



The Sequoia

BULLETIN OF SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

A CHAPTER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Volume 27, No. 7

March, 1978

MEETINGS:

BOARD MEETING, MARCH 2, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM at the Northern California Savings & Loan office, 1430 Chapin Avenue in Burlingame. Board members and committee chairmen should attend. Other members are welcome.

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING MARCH 9, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM 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 in San Mateo. Social period 7:30 to 8:00. Meeting commences at 8:00.

Our own John Silliman will provide the program telling us of the things he saw on several recent birding trips to the Southwest, Mexico and the Carribean Islands--with slides.

Frank Allen and Charles Newman will present their traditional and always interesting "see and hear" bird of the month.

LD TRIPS:

Save gas. Make birding pals by car-pooling. Call Pearl Morgenstern, 341-2510 and tell her where a rider or two can meet you. Split the cost of fifteen cents a mile equitably.

MARCH 4, SATURDAY POINT REYES--BEAR VALLEY SOUTH

Meet at the Pt. Reyes National Seashore headquarters at 9:00 AM

Leaders: Georgia and Jerry Perkins 583-7815 (after 4:00 PM)

MARCH 11 SATURDAY AÑO NUEVO

Additional reserved space at Año Nuevo. The following people have space reserved for them at times listed:

9:15 AM - Agens Redman (2)

9:30 AM - Gertrude Dean (1), Mildred Boomer (1), Steve Aldrich (2), Dorothy Harrington (1), Ruth Castle (1), Jerry Perkins (2), Ona Westigard (1), Barbara & Hal Lucas (2), Frances Harrison (4), Jan & Gil West (4).

9:45 AM - Kandice Ward (1), Myna Fahner (1), Charlotte Eichenhoffer (1).

1:45 PM - Si Browenstein (2).

These spaces are reserved for Sequoia Audubon. Please arrive at least 15 minutes ahead of schedule so your space is not given to someone else.

MARCH 18 SATURDAY COYOTE HILLS

PRESIDENT: John Prime
848 W. Hillsdale Blvd.
San Mateo, CA 94403
Phone: 573-5889

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

Cross the Dumbarton Bridge and just past the toll plaza turn left onto Jarvis and then left again at the signal onto Newark. Just after crossing the railroad track turn left on Patterson Ranch Road which is marked as the park access road. Meet at 8:30 AM at the small parking lot near the park boundary. We will be in the area between the parking lot and Indian Mounds for the first couple of hours so latecomers should be able to find us easily. The rest of the day will be divided among the two marshes, the salt ponds and the wooded area with lunch near the visitor center.

Leaders: Hal and Barbara Lucas 344-3796

APRIL 1 SATURDAY BUTANO STATE PARK -- OWL TRIP

Meet at sunset at the ranger's booth at the park entrance. Bring a flashlight, warm clothes and hot liquid refreshment. We may also visit Pescadero Marsh to check out the rail population.

Best way to Butano State Park is highway #92 to Half Moon Bay, south on highway #1 to Pescadero Road, east to Cloverdale Road and south about 4 miles to the park entrance.

Leader: Barry Sauppe

APRIL 8 SATURDAY SAN BRUNO MOUNTAIN WILDFLOWERS

Meet at 9:00 AM at Guadalupe Parkway and Radio Road. This point can be reached from Old Bayshore Highway by turning west at the top of the hill north of Brisbane.

This is a good opportunity to see the abundant San Bruno Mountain wildflowers many of which are unique to this area. Lunch optional.

Leader: Enes Millar

FIELD TRIP REPORTS:

February 4 and 5 -- Los Banos

As usual, our annual Los Banos trip was a booming success. Despite some nasty weather conditions a total of 76 species were observed. Some of the highlights of the trip were: mountain plovers, great-horned and barn owls, Say's phoebe, loggerhead shrike, Nuttall's woodpecker, vesper sparrow, horned lark, hundreds of Canadian, snow and white-fronted geese, common gallinule, sora, American bitterns, yellow-headed and tri-colored blackbirds, white-faced ibis, rough-legged hawks and the ever-fascinating dancing sandhill cranes. Thirty-one members participated in our trip which included Los Banos, San Luis and Merced Wildlife refuges. We enjoyed a good meal at the Wool Grower's Inn, together with four other chapters-- it was a convention!

