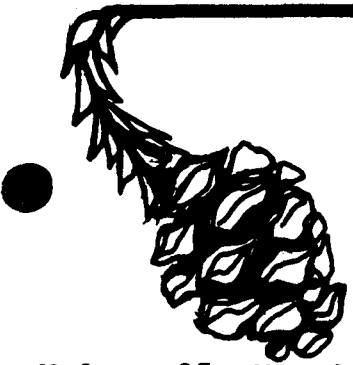




The SEQUOIA

BULLETIN OF SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

A CHAPTER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Volume 25, No. 10

June, 1976

MEETINGS:

BOARD MEETING. The June board meeting will be held at the home of Sheila and Byron Davies, 606 Cambridge Street, San Francisco, on Friday, June 4 at about 8:00 PM. Note change of date. Board officers and directors and their wives are invited to dinner at 7:00 PM before the meeting.

JUNE 10, THURSDAY, 6:30 PM, POTLUCK DINNER at the San Mateo Garden Center. The Garden Center is located on Parkside Way--between 26th and 27th avenues--just west of Alameda de las Pulgas. This is our last meeting for this year and will be a gala occasion. Phone Eila Fox at 343-1406 (evenings are best) and tell her what dish you plan to bring. Please bring your own table settings. Guests are always welcome.

JUNE 10, THURSDAY, 8:00 PM, REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING at the San Mateo Garden Center following the Potluck Dinner.

Our program will feature a slide talk by Ted Chandik, "Pelagic Birds of the California Coast." Mr. Chandik is a professional naturalist for the City of Palo Alto and has led field trips for Nature Expeditions International. He is also a prominent "birder" in Northern California. This will be another outstanding program. Don't miss it!

Charles Newman and Frank Allen will have their "see and hear" bird call of the month but can't tell us just now which of our bird friends will be featured.

FIELD TRIPS:

JUNE 12 - SATURDAY - AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

The meeting time is 9:30. If the gate is not yet open when you arrive, there is parking space across from the gate toward the lagoon. The Ranch is about 3 miles north of Stinson Beach on Highway 1. Take a lunch. The leader is Jean Jones, 334-9339.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS:

April 3 - San Bruno Mountain - Leader, Enes Millar

This was a flower field trip lasting from 9:00 AM until 10:30 AM. Some 30 hardy people braved the light rain and 10 to 15 mile per hour wind to observe 34 species of the San Bruno Mountain flora. Species observed were as follows: Pteridium sp., Bracken Fern - Mesembryanthemum sp., Hottentot-Fig - Rhus diversiloba, Poison Oak - Berberis pinnata Coast Barberry - Achillea millefolium, Yarrow - Anaphalis margaritacea Pearly Everlasting - Artemisia californica, California Sagebrush - Baccharis pilularis, Coyote Brush - Baeria chrysostoma, Goldfields - Eriogon glaucus, Seaside Daisy - Eriophyllum sp., Lizard Tail - Senecio sp., Groundsel - Sedum sp., Stone Crop - Brassica sp., Mustard - Marah

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fabaceus, Wild Cucumber - Arctostaphylos sp., Manzanita - Phacelia sp.,
- Salvia sp., Crimson Sage - Lupinus sp., Lupine - Ulex europaeus, Gorse
- Sidalcea malvaeflora, Checker Bloom - Eschscholzia californica,
California Poppy - Rumex sp., Dock - Ranunculus sp., Buttercup - Rham-
nus californica, Coffee Berry - Fragaria sp., Wild Strawberry - Castil-
lega wightii, Wight's Paint Brush - Diplacus aurantiacus, Sticky Monkey
Flower - Scrophularia californica, California Bee Plant - Heracleum
maximum, Cow Parsnip - Sanicula arctopoides, Footsteps-of-Spring -
Calamagrostis nutkaenis, Reed Grass - Sisyrinchium bellum, Blue-eyed
Grass - Chlorogalum pomeridianum, Soap Plant.

April 24 - Pigeon Point - Leader, Barry Sauppe

About twenty people enjoyed a pleasant day observing the many migrating ocean birds that occur off our coast. Most of the unusual ocean birds came quite close for everyone to observe. Over 100 species were seen this day. Some of the highlights of the trip were as follows: 1711 Arctic Loons, 12050 Bonaparte's Gulls, 18 Marbled Murrelets, 10 Pigeon Guillemots, 808 Murres, 357 Sooty Shearwaters, 4 Pink-Footed Shearwaters, 7 Black-Legged Kittiwakes, 1 Northern Fulmar, 660 Phalaropes, and 6 Pomarine Jaegers.

