



The Sequoia



Volume 23, No. 3

November, 1973

BULLETIN OF SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

A CHAPTER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

MEETINGS:

NOVEMBER 1, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM BOARD MEETING at the home of President Bergeron. Board members and committee chairpersons should attend. Other members are welcome.

NOVEMBER 8, THURSDAY, 8:00 PM REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING at Roosevelt school, Broadway and Vancouver, Burlingame. Mr. John Regan, General Manager of the Peninsula Humane Society, will discuss the aims and programs of his group, with particular reference to those areas tangential to our own interests. "We are not just dog-catchers," he points out, adding that while the subject of pets is a familiar one, the work of his organization is unfamiliar to many.

Joining Mr. Regan will be his associate, Mr. Cliff Lindquist, who will discuss his work with injured birds, particularly raptors.

FIELD TRIPS:

MARK ZUMSTEG -- CHAIRMAN -- 343-7365

NOVEMBER 10, SATURDAY 9:00 AM PALO ALTO BAYLANDS ECO-SERIES No. 3

Meeting Place: The Duck Pond at the Palo Alto Yacht Harbor. This is reached by taking the Embarcadero Road exit from Bayshore Freeway, then east on Embarcadero to the "T" intersection at which a left turn should be made. Continue to the Duck Pond.

This is a dual purpose trip. First, we will study the salt marsh. This we must do to acquaint ourselves with the various components of the salt marsh community. The second purpose is to see what a city has done with a valuable natural resource. Palo Alto's efforts are splendid and should be viewed by all of us.

NOVEMBER 24 and 25 SATURDAY and SUNDAY 9:00 AM GRAYLODGE STATE

REFUGE and SACRAMENTO NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Meeting Places: November 24 -- Graylodge Refuge headquarters near Gridley. Gridley is 16 miles north of Yuba City on Highway 99. Allow 2½ to 3 hours driving time. Thousands of geese, myriads of ducks and scads of Sandhill Cranes are the main features of these two internationally famous areas. There are absolutely incredible concentrations of migrant wildfowl. In addition, we are especially fortunate to have as our leader the man who knows the area probably better than anyone else, Mr. Harry Adamson. Mr. Adamson has traditionally led the same trip for Golden Gate Audubon. This is a wonderful opportunity for us all.

(Continued)

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EDITORS: Amy and Ed McElhany
1009 Laguna Avenue
Burlingame, CA 94010
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Overnight Accomodations:

For the motel types (Reservations a must):

Pacific Motel, Gridley
Marklay's Motel, Gridley
Buckner's Motel, Biggs
Blue Gum Motel, Willows

For the camping types:

Colusa State Recreation Area, ½ mile from Colusa

LOOKING AHEAD:

December Is Bird Count Month!

December 1 Christmas Count Preview

December 15 Christmas Count - Crystal Springs

December 22 Ano Nuevo Count (Not Sequoia sponsored)

December 29, 30, 31, and January 1 Salton Sea Trip. All interested in this trip call Mark Zumsteg (343-7365) as soon as possible for further information.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS:

Pescadero Marsh and Beach -- September 22 -- Mark Zumsteg, Leader

Over 60 birders enjoyed a clear, almost windless day with the temperature in the high sixties, observing 66 species. The trip started at 8:00 AM and concluded about 1:30 PM. The following species were seen: Red-throated Loon, Eared and Western Grebes, Sooty Shearwater, Brown Pelican, Brandt's and Pelagic Cormorants, Great Blue Heron, Common Egret, Snowy Egret, American Bittern, Pintail and Cinnamon Ducks, White-winged and Surf Scoters, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, California Quail, Virginia and Sora Rail, American Coot, Black Oystercatcher, Killdeer, American and Black-bellied Plover, Surfbird, Black Turnstone, Wandering Tattler, Willet, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Knot, Pectoral and Least Sandpipers, Dowitcher (sp) Western Sandpiper, Marbled Godwit, Sanderling; Glaucous-winged, Western, Herring, Ring-billed, Bonaparte's, and Heermann's Gulls; Common Murre, Marbled Murrelet, Band-tailed Pigeon, Anna's Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Common Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Black Phoebe, Barn Swallow, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Bushtit, Wrentit, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Starling, Yellowthroat, Redwinged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Lesser Goldfinch, White-crowned and Song Sparrow.

Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory -- September 29 -- Byron Davies, Leader

Bob Stewart of the PRBO professional staff, outlined the Observatory programs to over 20 Sequoia members and guests. It is always surprising, even to experienced birders, to see how small even the most familiar birds are when they're in hand for banding. Banding, while still continued, is no longer as heavily emphasized in the Observatory studies as it has been; current efforts are aimed more toward behavioral studies such as those involving raptor/prey relationships at Bolinas Lagoon. We did not compile a formal species list for this trip but a few of the more interesting birds noted, somewhat incidentally, were: Bl.-cr. Night Heron, Green-winged Teal, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Greater Yellowlegs, Baird's Sandpiper, Brown Creeper and Winter Wren. A female Wrentit gave her distinct call and one party lunched under a group of

eucalyptus where hundreds of Monarch butterflies had congregated.

Marin Headlands and Rodeo Lagoon -- October 7 -- Byron Davies, Leader
Eleven ardent birders endured rain, fog, mist, drizzle and more rain from 8:00 AM until 11:00. The weather cleared after they arrived home, damp and defeated. No hawk migration. The following species were observed: Pied-billed Grebe, Brown Pelican (Incl. Juv), Great Blue Heron, Common and Snowy Egret, Bl.-Cr. Night Heron, Mallard, Cooper's Hawk, Marsh Hawk, California Quail, American Coot, Long-billed Curlew, Willet, Marbled Godwit, American Avocet, Glaucous-winged, Western, and Heermann's Gulls; Great Horned Owl, Anna's Hummingbird, Red-shafted Flicker, Black Phoebe, Scrub Jay, Common Raven, Wrentit, Winter Wren, Robin, Loggerhead Shrike, Starling, Western Meadowlark, Redwinged Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, House Finch, Lesser Goldfinch, Brown Towhee, White-crowned, Golden-crowned, Fox and Song Sparrow.

Gazos Creek Road -- October 13 -- Mark Zumsteg, Leader

Beautiful skies, warm temperatures and lots of enthusiasm made this Eco-Series trip most enjoyable! Fifty species of plants were identified including Woodwardia, Fern, Creek Dogwood, Red Alders and a beautiful Liverwort. Also noted were many fungi and lichens. Invertebrates were numerous. Vertebrates were not so numerous; 23 birds, 2 snakes, and one mouse. Birds observed: Turkey Vulture, Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawk, California Quail, Band-tailed Pigeon, Red-shafted Flicker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Western Flycatcher, Steller's Jay, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Wrentit, Winter and Bewick's Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Audubon's Warbler, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, Rufous-sided Towhee, Golden-crowned and Song Sparrow.

OCTOBER PROGRAM NOTES By Nancy Bentz

BIRD CALL OF THE MONTH: Charles Newman's tape presentation was the loud melodious whistle of the familiar Olive-sided Flycatcher, with a Rufous-sided Towhee in the background.

PLANT OF THE MONTH: Jed McClellan treated us to a look at the pretty and delicate Grass of Parnassus (not a grass at all, but a member of the Saxifrage Family) named after Mt. Parnassus in Greece. The pale yellow flower blooms in the autumn in marshes and bogs of the California coastal ranges and the Sierra Nevada. His slides were taken at Mt. Tamalpais and up in Plumas County.

PRAIRIE FALCON COUNTRY was the special topic of the evening, presented by Mr. Phil Gordon of the Ohlone Audubon Society. The savannah country of golden grasslands and oaks, near the San Antonio Reservoir and Sunol Park in Alameda County, has been the stage for the past two years of a dramatic round-the-clock, eight-week vigil over the Flag Hill aerie of the magnificent Prairie Falcon, an endangered species.

A determined group of Ohlone naturalists volunteered to camp, in two-day to one-week shifts, above the cliff-side nest to drive away the potential nest robbers and alert nearby State Park employees. The "watchmen" were threatened and harassed by the irate falconers, who cut their phone lines as many as three times a day! They warded off

several nest robbers each day and the last few weeks it became necessary to heighten security by stationing a State vehicle near the campsite.

When asked how so many falconers had learned of the nest site, Mr. Gordon explained that a detailed article had appeared in the Oakland Tribune, describing not only the location of the nest but even methods of capture! Consequently, falconers of all ages arrived, well armed with ropes and climbing gear. One man flashed a State badge trying to "con" his way down to the nest. Fortunately, the distrustful naturalists stopped him and learned later that his shiny badge had long expired.

There were unbelievable slides of the just-hatched fledglings with great black eyes and pink gaping mouths and of the adult falcons in flight. The Prairie Falcon, Mr. Gordon explained, is a coursing bird with strong, low flight who preys mainly on other birds hitting them at great speeds (as high as 185 mph) with their toes. One slide captured a falcon pausing unfalteringly in midflight to scratch his ear.

