



The Sequoia



Volume 23, No. 8

April, 1974

BULLETIN OF SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

A CHAPTER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

MEETINGS:

April 4, Thursday 7:30 PM Board Meeting at the home of President Bergeron. Board members and committee chairpersons should attend. Other members are welcome.

April 11, Thursday 6:30 PM Potluck Dinner PLEASE NOTE NEW LOCATION New Foster City Recreation Center on Shell Boulevard just off of East Hillsdale and near the main lake. Please bring your own table settings. Phone Eila Fox at 343-1406 and tell her what dish you plan to bring. Guests are always welcome.

April 11, Thursday 8:00 PM Regular Monthly Meeting PLEASE NOTE NEW LOCATION! New Foster City Recreation Center on Shell Boulevard just off of East Hillsdale and near the main lake. The program will feature the film M'ZIMMA, the story of the interrelationship among all of the species in an oasis eco system. The film, by Alan and Joan Root, will be presented by Mrs. Rembert Kingsley who is preparing to lead an East African safari in March, 1975.

FIELD TRIPS:

Saturday, April 20 PORTOLA STATE PARK Meet at the park office at 9:15.

The special purpose of this trip is to see the resident Pileated Woodpecker. Portola is currently a southern extension of this spectacular woodpecker's range. Also, the resident ranger will be meeting with us and giving us a talk about the history and natural resources of the park.

Bring a picnic lunch!

Saturday, April 27 MINES ROAD, SOUTHEAST OF LIVERMORE 8:30 AM

Meet at Mines and Tesla Roads (start of Mine Road). Take Highway 580 east from the Bay Area. Just past Livermore take Vasco Road Offramp south. Go about 2½ miles on South Vasco Road to where it ends at Tesla Road. Turn right on Tesla, go about 1 mile and turn left at Mines Road.

Availability of gasoline at Livermore is not known and there are no stations on Mines Road. AFTER we meet at Mines Road we will make about a 40-mile round trip.

In case of rain contact leaders before leaving home.

Leaders: Fran and Leroy Nelson -- 593-7941

PRESIDENT: Albert Bergeron
251 Killdeer Court
Foster City, CA 94404
Phone: 349-2960

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

SPECIAL TRIPS UPCOMING. PLAN NOW.

May 4, Saturday AL WOOL RANCH in La Honda.

May 11 and 12 THE ANNUAL MYSTERY TRIP

A super trip is planned for this year's mystery trip. We are going to an area where there will be exciting birding and fine sightseeing. We will be met at our destination by an agent of the California Department of Fish and Game who will take us up through his pride and joy in search of interesting bird life. I have been assured that we will not have to look very hard.

New and different will be a Saturday afternoon barbecue and the option of staying in a motel or camping at a State Park. Thirty-six people will be able to make this bus trip. Tickets are now available by mail. The price of \$12.00 per person covers bus cost, Saturday afternoon's food and Sunday lunch. It does not cover the cost of overnight lodging. Each person will be responsible for paying his overnight cost at the time of the trip. Those people who plan on staying in a motel should get their money in immediately so that we may make the proper reservations and assure you a place to stay. Please tell us how many people are going in your party and the specific accommodations you wish. Send your check made payable to Sequoia Audubon to Mark Zumsteg, 41 Arundel Road, Burlingame, CA 94010. You must specify whether you are camping or moteling.

Full details next month. But reserve your place NOW.

ALSO--PLAN EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

June 9, Sunday BOAT TRIP

Sequoia has a boat chartered out of Princeton Harbor which will head out to sea in search of albatrosses, shearwaters, fulmars and who knows what. If you have never taken a boat trip you have missed one of the most exciting aspects of birding. Don't pass up this chance. Those of you who have been out before probably have your check books out by now. For your ticket send a check for \$8.00 made payable to Sequoia Audubon to Mark Zumsteg, 41 Arundel Road, Burlingame, CA 94010.

SIGHTINGS:

Black Brant. Dr. Norman Fox reports seeing a flock of Black Brant flying over San Francisco Bay north of the San Francisco International Airport on February 28.

White Deer. For several years white deer (not native) have been seen from time to time on the western slope of the hills, especially in Pomponio Canyon. Now Jobst Brandt reports that he sees them along San Gregorio Creek canyon, a mile or two above the San Gregorio store. He has seen as many as twenty in a group.

Rough-legged Hawks again. This has been a great winter for Rough-legged Hawks in our territory. Jobst Brandt reports seeing two between Pescadero and Davenport on February 10.