May 8 - Mines Road - Leaders, Roy and Fran Nelson

A group of 12 Sequoians had a full and interesting day on Mines Road. All 12 actively participated with great enthusiasm to provide a constant and sometimes overlapping stream of subjects for observation. For instance, how does one look at a Western Kingbird, an Aquatic Garter Snake, A California Thrasher, a Western Pond Turtle, Robins and Cliff Swallows gathering mud for their nests and still get a look at a Phainopepla who chooses that same moment to fly over?

There were many Western Kingbirds for close observation. There were Western Flycatchers, Western Wood Pewees and an Ash-throated Flycatcher. Lewis' Woodpeckers were seen in several places and Nuttall's Woodpeckers made their presence known with their sharp rattles. Two of the group were fortunate enough to see a Roadrunner before he lost himself to the rest of us. Wren species included Bewick's, House, Rock and a singing Canyon Wren. We watched the amusing antics of White-breasted Nuthatches as they foraged on tree trunks.

There were Western Tanagers, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Hooded Orioles. There were Northern (Bullock's) Orioles in great profusion. We had good views of Lark Sparrows and all watched a singing Rufous-crowned Sparrow in the scope. Bluebirds were another treat.

It wasn't a day for numbers of raptors but among those we did see was a Cooper's Hawk. It wasn't a day for a lot of warblers either. We saw Oranged-crowned and Wilson's and at the very end of the day we had close observations of a beautiful Yellow Warbler.

Besides the Aquatic Garter Snake, there was a terrestrial-type Garter Snake. There were Western Fence Lizards, an Alligator Lizard, and the best possible telescopic, studied view of a Western Whiptail. There were Beechey Ground Squirrels everywhere and we watched several Cottontails foraging. There were many species of wildflowers including Indian Paintbrush, Owl's Clover, Blue-eyed Grass, Mimulus and Brodiaea. The day was too short, as usual, to do justice to Mines Road. The 70 species seen were: Turkey Vulture - Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks - Sparrow Hawk - California Quail - Killdeer - Band-tailed Pigeon - Rock Dove - Mourning Dove - Roadrunner - Anna's Hummingbird - Belted King-

fisher - Red-shafted Flicker - Acorn and Lewis' Woodpeckers - Nuttall's Woodpecker - Western Kingbird - Ash-throated Flycatcher - Black Phoebe - Western Flycatcher - Western Wood Pewee - Violet-green, Rough-winged, Tree, Barn and Cliff Swallows - Scrub Jay - Yellow-billed Magpie - Common Raven - Common Crow - Plain Titmouse - Common Bushtit - White-breasted Nuthatch - Wrentit - House, Bewick's, Canyon and Rock Wrens - Mockingbird - California Thrasher - Robin - Western Bluebird - Ruby-crowned Kinglet - Cedar Waxwing - Phainopepla - Starling - Hutton's and Warbling Vireos - Orange-crowned and Yellow Warblers - Wilson's Warbler - House Sparrow - Western Meadowlark - Redwinged Blackbird - Hooded and Bullock's Orioles - Brewer's Blackbird - Western Tanager - Black-headed Grosbeak - Purple and House Finches - Pine Siskin - Lesser Goldfinch - Rufous-sided and Brown Towhee - Lark and Rufous-crowned Sparrows - White-crowned, Golden-crowned and Song Sparrows.

CONSERVATION NEWS: -- Ruth Smith, Conservation Chairman

This month attention is on Election Day, June 8. Of the 15 State propositions which will be on the ballot, only three deal with matters affecting the environment: Proposition 3 which authorizes a \$175 million bond issue for improvement of the 63% of domestic water systems in the state which have been found deficient;

Proposition 11 which will allow cities and counties to use land, originally acquired for transportation purposes but become surplus, as public parks and recreation areas;

Proposition 15, the Nuclear Safeguards Act, which will require proof to the Legislature of the safety of nuclear reactor emergency systems, of the development of safe storage of radioactive wastes such as plutonium, and of full and adequate compensation in case of a nuclear accident, with removal of the present federal liability limits. It will not stop use of present plants or those under construction but will limit their output to 60% in from one to five years if the safety proof is not met, with derating of 10% per year after five years if they still have not been proven safe.