The watchful naturalists had an unusual opportunity to observe not only the falcons but the surrounding wildlife of the area. They kept a detailed ledger and took incredible pictures. During the eight week vigil they identified 84 species of birds. Mr. Gordon's slides were a visual delight: an Acorn Woodpecker in his many-holed tree; a Horned Lark; a Bushtit in an elderberry tree; a Lark Sparrow perched amid the Bull Thistle; a Meadowlark; the black-masked Western Kingbird; the Golden Eagle, competitor of the falcon; the small whiskered cousin of the Prairie Falcon, the Sparrow Hawk. At night they heard coyotes and the dove-like call of the Pygmy Owl.

The first year of the vigil five falcons were fledged. This year, two. They'll be back next spring on Flag Hill to play "midwife" again to a most deserving bunch of youngsters.

CONSERVATION NEWS

Though most Audubon members probably already know, it will do no harm to repeat the good news that the Oil Sump Bill, AB2209, was signed into law by Governor Reagan. Further cause for rejoicing by "birders" and other conservationists was the consummation of the proposed land swap between the State Lands Commission and Mobil Oil Co. reported in last month's "Sequoia." This gives the State title to 900 acres of marshland on Bair Island and about the perimeter of Redwood Shores (with the possible later addition of up to 800 acres more on Bair Island) which will be designated as a wildlife refuge.

S.A.S. members should be on the alert for the new San Pedro County Park conceptual plan now being developed at a time when the North Coast Water District will have a request for doubled water use from San Pedro Creek. The State Department of Fish and Game now believes original estimates of water flow necessary to maintain San Pedro Creek as a viable steelhead stream were too low and they may renew their protest of the present amount of water use. The County Park is on the upper reaches of the Middle Fork of San Pedro Creek.

The Environmental Quality Coordinating Council has sent a letter to the State Water Resources Control Board supporting a request of the

Pacifica Creek Protection Committee (concerning the Water Company's application #23733) that minimum stream flow should be sufficient to maintain the present ecological structure of San Pedro Creek. As an E.Q.C.C. member, S.A.S. endorses this but similar letters of support written by individual members will also be helpful. They should be sent to: State Water Resources Control Board,
1416 Ninth Street, Sacramento, 95814

Though this is not a crucial election year, some important local issues will be coming before the voters in November. Menlo Park voters will decide on a \$1.8 million bond issue to purchase the 38-acre "Hill" the last large open area in the city. San Carlos will have a \$5.9 million bond issue for general park and open space acquisition and development including, most importantly, \$1.1 million for purchase of the Hassler Health Home property owned by the City of San Francisco. Pacifica will have two ballot measures: Measure D is a referendum to overturn the Council's zoning of 330 acres from Agriculture and R-1 to Planned Development which will allow 805 units of multi-story development. The Council-sponsored Measure F would provide for purchase of the land.

Probably the most controversial measure on the ballot is Proposition 1, the Tax Initiative. This is opposed by several conservation organizations in the County including the Sierra Club, Committee for Green Foothills and Coastal Alliance, and as of the middle of October none had come out in favor of it. A debate between Assemblyman Dixon Arnett and Senator Arlen Gregorio on the Proposition will be held in the Burlingame City Hall on October 31, at 8:00 PM.

National Audubon has noted that two recent developments in the field of nuclear power remind us that it "is still far from a proven answer to the Energy Crisis. For safety reasons, pending further study, the Atomic Energy Commission has reduced maximum allowed outputs of 10 of the 34 nuclear power plants now in operation in the United States. And a law suit filed by the Natural Resources Defense Council questions the safety of radioactive waste disposal at the AEC facility at Hanford, Washington, the nation's oldest dumping ground for such wastes, where leaks from underground storage tanks have been detected. Until there is full assurance of safe and efficient nuclear power, environmentalists must continue to insist on conservation measures to curb wasteful uses of power -- in order to make remaining supplies of oil and coal last longer." This means you and me as well as the other guy.

Ruth Smith
Conservation Chairman

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING NOTES

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH BOARD -- Charles Newman and Byron Davies were appointed to replace Howard Gurevitz and Roy Carlson whose terms have expired.

HABITAT ACQUISITION FUND -- The present balance in this fund now amounts to \$15,500.

A gift in memory of Mr. Louie Nadalini of Palm Springs has been gratefully received by Sequoia Audubon Society from Mrs. Lulu Martin. All memorial donations are placed in the Society's Habitat Acquisition Fund.

NATURE GUIDE

Nature Guide is a 32-page, 5½"x 8½" typewritten compilation of names, addresses and phone numbers of Audubon members throughout the U. S. who have volunteered to provide information about their local areas to visitors interested in birding, nature photography, butterflies, trees, wildlife refuges, flowers and geology. This is a wonderful means of contacting informed residents when visiting in other areas. For example; Al Bergeron, Byron and Sheila Davies and A. E. Montgomery are listed from Sequoia. Copies of Nature Guide are 25 cents. We plan to have a few at the November meeting. Otherwise, they may be ordered from: Operation Nature Guide, 34915 Fourth Avenue South, Federal Way, Washington 98002.

