



The Sequoia



Volume 23, No. 1

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BULLETIN OF SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY, A BRANCH OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

MEETINGS:

SEPTEMBER 6, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM BOARD MEETING at the home of President Bergeron. Board members and committee chairpersons should attend. Other members are welcome.

SEPTEMBER 13, THURSDAY, 8:00 PM REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING at Roosevelt School, Broadway and Vancouver, Burlingame. Byron Davies has arranged a most timely and important program. Mr. Philip Schaeffer, for the past two years Administrative Assistant in the Western Regional Office of NAS, will describe his study of open oil sumps in the San Joaquin Valley and the hazards they present to wildlife. He is author of "Oil Sumps -- the Deceptive Killers," a special report issued by the Audubon Western Regional Office; he was quoted in a brief summary of the problem in AUDUBON (May, 1973. p. 114).

The magnitude of this wildlife loss is easily seen in that while the dramatic and extremely visible SF Bay oil spill in 1971 killed some 7000 birds, the sumps each year destroy about 50,000 waterfowl, 100,000 songbirds, shorebirds, raptors, and many mammals from mice to deer.

FIELD TRIPS:

SEPTEMBER 22, SATURDAY 8:00 AM ECO-SERIES No. 1 PESCADERO MARSH Meeting place will be the parking lot on the west side of intersection of Highway 1 and Pescadero Road.

This is critical marshland. It is Sequoia's responsibility to see that this land is well taken care of. Join this trip to see what a marsh is all about. A trip this time of year can also have some memorable birding such as last year's Curlew Sandpiper.

SEPTEMBER 29, SATURDAY POINT REYES BIRD OBSERVATORY 9:00 AM SHARP! SPECIAL FIELD TRIP. Meeting place will be the observatory. To reach it take Highway 1 north to the Bolinas turn-off at the north end of Bolinas Lagoon. Proceed down the road watching for Mesa Road going off to the right. Turn on to Mesa Road and continue on it until you reach the observatory which is within the boundary of the Point Reyes National Seashore.

Leader: We are fortunate to have one of the staff members, Bob Stewart, as our personal guide. At our regular meeting in June, John Smail gave us an idea as to what the observatory does. Come and see just how they go about this important and meaningful work. This trip will be most interesting to anyone who has never been there before.

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Looking Ahead.... October 7, Sunday, The Marin Headland. October 13, Saturday, Gazos Creek. October 28, Sunday, Drake's Bay.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS:

Coyote Hills Regional Park, May 26, 1973.

Twenty of us visited the park from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM on a clear day with a brisk wind in open areas and observed 41 species and about 781 individuals. A few days earlier on our scouting trip, Mrs. Janice Defino, of Ohlone Audubon, pointed out nests of Bullock orioles, Allens hummers and barn swallows. Our group also found a pair of tree swallows nesting in a perforation in a stump on the edge of a swamp just west of Indian Mound on the fire road.

The following species were observed: 4 Great Blue Herons; 1 Common and 10 Snowy Egrets; 10 Bl.-cr. Night Herons; 26 adult - 8 young Mallards 1 Gadwall and 2 Pintail Ducks; 6 Cinnamon Teal; 1 Shoveler Widgeon; 4 Ruddy Duck; 2 Turkey Vultures; 12 White-tailed Kites; 1 Cooper's Hawk; 3 California Quail; 3 Ring-necked Pheasant; 1 Clapper Rail; 80 American Coot; 8 Killdeer Plovers; 22 Forster's Terns; 12 Rock Doves; 3 Mourning Doves; 1 Rufous and 3 Allen's Hummingbirds; 1 Black Phoebe; 2 Tree, 3 Rough-winged, 100+ Barn and 200+ Cliff Swallows; 1 Scrub Jay; 5 Long-billed Marsh Wrens; 1 Mockingbird; 1 Starling; 1 Orange-crowned Warbler; 25 Western Meadowlarks; 200+ Redwinged Blackbirds; 2 Bullock's Orioles; 7 House Finches; 2 Rufous-sided and 2 Brown Towhees; 1 Savannah Sparrow; and 3 Song Sparrows.

-- Neil Dickinson, Leader.

REPORT FROM THE FIELD TRIP CHAIRPERSON:

It is my desire that this year's field trips reflect the needs of our rapidly growing group in a way that will be meaningful to everyone. What I have designed is a three part program, each part emphasizing a slightly different aspect of our environment. Hopefully everyone in Sequoia will fit into at least one of these programs.