Allen's Hummingbirds. Jobst Brandt also reports he has been seeing Allen's Hummingbirds in Portola Valley since the middle of February. They winter in Mexico.

More Varied Thrushes: acorn eaters. Most thrushes do not eat acorns but Liv Gurevitz has found that Varied Thrushes do. She observed them foraging diligently on the ground under her Coast Liveoaks. (*Quercus agrifolia*) in Hillsborough and wondered what they were finding. Close and careful observation proved they were eating the acorns that had dropped from these trees. Dawson, in his four-volume work on "The Birds of California," in describing the winter migration into California of Varied Thrushes from Alaska, says (Vol II, p.771):

Upon arrival in the State these Thrushes fall at once upon the dropped acorns, and Beal found that mast constituted 76% of the birds' food in November. This fondness for acorns is quite an unusual trait in the Thrush family and deserves further study.

Bald Eagle. On March 4, Andrea Botini saw a mature Bald Eagle circling low over Capuchino High School.

-- J.Ed. McClellan, Chairperson

CONSERVATION NEWS:

The confusion of the "energy crisis" seems to be producing a resurgence of anti-conservation forces in both state and federal legislation. One of the most disastrous results of this was the vote by the House Rules Committee to kill the very important National Land Use Planning Act, H.R. 10294, which had already been passed by the Senate. Conservationists will try to get it reconsidered before the end of March, but this is probably a pretty forlorn hope.

E.P.A. Administrator, Russell Train, has allowed emergency use of DDT by the Forest Service against the tussock moth infestation in the Northwest, in spite of its known serious dangers and doubtful usefulness in the long run. The program, however, is to be subject to monitoring and to proof of a valid research program on alternatives to be presented by December 1, 1974.

On the positive side, Interior Secretary Rogers Morton has still not given in to the demands of the 21 western senators to relax restrictions on predator poisons. Twenty other senators, including our own Alan Cranston, have urged that he stand firm on the poison ban, and some of the original twenty-one have modified their extreme statements.

The House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee (whose chairman is Representative James F. Haley of Florida, House Office Building, Washington D.C. 20515) barely defeated an attempt to substitute a much weaker strip mining bill (H.R. 12898) for the strong H.R. 11500 which has been endorsed by National Audubon. Help in the form of letters and telegrams will probably be needed to keep H.R. 11500 from having weakening amendments added.

In the past 3 weeks a petition has been circulated by Sierra Club members to get an Initiative on the November ballot making the Stanislaus River, widely used for various types of recreation, a part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, thereby preventing construction by the Corps of Engineers of the New Melones Dam. If you missed it and want to sign it, get in touch with me or with Sierra Club headquarters, 1176 Emerson St., Palo Alto, CA 94301, phone 327-8111.

All of us were no doubt deeply shocked at the result of the recent strike in San Francisco which allowed all of San Francisco's (including the Airport's in San Mateo County) raw sewage to be dumped in the Bay for about a week before anything at all was done to stop it. It is to be hoped by the time you read this that plans will be underway, with full support from SAS, for adequate legislation to prevent another such catastrophe in the future.

-- Ruth Smith, Conservation Chairperson

CITY OF BURLINGAME
SHOREBIRD SANCTUARY
Plants and Habitat Protected

This is the sign we hope to see posted soon on a piece of land on Old Bayshore Highway Road, land which Burlingame owns because it is a water outfall. This is adjacent to the Fisherman Restaurant, near the 76 Station and Charley Brown Restaurant. It is a piece of land 150 feet wide along the sidewalk; to the north of it is a strip 100 feet wide owned by the San Francisco Airport Authority.

This has long been an excellent place for shorebirding, and it frequently is satisfactory viewing without getting out of the car, which is a ploy I sometimes use to get people started on Birding.

Troop #156 of Burlingame Boy Scouts will have a tidy-up day there in March; and the Explorer Post of Dr. Norman Fox will have a work day there to arrange rocks and logs on the site and make it attractive to the public for Birding. The Park Department may plant some native shrubs to enhance the looks of the area from the road.

Jed McClellan and Wade Macomber, two stalwart gentlemen of renown, are the consultants-in-chief on this project and the three of us are The Committee.

Dr. Fox has a lovely Clapper Rail friend on this very site!

-- Luana Hammett

WILDFLOWERS IN APRIL:

April is the prime season for wildflowers in San Mateo County. We have some flowers in bloom in each month in the year but the real flood comes in April. By this month some plants will have finished blooming or at least passed their prime (e.g., Chamise). Some plants blooming in April will have started in March or even earlier.