For residents from Belmont south, a county proposition - D - will be on the ballot providing for annexation to the Midpeninsula Regional Park District. The District now covers northwestern Santa Clara County from the Bay to Santa Cruz County and south to the area of Mt. Umunhum. It is a political body, distinct from either county, governed by an elected Board of Directors and financed by a tax rate of 10¢ per \$100 assessed valuation on property in the District, separate from the county 10¢ tax rate for parks. Its policy so far has been acquisition for open space preservation with little or no development for intensive recreational uses.

Plans for the San Bruno Mountain Park comprising 1,250 acres have reached the point of a Draft Environmental Impact Report which was presented to the County Planning Commission May 12 and accepted as "complete and adequate." It was then returned to the Parks and Recreation Department for preparation of the final EIR with addition of comments from the Planning staff and from members of the public who were at the hearing, such as the Sierra Club representative.

In Sacramento the Coastal Bill, SB 1579, narrowly cleared the Natural Resources Committee by a 5 to 3 vote and next went to the Senate

Finance Committee chaired by its author, Senator Anthony C. Beilenson. The bill must clear the Senate by June 18 or it will be dead for this session, and the Coastal Commission will expire at the end of the year with return of Coastal supervision to local agencies.

Senator Holmdahl's bill, SB 1975, also cleared its first committee, Senate Transportation, unanimously. This bill removes the veto power of cities over the western Dumbarton Bridge approaches. It conflicts with Assemblyman Knox's bill, AB 3219, which allots \$35 million to upgrade the existing Dumbarton Bridge and provide new approach roads and shifts the extra \$65 million expected to be spent on a new bridge to building a new approach to the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge. AB 3219, which was approved by the Assembly Transportation Committee, is also sponsored by San Mateo County's Assemblyman Arnett and Senator Gregorio.

The Senate in Washington completed joint markup by its Agriculture and Interior Committees of a Forestry Bill, S. 3091. This is a compromise bill which contains some of the management principles of Senator Randolph's bill, S. 2926. Further amendment on the Senate floor is expected.

The Senate postponed till the end of May action on its Clean Air Act Amendments Bill, S. 3210. This bill gives protection of air quality to National Parks and Wilderness areas, but, like the House bill, allows postponement of compliance with auto emissions and stationary source standards and with implementation of mass transport plans in metropolitan areas.

The House Interior Committee rather unexpectedly started markup of H.R. 5224, the Bureau of Land Management Organic Act. As reported out of the subcommittee it contains many features which conservationists find objectionable, and it was declared unacceptable to the Administration by Interior Secretary Thomas S. Kleppe. Among other things it would allow hunting, except for reasons of public safety on all BLM or Forest Service lands, including such areas as the California Condor Sanctuary.

Don't forget to vote June 8th!

BIRDING FROM A KITCHEN WINDOW

-- By Fran Nelson

My view from the kitchen window changes rapidly these days. By the first week in March the birch clump is beginning to show change. The pendulous male catkins and a tiny pair of leaves with each one is but the beginning of the great profusion of new growth which in about two weeks obliterates the bare-branch tracery. The new foliage is beautiful, fresh and yellow-green, contrasting with the blue-green of the new foliage of the bird-planted gooseberry beneath it.

Signs of Spring are everywhere! A pair of Bushtits comes now instead of a flock. They do not seem to be foraging as much as considering a nesting site. He pauses and sings a little song just his size.

I hear loud, excited sounds emanating from a House Sparrow and, as usual, I must see what is going on. Looking out the window, I see a bird thrashing around in the prostrate-growing junipers and he appears to be injured. I quickly reach for my binoculars and my concern turns to amusement. It is a male House Sparrow doing his courtship dance as he follows the object of his affections through thick and thin! She is eating. When he tumbles too close to her, she pecks at him. Otherwise, she doesn't acknowledge his presence. Her search for food finally takes her out of the junipers onto the gravel. He follows, not losing a beat--

belly to the ground, head up, tail up. Bouncing up and down in this position, alternately dipping forward and leaning backward, and keeping one's balance must be hard enough to do on a level surface let alone in a juniper bed!

The Rufous-sided Towhee buzzes his claim to this territory more and more hours each day as the season advances. In fact, he hardly has time to eat! He buzzes, emerges from the *xylosma senticosa*, buzzes, picks up a sunflower seed, buzzes as he cracks it while returning to the cover of the shrubbery. The buzzing continues as he returns for another seed. Well, there are times for all of us when we have to eat on the run.

One Brown Towhee has another down on its back--obviously an intruder. There is much screaming until the downed bird gets free and flies off. There are many ways to say "NO TRESPASSING."