The first section is something new that I choose to call the ECO-SERIES. These field trips are going to involve everyone in discovering what makes our county's habitats tick. Each trip will take us to a particular habitat where we will classify, quantify and analyze the relations that we see. In doing so we will acquaint ourselves with the incredible diversity of life in each habitat and learn some basic scientific processes.

I cannot stress the importance of this series too much. Audubon has become dedicated to the preservation of the entire ecosystem. If we are to speak as responsible members we should speak with some knowledge of what we have and are trying to protect.

Here are the habitats and their corresponding locations that we will see in the coming year:

Freshwater Marsh -- Pescadero Marsh
Riparian Woodland -- Gazos Creek
Salt Marsh -- Palo Alto Baylands Center
Redwood Forest -- Butano State Park

Oak Woodland -- Jasper Ridge
Broadleaf Evergreen -- Castle Rock State Park
Chaparral -- Mt. Tamalpais State Park

The second series might be called the TRAVELER'S SPECIALS. These are going to be fairly long distance trips, usually involving two or more days, and will be bird-oriented. I have tentatively scheduled one birding spectacular that is four days long. Because the trips deserve special advance planning I give you the dates and places:

November 23, 24, 25. Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge and its nearby neighbors. Incredible concentrations of wildfowl here, especially geese.

December 29, 30, 31, January 1. Salton Sea and surrounding areas. Waterfowl and desert species abound in this area.

January 26, 27. Monterey area. Many exciting birdy localities.

Any spring trips will be contingent upon member support of these trips. PLEASE! I need the help of someone who has the time to investigate the motel-restaurant facilities in these areas. Not a special trip -- just some looking through travel guides and then taking the responsibility of coordinating reservations. I CANNOT possibly do this myself. I must have help or these trips will be failures if they even happen. PLEASE!

The third series is the familiar old rehash of the same old stuff. Sounds boring? Not really. Our local birding trips are consistently productive. These regular trips will be concentrated in the winter months.

-- Mark Zumsteg
Field Trip Chairperson
Phone: 591-4332

543-7362

SAN MATEO COUNTY BIRD LIST

The Checklist of Birds, San Mateo County, California was published by Sequoia Audubon in December, 1969. I have been working on an expanded and updated list for the past two years and am ready to have it printed. However, there are a few species listed on the 1969 list that have never been published in any local bulletins or journals. If I can find no substantive material or no one comes forward to tell me the wheres and whenabouts of them I will be forced to delete them which may hurt someone's feelings. Please, if you know of a record concerning the following species, call or write me very soon. The species in question are:

Chukar (was this confused with the Red-legged Partridges released by CDFG?), Solitary Sandpiper, Franklin's Gull, Pygmy Owl, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Bluebird, Bohemian Waxwing, Summer Tanager (Was that you, Paul?), Black-chinned Sparrow.

-- Mark Zumsteg
Phone: 541-4332

NATIVE ORCHIDS by James A. Taylor

The Santa Cruz Mountain Range is a treasure-chest of jewels for

all to see and appreciate. These jewels are the native orchids that may be found in the redwoods from March to September. Many of these jewels of the redwoods are quite small and not showy as are many of the wildflowers. Some orchids are to be found in the deeply shaded areas, some in the grassy meadows and some are found in the middle of the creeks.

The first orchid that comes our way in the spring is the Calypso Orchid. This lavender beauty is found in the duff of Douglas Fir stands. The Calypso is one of the largest of our native orchids and will measure up to 1½ inches. This jewel has but one leaf, one stem, and one flower. Few people realize that this is one of the few orchids that has a fragrance, and a delightful one at that.

Shortly thereafter, the saprophytic Coral Roots start to bloom. All of this group lack chlorophyll and do not have leaves. These come in three types: spotted, nonspotted and striped.

Although most of the orchids grow in the drier areas of this mountain range, one orchid so dearly loves the water that it grows with its feet in the water. This is the Stream Orchid. It has a close relative that grows in the drier areas.

Next come the Rein Orchids. Some have spurs that follow down the stem and some have spurs that stick straight out behind the flower, looking like a row of crossed swords. Usually these flowers are borne on an uncrowded stem but one species of the Rein Orchid has a very dense cluster of flowers. The Rein Orchids are the smallest members of the orchid family. The flowers may be as small as ¼ inch across and are normally greenish-white.