Here are the names and typical habitats of a few of the wildflowers to be seen in this county in April:

Canyons with water in them:

Redwood Violet, *Viola sempervirens*; Skunk Cabbage, *Lysichiton americanum*; Succulent Lupin, *Lupinus succulentus*; Coast Trillium, *Trillium ovatum*; Sessile Trillium, *Trillium chloropetalum*; Sweet Colts-foot, *Petasites palmatum*; Cow Parsnip, *Heracleum lanatum*.

Beaches and Coastal bluffs:

Seaside Daisy, *Erigeron glaucus*; Beach Strawberry, *Fragaria chiloensis*.

Mixed woodland:

Mission Bell, *Fritillaria lanceolata*; Red Elderberry, *Sambucus callicarpa*: (only on west side of divide); Oso Berry, *Osmaronia cerasiformis*; Striped Coralroot (an orchid), *Corallorhiza striata*; Indian Warrior, *Pedicularis densiflora*; Wild Iris, *Iris longipetala*; Hound's Tongue, *Cynoglossum grande*.

Grassland:

California Buttercup, *Ranunculus californica*; California Poppy, *Eschscholzia californica*; Western Wallflower, *Erysimum franciscanum*; Shooting Star, *Dedecatheon* species; Wild Hollyhock (Checker Bloom), *Sidalcea malvaeflora*; Cape Buttercup, *Oxalis pes-caprae*; Field Mustard, *Brassica campestris*; Mule Ear, *Wyethia* species.

Chaparral:

Indian Paintbrush, *Castilleja* species; Silver Lupin, *Lupinus albifrans*; Blue Witch, *Solanum umbelliferum*; Blue Elderberry, *Sambucus mexicana* (on the east side of the divide); Cream Bush, *Holodiscus discolor*.

Redwood forest:

Redwood Sorrel, *Oxalis oreganum*.

Roadside and wastelands:

Poison Hemlock, *Conium maculatum*.

Salt Marsh:

Brass Buttons, *Cotula coronopifolia*.

-- J. Ed. McClellan

EQUOIA -- The Name:

Sequoia is a popular California name. We have Sequoia National Park, Sequoia National Forest, countless Sequoia streets, avenues and drives in various California towns and in our own San Mateo County, Sequoia High School, Sequoia Hospital and, with fitting modesty, Sequoia Audubon Society. This popularity is due to the fame of those magnificent trees bearing the generic name, Sequoia -- the Redwoods of the coast and Bigtrees of the Sierra Nevada.

The name, Sequoia, was first applied to our trees by an Austrian, Stephan Ladislaus Endlicher, in 1847. Endlicher was born in 1804, studied at the universities of Budapest and Vienna and received his Ph.D in 1823. His plans to follow the priesthood were abandoned and he continued his education in natural history, philology and finally medicine, receiving an M.D. from Vienna in 1840. In 1836, he was appointed curator of botany at the Museum of Natural History in Vienna and presented to that institution his personal herbarium of some 30,000 specimens. In 1840, he became professor of botany at the University of Vienna and director of the botanical garden. He published many important literary, historical and botanical works including a Chinese grammar and a Chinese atlas and founded the first journal of natural history in Austria. His studies of linguistics brought him into contact with the work of Sequoyah, a Cherokee Indian genius who, in about 1821, invented an alphabet or syllabary for written communication among his tribe. Endlicher died in 1849.

The man whom Endlicher honored was born about 1773 in the Cherokee village of Tuskegee in Tennessee of a Cherokee mother and German

father, Nathaniel Gist. Gist was a friend of George Washington and spent many years among the Cherokees as a hunter, explorer and soldier. In early 1777 he was commissioned Colonel in the Continental Army and was sent by Washington to recruit Cherokees for army service against the British. Gist was successful in enlisting seventeen warriors.

Gist, in 1783, married Judith Cary Bell and to them were born several daughters one of whom married Francis Preston Blair. Blair was a distinguished journalist, publicist, political leader and editor of the Washington "Globe." The Blairs became parents of Montgomery Blair, who became a member of Lincoln's cabinet and Francis Preston Blair, Jr., who became U.S. senator from Missouri, a major general in the Civil War and in 1868 candidate for vice president with Seymour. Major Gist Blair, son of Montgomery Blair, owned and occupied the historic Blair home on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. Nathaniel and Judith Gist's other daughters also married prominent men.