The birches have filled up with Cedar Waxwings--more than a hundred! I had seen them earlier on a utility line but now they are here taking baths and drinking. Eighteen to twenty at one time are in the baths and along side them awaiting a turn. They are so vertical on a perch and so horizontal on the ground! Finished, they leave as one! Later, half the number return to the birches. A Scrub Jay takes note. Scamp that he is, he zeroes in to right center! Half of the Waxwings make a hasty departure. He sits there, alone, obviously pleased with his dastardly deed but--half of them are still here. He quickly takes care of that, pauses a moment and is off to the next bit of mischief! The waxwings regroup--this time each on the very top of a new candle on the Monterey Pines behind us. Exquisite!

A Wren-tit pair is in the *Ligustrum Texanum*, a rather compact privet. They have been coming to it often of late and I wonder to myself if they are hunting for a building site. I try to transmit my thought waves to tell them it isn't safe. Brown Towhees thought a couple of years ago that it was indeed a fine place until all their efforts were wiped out.

Over the nearby hills, a pair of Red-tailed Hawks is engaged in a courtship flight--one lowers his legs while soaring in big lazy circles--beautiful enough to make me forget my hands are doing the dishes!

About the end of January, a Fox Sparrow had turned up missing a tail. I hoped that there would be time to grow another before he must leave for the mountains. He was very distinctive looking. In fact, he looked like a rail who had lost his marsh! Twenty days later, he had a tail about as long as that of a Winter Wren and five days later, it took binoculars to see that only the laterals were not quite full length. Now I cannot tell him from the other two Fox Sparrows who come and he has made it well ahead of migration.

Seeing Roy off for work, I hear a squealing sound. One glance confirms my suspicions--two male Brown-headed Cowbirds! They are posturing on the wire. Their brown heads and shiny black bodies show up well in the early morning sunlight. This spells doom for some small birds' nesting efforts. Moments later, one is singing a song I've not heard before--grudgingly, I think it really is pretty.

A Golden-crowned Sparrow rehearses for his spring-thing in the far north. He adds a note or two to his plaintive 3-note song and does some variations. Sometimes he starts over in the middle of his song two or three times as if trying to perfect his rendition. He's oblivious to his audience.

A House Finch is screaming out his song with great enthusiasm! The refrains are interspersed with high-pitched Cedar Waxwing-like notes. His loved one sits nonchalantly on the edge of the fence while he dances

to the right of her and to the left of her. Since there is no room to dance in front of her, he flies to the front of her, all the while singing wildly. She just sits--and picks her teeth. Seemingly, she hasn't noticed him. I put out a fresh supply of sunflower seeds. She goes to the seeds and he follows. She flutters her wings, begging to be fed. Obviously, this is the part she likes best about this courtship thing! But now, his mood changes and he is feeding--himself!

Each day now for several, after I have put out the late afternoon snack, a beautiful male Robin comes poking around the birdbath area and consistently finds edibles. Whether he is finding worms or insects, I am not able to see. I have been meaning to do some poking around to try to find out what is so yummy. I probe and poke but all I find out is that I would indeed make a poor Robin!

It is almost the end of April and there is only one Golden-crowned Sparrow left today. Yesterday, he had at least seven companions. Now, without the company of other crowned sparrows, he is shy and retiring, mostly hiding in the Indian Hawthorn. Early afternoon, I clean up the feeding area and refuel it. As soon as I return to my kitchen, he comes out and is eating ravenously until an aggressive male House Finch comes to give him a bad time now that he is alone! Mid-afternoon is the last I see of him. For him it's the beginning of a long journey northward, hopefully to raise a new generation. For me it's a promise of more lovely Golden-crowns to see and to hear when, in September, they once again return to the Bay Area.

SIGHTINGS:

On April 21, 7825 Loons were seen moving north past Pigeon Point. A breeding-plumaged Red-Necked Grebe was at Pescadero Beach, April 17, and another was at Pigeon Point May 5. Two Black-footed Albatross were observed following ships from P.P. on April 8. A total of 442 Fulmars was seen from P.P. on the eighteenth of March. On April 14, 61 Sooty Shearwaters and 14 Pink-footed Shearwaters were observed from the Point. On May 15, 10300 Sootys were observed from P.P. On May 5, an Ashy Petrel was at Pigeon Point. This was the fourth County record, and the only one since 1911. The first Brown Pelican of the season was seen from P.P. on May 8. A total of 9201 Brant were seen moving north from P.P. April 14. Unusual inside the Bay, a Black Brant was at Foster City, April 22. A Blue-winged Teal was at Pescadero Marsh April 10, and another was on a small pond in Half Moon Bay, May 9. A pair of Wood Ducks were at the northern Crystal Springs Reservoir, April 12. Three Oldsquaws were in Princeton Harbor, April 14, having been present since January. Also in the harbor were 4 Black Scoters. On April 14, 14828 Surf Scoters were seen migrating at Pigeon Point. Two Common Mergansers were at the south end of Crystal Springs Reservoir, April 5 and another was at the same place May 8. An Osprey was observed catching a fish along Sawyer Camp Road, April 3. Single birds were seen there April 23, 30 and May 7. An American Bittern was at Pescadero Marsh, April 4. An American Golden Plover was on a pasture near Pigeon Point, April 20. An amazing concentration of over 300 Surfbirds at Pescadero Beach, April 20, also included a rare Rock Sandpiper in breeding plumage. Two Lesser Yellow-legs were at northern Crystal Springs Reservoir, April 23. Persistent northwest winds, up to sixty-miles-per-hour, April 15-16 forced many off-shore migrating Red Phalaropes onto Coastal ponds and lagoons; 125 were in Pescadero Marsh, April 16, and a few were still present in May. A Green Heron at Sharp Park Golfcourse, April 18, and another at northern Crystal Springs Reservoir, April 30 were rarities. On April 8, 5

Pomarine Jaegers were seen from P.P., and on the 14th, 7 were observed. Twenty northbound Black-legged Kittiwakes were at the Point April 10, and one was at the Pescadero Creek mouth the same day. An unusually high count of Kittiwakes was seen from P.P., on May 15, when 264 were observed.*Most unusual were two Sabine's Gulls at P.P., May 12. These birds were the second county record. The first observation was in 1896. Unprecedented was the appearance of 127! Sabine's Gulls on May 15. On May 5 there were four Arctic Terns feeding at the Pescadero Creek mouth. These terns were the first County record.

A migrant Bank Swallow flew past Pigeon Point on April 8 and another was at Princeton marsh on April 14. At least eight pairs were seen nesting at Ano Nuevo Point, April 28. A MacGillivray's Warbler was at Sawyer Camp Road, April 30. A singing Hermit Warbler was seen in Douglas Fir at Tunitas Creek Road near Skyline, May 9. Two singing Yellow-breasted Chats were seen along Stage Road on May 5. These were the third and fourth county records. Another was along Gazos Creek Road on May 9, representing the fifth County record. A Nashville Warbler was at the water tank along Sawyer Camp Road, May 11. A female Yellow-headed Blackbird was near the Menlo Park garbage dump, May 11. A Western Kingbird was seen along Highway 1 near Belmont on April 27, 2 were seen along Canada Road next to Crystal Springs Reservoir, May 8 and 2 more were observed on Whitehouse Road, May 12.

Peter Metropulos and myself are gathering data on early Spring migrants and late wintering visitors. If you have any dates when you first observed swallows, warblers, vireos, orioles, or any other passerine type species, please inform us of those dates. Also if you have observed wintering birds that stayed unusually late in the Spring we would appreciate that information also. A bird such as the White-throated Sparrow would be an example.

Please report occurrences of unusual birds to Barry Sauppe (349-8470) or Peter Metropulos (591-9898).

THE BALD EAGLE - *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

In order to take note of our Nation's bicentennial year, SEQUOIA this month includes some notes on the Bald Eagle, our national bird since June 20, 1782.

The bald eagle is of the order Falconiformes and family Accipitridae (hawks, Old World vultures and harriers), a family which includes 205 species. The genus, *Haliaeetus*, includes eight other large eagles generally known as the sea eagles. Our bald eagle is the only species of this genus native to North America. It does breed in Northeastern Siberia but otherwise is restricted to North America. The species has been further divided into two races, Northern and Southern.

Aside from the California Condor, the bald eagle is California's largest raptor, measuring 30 to 43 inches in body length and with a wing span of 6½ to 8 feet. The adult, with its white head, white tail, dark body and yellow beak is easily identified. Immature individuals, however, lack the white markings and have a dark bill and may be confused with the Golden Eagle. Adult markings appear at about the fourth year.

Bald eagles mate for life but if one of the pair dies, the survivor promptly chooses a new mate. Mating occurs in the winter and a nest is established usually by the addition of sticks and lining material at an old nest. Nests may be occupied for many years until they become truly gigantic--some have been measured at seven feet high and

*See Addendum, Page 11

over seven feet in diameter and there are records of even more massive structures. In California, all presently known nests are in pine trees 20 to 90 feet from the ground and near rivers or large bodies of water. However, rocky cliffs are also used as nest sites in other areas. Smaller birds sometimes nest in the nooks and crannies of a large eagle nest.