In August the Ladies' Tresses come into bloom in the grassy areas. The flowering head is twisted or spiraled, looking vaguely like a lady's hair-braid.

The last orchid of the season, a September bloomer, is the Rattlesnake Plantain. This orchid is so named due to the green and white reticulation of the leaves.

For those who look for orchids, the rewards may be great. Hunting for the uncommon or the rare can give a great deal of personal satisfaction when the elusive orchid is finally found.

The California State Park System maintains six State Parks in the Santa Cruz Mountain Range encompassing some 27,000 acres. These park units are dedicated to keeping the area as natural as possible. Orchid hunters will always have a place to look for them, for Parks are forever.

Good Hunting!

(Jim Taylor resides at Portola State Park and is Supervising Ranger for Butano, Castle Rock and Portola Parks. We hope that Jim will favor us with more articles for future issues of SEQUOIA.)

MONTEREY PELAGIC BIRD TRIP

A four-hour birding cruise around northern Monterey Bay to observe pelagic birds will be held on Monday, September 24. A Stagnaro sport fishing boat will leave Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf at 7:30 AM.

William Anderson will lead the trip. Make reservations by sending \$2.00 and a stamped, self addressed envelope to Viola Anderson, 227 Linden Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95062.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Like the rest of us, members of Congress will be returning to work from vacation, convening this month after taking August off to "mend their fences." The State Legislature took its vacation a month earlier and has been working through August.

Before the recess the State Senate Natural Resources and Wildlife Committee killed Senator Behr's wildlife protection bill which we had endorsed, while the Assembly Committee passed Assemblyman Karabian's oil sump control bill, AB 2209, and sent it on to the Committee on Government Administration. If you have not yet written your Senator and Assemblyman about this bill, there is still time to do it.

Assemblyman Antonovich has introduced two bills, AB 2343 and AB 2344 prohibiting use of steel-jawed traps for taking mammals or birds. Their use is mainly for predators but Federal Wildlife officials have reported hundreds of eagles in Nevada accidentally caught in traps set for coyotes and bobcats. Full protection, prohibiting taking or possession at any time, is given the brown pelican and golden eagle in a bill, AB 2289, introduced by Assemblyman Keene.

Before its August recess Congress approved the Alaska oil pipeline, ignoring the possibility of a Canadian route which was considered by experts environmentally much safer. Predator control did not make the Senate deadline so focus now is on several bills being considered by the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee which it is hoped will affirm the President's poison ban and give state wildlife agencies operational authority.

The endangered species protection bill, S. 1988 has just been passed by the Senate. A similar bill, HR 37, which conservationists think is the stronger, has been favorably reported out of committee by the House.

If anyone feels that writing letters to legislators is not useful, perhaps the response of Representative McCloskey recently received will make it seem worth while. He ended his letter: "I only wish all of my constituents would take the time to let me know their thinking." Mr. McCloskey generally agrees with the Audubon viewpoint, but it helps him - and all legislators - to have proof of public backing. So let us all let our elected representatives know what we want.

The Audubon Condor Naturalist, John Borneman, reports that there is mounting pressure from a few sportsmen to re-open for motorized vehicle use some of the roads closed by the Forest Service in San Luis Obispo County close to condor roosting and nesting sites. An Executive Order, no. 11644, has been given to make an off-road vehicle study on the portion of the Santa Lucia Ranger District which is in San Luis Obispo County, which began August 4. (Cont'd)

Letters or phone calls to:

Mr. Robert Lancaster, Supervisor
Los Padres National Forest
U.S. Forest Service
42 Aero Camono
Goleta, CA 93017

are urgently needed commending the Service for closing the roads and urging that it not give in to pressure to re-open them until there has been ample time to evaluate the impact of road use on the California condor as well as on wildlife in general. Communication with your Congressmen will also be helpful.

-- Ruth Smith, Conservation Chairperson

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

The nominating committee presented their nominations at the regular monthly meeting on June 14, 1973, and the following were elected for the year 1973 - 1974:

President:	Albert Bergeron
Vice President:	Byron Davies
Secretary:	Sheila Davies
Treasurer:	Clifford Daniels
Directors:	Dr. Norman Fox, Dr. Ruth Smith, Dr. John Tatomer, Charles Newman

Members of the nominating committee were A. E. Montgomery (Chairman), Jean Jones, Frances Nelson, Leroy Nelson.

