indian Mounds. Walking shoes and a lunch are suggested. Norman Kidder of the East Bay Regional Park System and a Sequoia member will be our leader. Directions from Dumbarton Bridge: Take first left after toll plaza onto Jarvis Avenue, turn left at the traffic signal at the shopping center onto Newark Boulevard. Turn left onto Patterson Ranch Road which is marked with a small Coyote Hills Regional Park sign. Park in the former biosonar lab area. For further details call 593-7941.

NOVEMBER 25, SATURDAY -- Golden Gate Park
Leader: Byron Davies

Meet at 43rd and Fulton by North Lake at 8:30. Golden Gate Park often has rarities as well as good "looks" at many of the usual birds. If the weather is inclement there is always the California Academy of Sciences, a most worthy and interesting alternate. Walking shoes and a lunch are suggested.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

On the September 30 trip, some 20 to 25 observers visited the Pigeon Point and Ano Nuevo area. The weather was pleasant and the highlight of the trip was provided by five Harlequin ducks in their spectacular breeding plumage.

CONSERVATION NOTES

Two notable days - Thanksgiving and Election Day - will occur in this coming month of November. The most important from a conservation standpoint, of course, is Election Day, November 7. The National Audubon Society cannot maintain its exempt tax status if it participates in elections. It is therefore up to each and every individual member to assist in bringing to actuality the environmental ideals to which the Society is dedicated by a wise choice of candidates and by informed votes on the State and County propositions which will be on the ballot.

On this Thanksgiving one more thing for which we can be thankful is the growing legislative awareness of the importance of conservation as evidenced by the literally hundreds of bills in some way concerning conservation which have been introduced in the present Congress. Its members have recently been working at a much accelerated rate in the apparent hope of a final adjournment - rather than just a recess - before election. While many conservation bills still being considered will fall by the wayside, a few important ones probably will have been passed by the time you read this; notably, the Pesticide Control Bill and the Ullmann bill. The latter would allow organizations such as the Audubon Society to use up to 20% of annual revenue to influence legislation without losing tax-exempt status.

With the new 1973 cars already appearing we might take note of legislation being considered by West Germany as a means of disposing of the over seven million cars which will be heading for the junk yard in this country. The "National Wildlife Federation Conservation News" for August 15 reports that the Bonn Parliament is considering a law "which would include the cost of disposing of a car in its original purchase price. To put an end to the abandonment of valuable scrap steel, the buyer must provide for a suitable recycling burial when he picks up his new car."

A final word -- DON'T FORGET TO VOTE NOVEMBER 7

-- Ruth Smith, Conservation Chairperson

EXTREMELY RARE BIRD SIGHTED: Curlew Sandpiper

On September 16, during the Pescadero Marsh field trip led by Peter Metropulis, Fran Nelson spotted a strange bird which proved to be a species extremely rare in California. Only one previous record (for California) has been found. It is the Curlew Sandpiper, whose principal nesting area is north central Siberia. It is listed (p. 340) in Appendix I of Peterson's A Field Guide to Western Birds as "accidental in n. Alaska." It is pictured (p. 87) and described (p. 131) in A Field Guide to the Birds of Britain and Europe, by Peterson, Mountfort and Hollom. It is described but not pictured

(p. 173) in THE AUDUBON ILLUSTRATED HANDBOOK OF AMERICAN BIRDS by Edgar M. Reilly, Jr. Pictures of the bird, in both spring plumage (p. 112) and fall plumage (pp. 93 and 113) appear in Peterson's A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF TEXAS where the bird is described as "accidental in Texas." It is not even listed in BIRDS OF AMERICA or in Dawson's THE BIRDS OF CALIFORNIA.

Fran Nelson immediately reported and described the bird to Ted Chandick, who was scheduled to lead a field trip to the Pescadero Marsh area on the next day for the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society. He found the bird and identified it positively as a Curlew Sandpiper. He is a former co-editor of Mid Pacific Coast Region of Audubon Field Notes and a recognized authority.

-- Jed McClellan, Observations Committee

OBSERVATIONS COMMITTEE

We would like to present each month in the SEQUOIA a list of birds observed by Sequoia membership (San Mateo County) where such observations are of unusual interest because of the rarity of the species in this area, because the birds are earlier or later than generally observed, because the number of birds observed is unusual, or any other reason that may make the observation of particular interest to the readers of SEQUOIA. In order to provide a central coordinating point, Aveline Butler (593-4489) has agreed to serve as Chairman of an Observations Committee. Aveline, with her vast knowledge and experience will be able to assist in identification and also to assess the interest an observation may generate. She may even wish to visit the observation area to see the bird.

In order to develop a list each month, the cooperation of all Sequoia members is earnestly solicited. Please phone promptly either Aveline or another committee member from the list below immediately upon observing a bird or birds of unusual interest. The committee will then compile a list for inclusion in the SEQUOIA reporting the date, place, identification and observer's name. While it is felt that our list will generally be confined to observation within San Mateo County, we certainly do not want to exclude other nearby areas where Sequoia members may be birding; so report them, too. Possibly an interesting observation may inspire other members to visit an area and share the observation.

The following Sequoia members have been recruited to serve with Aveline on her committee:

Jed McClellan Phone: 344-3486

Neil Dickinson Phone: 366-7661

We are certainly fortunate to have such a competent and dedicated group serving on this committee. It is now up to all Sequoia members to make this program a success.

BIRDING AT PALO ALTO BAYLANDS

The city of Palo Alto, Department of Community Services, announces a bird walk at Baylands on December 2, 9:00 a.m. to noon. Meet at Baylands Nature Interpretive Center at the end of Embarcadero Road across from the Palo Alto Yacht Club. Species of special interest include California Clapper Rail, Blue-winged Teal, White-tailed Kites.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

L. A. Mehrhoff has been named manager of our new refuge which is scheduled to be dedicated on October 26. Mehrhoff has been manager of Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge near Marion, Illinois.

PROPOSITION 14 -- THE "WATSON" INITIATIVE

The Nature Conservancy (a national organization which helps to preserve unique areas of land) may be forced to give up completely all its good work in California such as its present program to acquire and protect key areas of the Baylands if Proposition 14, the Watson Initiative, is passed in the coming election. This initiative specifies that any tax exemption or reduction on any property must be approved by a majority of the voters in the state voting at a primary or general election. It would mean an impossible amount of work and expenditure of money to retain the exemption on all of its holdings which is the only way the Conservancy can afford to continue its work.

Many conservation organizations have registered their opposition to Proposition 14 -- Sierra Club, National Audubon Society, Friends of the Earth, Committee for Green Foothills, and others.

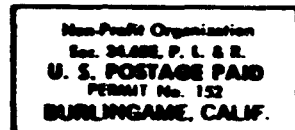
We expect that Audubon Canyon Ranch would experience the same effect as the Nature Conservancy.

The real "relief" this initiative would provide would benefit large property holders, land speculators, developers, agricultural corporations. As far as the average home owner is concerned, it is a complete delusion.

COMPLAINT ABOUT AIR POLLUTION

The Bay Area Pollution Control District has established a toll-free phone number for residents who want to complain about the condition of the air or to seek information. Ask the operator for ENTERPRISE 1-3200.

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