In California, eggs are laid from mid February through March. Generally two eggs are laid but sometimes there is only one and rarely three. The eggs are very small for so large a bird. The incubation period is about 35 days and both parents participate. Frequently the first born is a female and is larger and stronger than the second. The second eaglet gets low priority on the food supply and is abused and harassed by its older nest mate with the result that often it fails to survive.

After 8 or 10 weeks the young are ready to leave the nest. There has been much play and exercise in preparation for the event. The nest has been trodden flat by the jumping, walking, wing flapping and grasping of sticks. Some young birds leave voluntarily but others must be starved or lured away. During the first summer the young eagles associate with their parents and even return to perch at the nest. Eventually, however, they leave for a new territory as the parents will not permit them to establish themselves nearby.

Bald eagles are essentially fish eaters but when fish are scarce they dine on all kinds of waterfowl, grebes, loons, gulls, coots, cormorants, ducks, geese, grouse, ptarmigan and even small land birds. Their diet also includes mammals such as rabbits and squirrels and even foxes and deer. They are experts at stealing fish from flying Ospreys. The bald eagle can probably lift about 10 pounds but one observer claims to have found a 15-pound fish in a nest. They can land on the water, float like a gull and take off without difficulty.

In 1917, Alaska instituted a bounty on bald eagles and in the first 10 years almost 42,000 eagles were killed and bounties collected. Since 1940 complete federal protection has been provided. The Northern race seems now to be secure but the Southern race is endangered. Only 21 pairs were known to nest in California in 1974.

MAY GENERAL MEETING REPORT -- by Sheila Davies

Are you interested in birds? If you are and didn't attend the May meeting, you missed a wonderful chance to learn more about shorebirds from an excellent speaker and to actually see at close hand two birds who will have been restored to their wild state by the time you read this.

Frank Allen's Bird of the Month was the Audubon's Warbler. I always seem to manage to focus my binoculars on the Audubons just as he is flying away, so I was particularly glad to see this bird in detail by way of Frank's good photography. The photographs also documented the fact that the Audubon's Warbler eats persimmons.

The Plant of the Month, lichens, was presented by Betty Hart. Mrs. Hart started photographing lichens for a camera club competition and has spent several years studying these plants and their role in the ecological chain with hand lens, microscope and camera. The lichens are not only delicately beautiful but also useful in their role of breaking down rock. Mrs. Hart calls them the great pioneers of the green world.

Max Krueger and Cliff Lindquist gave us an especially exciting moment when they brought in two birds from their raptor rehabilitation program who are to be released to enjoy freedom again. Countess, a most

vociferous Prairie Falcon, screamed her displeasure at having to attend an Audubon meeting. She came into the raptor rehabilitation program after being mishandled and found nearly dead. Thanks to the skillful care and concern of Max and Cliff she has been completely restored to health and a normal feisty falcon life. In contrast to the fishwife screaming of Countess, Jo Century, a two-year-old Red-tailed Hawk, sat with perfect lady-like calm on Max's hand. She, too, has been retrained to catch her own food and will shortly be flying free once more over California hills instead of living in confinement.

A very well organized presentation on shorebird life on a California estuary was given by Gary W. Page, a biologist at Point Reyes Bird Observatory. Under Mr. Page's guidance, PRBO has studied Bolinas Lagoon to put together a total picture of how and why birds use estuaries. Very few shorebirds breed in California but Mr. Page has also studied shorebirds on their breeding grounds in the Arctic and illustrated his talk with slides of birds in their more colorful breeding plumage. He described their flight and song displays and the more individualistic behavior they display during the breeding season. Each species of shorebird is specially equipped to feed on a particular animal. The curved bill of the Long-billed Curlew fits into the curved burrow of one species of invertebrate. The tip of a shorebird's bill is very sensitive to enable it to quickly get its food. Even to someone who finds "wet feet" birds less exciting than landbirds, Mr. Page made shorebirds extremely interesting by the details of feeding habits of different species on different parts of the lagoon and the different breeding and migration patterns of each species.

WILDLIFE RESCUE, INC.

-- by Katy Hobson

1975 Waterbird Report: 154 birds registered of which 46 released, 49 transferred (IBRC, SF Zoo, etc.), 10 euthanized, 40 expired, 1 pending, and 2 unknown (baby domestic mallards.) There were very few orphans--botulism and fractures took a heavy toll. Some of the species were: gulls, ducks, coots, grebes, egrets, herons, a phalarope, swan, ibis, murres, auklet, killdeer, stilt, sandpiper, etc.