AUDUBON CAMP OF THE WEST

Jim Ginestra and Barry Sauppe, two young members of Sequoia Audubon, attended Audubon Camp of the West as guests of Sequoia Audubon. Both reported that they found the experience extremely interesting and valuable and they extend their thanks to the membership.

BIRDWATCHING AT THE SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT

Dr. Norman Fox reports that he has obtained permission from Assistant Airport Manager, Tom Bertken, himself a bird watcher, for us to bird on airport property at the foot of Millbrae Avenue. The area is fenced and patrolled but Mr. Bertken has said he would notify the Highway Patrol and airport officers of our arrangement. Parking will have to be in an adjacent area where people park to watch the airplanes.

RICHARDSON BAY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY AND EDUCATION CENTER

Philip Schaeffer, our speaker for September, has been appointed Manager of RBWS succeeding Norman McIntosh who was transferred to Orange County to manage the Starr Ranch Audubon Sanctuary. The sanctuary is located at 376 Greenwood Beach Road in Tiburon and is open 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM Wednesday through Sunday.

Mr. Schaeffer was born in Hartford, Connecticut and moved to California in 1969. He spent two years as a State Park Ranger and

then obtained a degree in zoology at U.C. Davis. In 1972 he founded Davis Audubon Society. He has been on Paul Howard's staff at the Western Regional office of NAS in Sacramento during which time he worked on a program outlining the hazards of oil sumps.

ADELAIDE FICHTNER

For 13 years Adelaide has served as our membership chairperson. She wrote to each new member and as our membership grew from 200 to 300 to 600 and now to over 900 the magnitude of this one phase of her work can be appreciated. She prepared cards and membership lists for the president and SEQUOIA editors. Countless hours were cheerfully spent on these chores and as few really understood what was involved, Adelaide received only perfunctory acknowledgement. Adelaide has now decided to retire and do some traveling. We want her to know that Sequoia Audubon thanks her for her years of dedication to the Audubon cause and wishes her happiness for the future.

NEW MEMBERS

We are delighted to report that over 145 new members have been officially added to our membership list since our last Bulletin. Regretfully, we have had to omit listing their names because of space limitations. We do extend to each of them welcome to Sequoia Audubon and hope they will become active members and participate in Audubon activities.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY CONVENTION REPORT

The Denver National Audubon Convention started with a briefing Thursday night, June 7, and a choice of field trips on Friday, June 8th. I went to the Plains Conservations Center where we saw abundant Lark buntings, Grasshopper sparrows and some prong horn antelopes as well as a myriad of flora of the grass lands and the sod houses typical of the plains. Every minute of Saturday and Sunday was devoted to the excellent program whose theme was "Public Lands, Our Margin of Environmental Quality." I felt the highlight of the banquet was the speech of Governor McCall of Oregon who is an ardent conservationist. Roger Tory Peterson was there, among other notables, but he did not participate in the program. A satisfactory end to the convention on Monday, June 11 was a field trip to Rocky Mountain National Park which took us to an elevation of 12,000 feet, almost the summit of the Trail Ridge Road. There was still much snow but there was a multitude of colorful lichen and tiny fragile flowers of the alpine tundra as well as a pair of Ptarmigan changing their winter plumage. There were also a good number of brown-capped rosy finches flitting over the snow. At lower levels in the park we saw Broad-tailed hummingbirds, Green-tailed towhees, Gray jays, Mountain bluebirds, Gray-headed juncos and ravens.

The other Sequoia Audubon members who attended, Charlotte Klock

and Charles Jordan, will no doubt agree that the whole program was most valuable and extremely interesting.

-- Ruth Smith, SAS Director and
Conservation Chairperson

THE SEQUOIA is the news letter of Sequoia Audubon Society. A subscription is \$2.00 per year for 10 issues - one each month September through June. Membership in National Audubon Society includes a SEQUOIA subscription to members living within this area and membership in Sequoia Audubon Society. Application for such membership may be sent to National Audubon Society, 950 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022, together with remittance of \$12.00 for an individual membership or \$15 for family membership. Other classes of membership are available. Phone the editor of SEQUOIA for details. The public is invited to Sequoia Audubon meetings and field trips. Board meetings are held at the home of the president on the first Thursday of each month. Regular monthly meetings are at Roosevelt School, Vancouver Avenue and Broadway in Burlingame on the second Thursday of each month. There are no meetings in July or August. Closing date for the SEQUOIA is the 15th of each month.

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