Not much is recorded of Sequoyah's early life but it is known that he was a silversmith and had considerable natural mechanical ingenuity, but he was never exposed to any formal education nor did he read or speak English. He served for several months in the War of 1812. His English name was George Guess. About 1809 he commenced work on his alphabet and completed it twelve years later suffering ridicule, discouragement and even hostility during the whole of this period. Among the Cherokee prejudices was the legend that God created the Indian and gave him the book and then created the White Man and gave him the bow and arrow. The Indian was indifferent about his gift and it was stolen by the White Man. The Indian was then obliged to subsist with the bow and arrow, forfeiting forever his right to the book. One purpose of his alphabet, Sequoyah explained, was to record and preserve knowledge which would otherwise be lost and unavailable to future generations. He had observed that this resource was used by the White Man and felt that it was a substantial advantage.

Sequoyah's alphabet at one stage used about 200 characters but this was eventually reduced to 86. After the alphabet was perfected to his satisfaction there remained the task of persuading his people to use it. During the years of work on the alphabet his dedication and concentration had alienated former friends and stirred suspicions as to his motives and actions. Eventually, however, through many demonstrations the virtues of the alphabet were accepted by the Cherokees and they became a "reading people." The alphabet was sufficiently simple and logical that the Cherokees were able to learn it in a matter of days. Sequoyah's own six-year-old daughter was able to master it.

The first printing in Sequoyah's alphabet was in December, 1827, a translation of the first five verses of the book of Genesis. In early 1828, a four-page newspaper, the first in Indian history, the "Cherokee Phoenix," commenced publication, part in English and part in Sequoyah's syllables. The paper was published for nearly six years and a file of many of these issues is in the British Museum in London. Another newspaper, the "Cherokee Advocate," was published in both English and Sequoyah's Cherokee characters beginning in 1844 and continuing, with interruptions, until 1906. Primers, spelling books, arithmetics, almanacs, and hymnals were printed. The constitution and laws of the Cherokees were published as well as political messages. All of these materials contributed greatly to the enlightenment, culture and advancement of the Cherokee people.

At a comparatively early age Sequoyah contracted a disease in one leg which resulted in his becoming permanently crippled. He subsisted for much of his life on small farms in Arkansas and Oklahoma and derived some income from the production of salt from nearby salt licks. In the summer of 1842, nearing the age of 70, he set out in the company of several companions including one of his sons, to visit Mexico. He was ill throughout most of the trip and died in August, 1843, probably in the town of San Fernando in Northern Mexico.

Sequoyah's honors have been great and many. In 1824, the legislative council of the Cherokee nation voted to him a medal as a token of respect and admiration. In 1825, the U. S. Office of Indian Affairs noted that Sequoyah's invention "is of no ordinary genius and entitles its author to the respect and distinction of all men...." The Moravians who were handicapped in their mission work among the Cherokees by language difficulties remarked, "In the year 1821 a remarkable man came forward with a Cherokee alphabet destined to bring the nation forward by leaps and bounds, making the Cherokee a literary nation." In 1828, the federal government promised him \$500 in recognition of his accomplishment but this promise does not appear to have been fully met.

During a visit to Washington, D.C., Sequoyah's portrait was painted by the noted artist, Charles Bird King. The Cherokee Nation granted Sequoyah a pension of \$300 per year payable for life and transferrable to his wife, Sally, for life after Sequoyah's death. In 1851, the Cherokee Council changed the name of Skin Bayou District, where Sequoyah lived, to Sequoyah District and this area is now known as Sequoyah County, Oklahoma. On June 6, 1917, a statue of Sequoyah was unveiled in Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C. Sequoyah's home in Oklahoma has been preserved as a historic shrine.

There is a sense of fitness in Stephan Endlicher's tribute to Sequoyah. Here is a distinguished scholar and scientist recognizing an illiterate Indian genius in an enduring and meaningful tribute. What greater honor than to have one's name forever associated with these splendid trees?

THE MOCKINGBIRD

Have you ever awakened in the middle of a Spring night to the songs of a Mockingbird? By day, his songs are loud and burlesque. He sits conspicuously atop a telephone pole or antenna, flicking his tail saucily, interrupting the cat's afternoon nap, singing even while in flight, his white wing patches flashing. Like a persistent showman, he repeats his mimicry several times to be sure I haven't missed a single phrase.

But in the middle of the night, when the moon is peeking through the branches of the Camphor tree in the front yard, illuminating the Acacia blossoms and the walls of my room, the Mockingbird is transformed, quieted. His song is like a lullaby. Though refusing to be stilled by the night, his song is hushed -- barely disturbing the cat's dreams. Now there are two of them it seems, one a distant echo. Is it lonely for him, I wonder, singing through the darkness while the world sleeps? The March wind rustles the new leaves and brings their fresh scent. I drift back to sleep, glad that I overheard the night... and the Mockingbird.