In January we received a Great Blue Heron with a compound fracture of the metacarpals and a fish hook under his wing. We made two trips to Santa Cruz to an excellent Veterinarian who donated his time to set the wing. Ebenezer, the Great Blue Heron and Oliver, a White-faced Ibis lived together while their fractured wings healed. Between them they could eat $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of fish a day. The heron, who weighed 6 lbs, 15 oz when he was released, was with us for five weeks. He was a very expensive bird to rehabilitate, but also very gratifying. When he was ready, we took him to Bolinas and released him near the Audubon Canyon Ranch. Before release, A U.S. Fish & Wildlife band was put on his leg. Skip Schwartz and Kathy Kipping of the Audubon Canyon Ranch suggested the release site and witnessed the release. On the way to Bolinas, we took the Ibis to the S.F. Zoo. The Ibis was not as fortunate as the heron and will never fly again but he will be well cared for at the zoo.

Sadly, not all of the birds we receive can be rehabilitated, some must be euthanized. Some ducks and other birds who are not releasable can be given to a zoo but we know of no zoos or museums at this time which will accept crippled gulls. Our permits only allow us to keep birds while they are in treatment--when treatment is complete, the bird must, if unreleasable, go to a zoo, museum or educational institution, or be euthanized. Euthanasia is not a pleasant part of our work but it

is a fact of it. The heron and the ibis are unusual birds. Much of our work is with gulls and ducks. We use enormous amounts of fish, dog kibble and duck mash to feed our birds. All waterbirds used to be sent to IBRC in Berkely. As we have gradually come to take care of more of these birds at W.R.T., we have needed to build special facilities for them. At this time, we have plans to update our facilities and care of waterbirds before expanding the number of volunteers who care for these birds in their homes. Any donations of food or materials would be greatly appreciated.

Last year we were asked by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to take care of botulism birds picked up in the south bay, but we had no place to keep the birds while they recovered. So the birds were sent to YSI in San Jose and our volunteers helped care for the birds down there. If we are to help in situations like that, we need to find a place to temporarily set up a treatment center and we need volunteers to staff the center. Botulism is a problem in the early fall, primarily September. Are you able to help by staffing a center: Would you like to help during a major oil spill? All oiled birds are cleaned and cared for at Int'l Bird Rescue in Berkeley. We'd like to know now many are interested and able to go to Berkeley to help in emergencies. If you can help, please let us know--volunteers are needed on a regular basis during a crisis, it doesn't help to come once. It takes time to train people and we prefer people who can work as much as possible during the crisis.

Many waterbirds are killed by well-meaning attempts to help them. There are specific problems that are common to each variety and all of them find contact with humans very traumatic. If you find an injured bird, please bring it to us as soon as possible. Many birds show no outward injuries such as fractured wings or legs or oiled feathers. They are picked up because they will not fly or they cannot stand. We can't always state the cause of the illness (though we often suspect pesticides or other toxins), but we can support them with medications and tube feedings until they recover.

To become a WILDLIFE RESCUE, INC., VOLUNTEER, send your name, address and phone number to: Linda Ettinger, 248 San Mateo Drive, Menlo Park 94025.

To be a supporter of Wildlife Rescue, send your donation to: Phyllis Pierce, 494 Van Buren, Los Altos, 94022

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

For a swan song--most appropriate in our case--I first thank all the people in the Chapter who have kept it running, and urge you to keep it up in support of your new officers. I urge you, too, to remember that stewardship of our outdoors and of its plants and animals rests with you. With you, not with your Chapter officers, your elected or appointed officials, National Audubon, the Sierra Club, nor the Nature Conservancy. You are the only ones who can be ultimately successful in keeping the world from being paved over.

-- Byron Davies
President Sequoia Audubon

ALBINISM IN A BREWER'S BLACKBIRD:

Mrs. Ivan Angle reports a pair of Brewer's Blackbirds on Orange Avenue in South San Francisco just off El Camino Real. The male is a normally colored bird but the female has a perfectly white head and neck and light-colored legs and is a beautiful bird. Nearby shop owners say the birds have been there for some time.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME - NATIVE SPECIES CONSERVATION

"Don't hold your breath until the birdwatchers put their money where their mouths are," wrote a sports writer recently. Well, bird watchers, here's your chance to show the hunters. Participate in the DFG WILDLIFE program for the enhancement of non game wildlife in California. Make your check payable to WILDLIFE and mail it to WILDLIFE, Box DFG, Sacramento, CA 95801. Last year you received a sea otter decal and this year you will get a handsome bicentennial bald eagle decal. Do it now!