NEW BIRD NAMES

The A.O.U. (American Ornithologists Union) has issued Supplement 32 in THE AUK for April, 1973, making certain changes in the "official" bird names. Present names are based on the A.O.U. "Check-list of North American Birds" (5th edition, 1957). It would seem reasonable that in spite of the supplement of April, 1973, present names would continue to be acceptable until the 6th edition is published and existing field guides and printed lists are revised.

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

Spangenberg Auditorium, 780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto.
7:30 PM General Admission, \$2.00:

Thursday, November 1	"West Side Story -- Mexico to Alaska"
Thursday, January 24	"What Have You Done With My Country"
Tuesday, March 5	"Queen of the Cascades"
Thursday, April 4	"Wild Tennessee"

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 \$15.00 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.

President:	Albert Bergeron	Director:	Charles Newman
Vice Pres:	Byron Davies	"	Ruth Smith
Secretary:	Sheila Davies	"	Jon Tatomer
Treasurer:	Clifford Daniels	"	Norman Fox

Chairpersons

Membership:	Liv Gurevitz	Sightings:	J. Ed. McClellan
Conservation:	Ruth Smith	Youth:	Jon Tatomer
Program:	Byron Davies	Habitat Acquisition:	
Education:	Jean Jones		Charles Newman
Publicity:	Nancy Bentz	Social:	Eila Fox
Field Trip & Christmas Count:	Mark Zumsteg	SEQUOIA:	Amy & Ed McElhany
		Audit & Tax:	Leroy Nelson

Audubon Canyon Ranch Directors: Al Bergeron, Charles Newman, Maryann Danielson, Byron Davies, Ed McElhany, A. E. Montgomery, Charles Newman, John Prime

Bay Area Audubon Council: Norman Fox, Ruth Smith, Jon Tatomer

Bentz, Nancy	591 Cedar St. San Carlos	94070	592-2547
Bergeron, Albert	251 Killdeer Ct. Foster City	94404	349-2960
Daniels, Clifford	1009 Haddon Dr. San Mateo	94402	341-5366
Danielson, Maryann	848 Edgehill Dr. Burlingame	94010	342-6919
Davies, Byron & Sheila	606 Cambridge St. San Francisco	94134	334-2851
Fox, Eila & Norman	51 W. Bellevue San Mateo	94402	343-1406
Gurevitz, Liv	1400 Southdown Rd. Hillsborough	94010	347-0912
Jones Jean	1417 Sanchez Ave. Burlingame	94010	344-9339
McClellan, J. Ed.	1356 Bernal Ave. Burlingame	94010	344-3486
McElhany, Amy & Ed	1009 Laguna Ave. Burlingame	94010	343-3219
Montgomery, A. E.	2270 Summit Dr. Hillsborough	94010	344-4249
Nelson, Leroy	1035 Lassen Dr. Belmont	94002	593-7941
Newman, Charles	25 Corte Alegre Millbrae	94030	697-5601
Prime, John	848 W. Hillsdale Bvd. San Mateo	94403	345-4968
Smith, Ruth	1231 Hoover St. Menlo Park	94025	322-5279
Tatomer, Jon	#4 East Carol Burlingame	94010	347-2020
Zumsteg, Mark	41 Arundel Rd. Burlingame	94010	343-7365

Brisbane: Mary Anne Desfosses. Burlingame: Mrs. Walter H. Hales,
Miss Dorothy Fletcher, Mr. & Mrs. Carroll Schmitz, Mr. Wayne M. Smith.
Daly City: Mr. Harold Hanley. Half Moon Bay: Mr. & Mrs. Ray Patton.
Menlo Park: Charlotte Matthews, C. J. Schmitt, Mr. & Mrs. J. W.
Pedersen, Diether Roth. Portola Valley; Helen E. Simpson. Millbrae:
Lynne Hanacek, Mr. & Mrs. R. Bottini. Mountain View: Mr. & Mrs.
William L. Wise, III, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Way. Woodside: Mr. William
Jackson, Mrs. H. Abraham. Foster City: Mr. & Mrs. David S. Miller,
Marlene Neff. San Mateo: Mrs. Leslie A. Bunch, Helen M. Bell.
Redwood City: Robert C. Irish. Palo Alto: N. Corbin, Mr. & Mrs.
P. S. Cutler.

THE SEQUOIA

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