A nature experience with four outstanding naturalists: Rich Stallcup, Bill Clow, Peter Warshall and Arthur Earle in one of the best birding areas of the country -- Tucson, Madera Canyon, Patagonia, Mile High and the Chiricahua Mountains. Many species of birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals encountered occur nowhere else in the United States.

For information write Point Reyes Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 442, Bolinas, CA 94924.

FIELD STUDIES IN NATURAL HISTORY

In-field environmental and ecological studies of Sequoia National Park, the Sierra gold country, the Hawaiian Islands, and the Santa Cruz region make up this summer's Field Studies in Natural History program offered by San Jose State University's Extension Services.

The four sessions, of interest to the experienced naturalist as well as the beginning ecologist, are designed to expose the student to a particular areas' natural history -- birds, insects, geology, flora, mammals -- and, in some instances, its social history.

For students with school-age children a junior natural history program will run concurrently with the Santa Cruz, gold country, and Sequoia National Park courses.

Sessions will be conducted by a group of SJSU natural science, geology, and biology instructors with backgrounds in the natural history of regions studied and by outside experts. Courses offer one to two units of upper division natural science college credit.

Highlights and program schedule is as follows:

Sequoia National Park, June 15--20, features SJSU Drs. Howard Shellhammer, H. Thomas Harvey and Richard Hartesveldt, participants in a ten-year scientific study of the park.

Sierra Gold Country: Columbia, June 22--27, is based out of the town of Columbia, preserved 1849 gold rush town.

The Hawaiian Islands; July 16--30, will be conducted by four SJSU professors, all who have researched and worked on the Islands.

Santa Cruz: Mountains to Sea, August 12--18, will study the region's Sequoia groves down to its tide-pools, included is a one day trip to Point Lobos on the Monterey Peninsula. John Stanley, one of the instructors and former SJSU instructor in biology has done a number of environmental impact studies of the region for various governmental bodies.

For additional information on costs, enrollment, etc., contact: Ms. Marcia DeHart, secretary, Field Studies in Natural History, Extension Services, San Jose State University, San Jose, 95192, (408) 277-2211.

CAR POOLING:

Car pooling is the order of the day and Sequoia members are encouraged to participate in sharing rides to meetings and field trips. If anyone who regularly attends these events will let us know we will print names, phones and points of origin of those having extra seats in cars. Those needing rides can then make the necessary contact direct.

Paul Knutson, a scientist with the U. S. Corps of Engineers, described the Corps' study program for disposal of material dredged from San Francisco Bay. Each year the Corp dredges 10,000,000 cubic yards of material from San Francisco Bay in order to maintain proper water depth for navigation. The Corp is spending \$2,500,000 on a research program to determine the best means for disposal of this material. A great deal of it is presently dumped in areas of the Bay subject to vigorous currents and is swept out to sea. Mr. Knutson described a means of disposal involving the creation of salt water marshes one of which is being constructed on an old salt pond in the East Bay. In view of the fact that it is the shallow water areas that provide much of the oxygen for deep water channels and also help control the moderate, even temperature we enjoy, this seems like a most attractive solution. Were it not for the shallow water and marshes around the perimeter of the Bay, our weather would be consistently several degrees warmer in summer and colder in the winter.

Charles Newman presented a medley of song from the Red-shafted flicker, Purple finch, Rufous-sided towhee, Pine siskin, California quail, Pileated woodpecker which he recorded two years ago down by the creek near his cabin in the Santa Rosa area.

Jed McClellan's Plant of the Month was actually two species of poisonous hemlock: Water hemlock, *Cicuta Douglasii* and Poison hemlock, *Conium maculatum*. Both are found in San Mateo County. This program was suggested by Dr. Wade Macomber to call to our attention the hazards of these deadly plants. Anyone who took careful note of Jed's slides should be able to readily identify these plants.

The entire SIGHTING COMMITTEE invites your reports of interesting findings:

J.Ed. McClellan, Chairperson	344-3486
Aveline Butler	593-4489
Neil Dickinson	366-7661
Liv Gurevitz	347-0912

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.

THE SEQUOIA
Sequoia Audubon Society
1009 Laguna Avenue
Burlingame, CA 94010

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U.S. POSTAGE PAID
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Address Correction Requested

Mr. & Mrs. A. E. Montgomery
2270 Summit Dr.,
Hillsborough, Calif. 94010