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH NEWS -- by Betty Boyd

A Special Announcement: A display of Howard Wheatley Allen's exquisite wood carvings of North American Birds will be on exhibit at Shorebirds (1550 Tiburon Blvd.) in Belvedere. The display will run from June 1 through June 19 - hours 10-5 p.m. Through Mr. Allen's generosity Audubon Canyon Ranch will share in the proceeds of sales.

As one enters the ranch courtyard he is welcomed anew by the graceful swooping antics of Cliff, Barn and Violet Green Swallows overhead and the twittering of the nearby nesting young... And in the picnic area if one is fortunate, he may catch a glimpse of a rare visitor, Harris' Sparrow... And John Kipping writes, "After a belated start nesting activities of the Great Egrets are in full swing and the cries of young Great Blue Herons atop the redwoods fill the canyon. Far below, the Lagoon is alive with the changing tides. Flowing water reveals the sublime pattern of channels now laced with thousands of sandpipers. The resident Harbor Seals bask in the sun near Pickleweed and Kent Islands, while overhead the large Caspian Terns and Osprey hover and plunge."

Special "thank you" to:

15 people from Outdoors Limited who pitched in at Volunteer Canyon Easter weekend to assist in completion of the water system there.

Marilyn Proffit, Marjorie Schwarz, John and Cathy Kipping and Helen Pratt who made possible the purchase of walkie talkies.

E.D. Bullard Co. of Sausalito for their donation of 3 fine First Aid kits.

Arthur and Consuelo Martin who donated a set of socket, box and open end wrenches.

POINT REYES BIRD OBSERVATORY FIELD TRIPS:

June 20-26 A seven day west-to-east Transect of the Sierra Nevada. Emphasis on birds at height of breeding season. Leaders Rich Stallcup and Art Earle. All meals included. \$170.

July 4-10 East of the Sierra Emphasis on botany and ornithology of White Mountains, Glass Mountain, Mono Lake and Tioga Pass. Bob Stewart, PRBO Biologist, Steve McCormick, Botanist and Pam Williams, naturalist. \$100

August 2-6 Ecology of Plants and Birds of the Lake Tahoe Region. Donner State Park, base camp. Steve McCormick, botanist, Bob Stewart, PRBO biologist. \$65

November 19-27 Birds of San Blas, Mexico. Limited to 15 participants. PRBO membership necessary. Leaders Art Earle and Bob Stewart.

For more information contact Bob Stewart, 27 Cedar St. San Anselmo CA 94950. Phone 457-3744.

ADDENDUM TO SIGHTINGS:

From Pigeon Point on April 1, 5114 Bonaparte's Gulls were observed. on April 14, 5229 were seen, on April 24, 12050 were observed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS - JUNE MEETING:

The nominating committee has designated the following Sequoia members as their nominees for the 1976-1977 period: PRESIDENT: John Prime; VICE PRESIDENT, Steve Aldrich; SECRETARY, Louise Fletcher; TREASURER, Victor Crotchett; DIRECTORS, Ruth Smith, Howard Rathlesberger, Jean Jones, Ed McElhany, Norman Fox, and John Silliman. (Byron Davies will also serve as a director by virtue of being immediate past pres.)

Nominations from the floor at the June 10 meeting are welcome. Nominees must have consented to accept the nomination.

COMMENCING THIS MONTH we are discontinuing our practice of asking the Post Office to return bulletins to us with corrected addresses and will make corrections as they are received from National Audubon. This usually requires about a month to complete so if you do not want to miss any issues, please phone us or drop us a note too when you inform National Audubon. If you are moving out of San Mateo County and want to receive the newsletter of your new Chapter, remember to ask National Audubon to transfer your membership as this is not done automatically.

IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY with the time lapse in receiving your bulletin due to the delays inherent in bulk mailing, send the editors a remittance of \$1.30 to cover first class mailing for the next ten issues starting with September, 1976 and we shall mail your copy individually.

THIS IS THE LAST ISSUE of the bulletin until September, 1976. We hope you have a very HAPPY VACATION SEASON! Deadline for the September Bulletin is August 15th!

THE SEQUOIA June, 1976
Sequoia Audubon Society
1009 Laguna Avenue
Burlingame, CA 94010

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