-- Jerry and Georgia Perkins, Leaders

CONSERVATION NEWS:

February provided one item of good news from Washington in the passage by both the House and Senate of bills to expand Redwood National Park. The main difference between the two bills is the provision by the House bill of \$40 million to retrain loggers who might lose their jobs as a consequence of the Park expansion. Senator Cranston, who sponsored the Senate bill, would not oppose this addition to his bill in the joint conference committee, so it is hoped the final bill will go to President Carter for signature by March.

A helping hand was given the state forest lands recently when the State Board of Forestry appointed Madrone Audubon's Martha Bentley to the

District Technical Advisory Committee of the Coast Forest District which extends from the Oregon border through Santa Cruz County. Congratulations, Martha, the District is fortunate to have you on its Advisory Committee.

A two-house conference committee of the state Legislature was also considering a pair of more divergent bills on farm land preservation. AB 1900, sponsored by Assemblyman Calvo of Mountain View, was passed by the Assembly, while SB 193, the bill of Senator George Zenovich, was passed by the Senate. Both bills set up state councils for protection of prime agricultural lands and require that they be assessed on their value as farm lands, not as property for urban development. The Senate bill, however, allows excessive local control and does not give the state sufficient power to block urbanization. It is nevertheless supported by the California Farm Bureau and the Cattlemen's Association, as well as the State Chamber of Commerce and the Supervisors' Association. The Assembly bill would require identification of prime agricultural lands by the state Council and approval by the council of local plans to preserve such lands.

The Audubon Leader has asked again for help in permanent halting of the Garrison Diversion Unit, one of the largest and most environmentally harmful of President Carter's original "hit list" of water resource projects which Congress passed last year in spite of him. It has been temporarily halted by a NAS lawsuit whose settlement directed the Department of the Interior to draw up alternatives to the original plans. The Department will probably recommend a greatly reduced project, but it is important that the Lonetree Reservoir unit be cut out of the project. As long as it remains it will be "a foot in the door for restoring other parts (of the original) in future years." Letters are needed to Cecil D. Andrus, Secretary of the Interior (Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., 20240) urging him to be sure the Lonetree Reservoir unit is removed from the modified Garrison project.

And speaking of the Audubon Leader, those who wish to keep as current as possible in conservation activities are reminded that subscriptions to this semi-monthly publication are available to any SAS member for \$5 per year from the National Audubon Association, 950 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. The mid-month issue always seems to arrive a day or so after the SEQUOIA deadline, so that any information from the Leader in this column is apt to be a month late.

The happy settlement of the future of Filoli is probably not new to most SAS members, but it was given such relatively scant news coverage that it may be worth mentioning here. In early January the 528 acres of Parcel C of the Filoli estate, which had been seriously considered for purchase by San Mateo County, was sold by Mrs. Roth to Filoli Center. This is the non-profit organization which manages Parcels A and B of the estate for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Final plans for use of the land have not been made, but it is hoped the upland portion will be kept as a wildlife refuge. No plans are contemplated for a golf course, which had been a suggested use and point of controversy in the County's proposed acquisition of the property.

The County has about decided to express an interest to the State in purchasing the Edgewood Road State College site just east of the Filoli estate. No definite plans have yet been formulated, however, though the County would have priority as a public entity in its purchase. It is suggested that the Mid-peninsula Regional Open Space District might supply half the funding.

The District has available to it some half million dollars in federal grant funding for another nearby property - the Hassler site off of Edgewood Road and bordering on San Carlos. That town would like to acquire it but lacks funds and reversed its previous decision on acquisition. San Francisco is asking some \$2 million for the land and the MROSD would have to share the remaining cost with a partner, such as the County.

--Ruth Smith, Conservation Chmn

BIRDING FROM MY KITCHEN WINDOW: -- by Fran Nelson

The first sound to greet my ears this morning when I go out to feed the birds at 6:15 is the same as the last sound last night--that wonderful treefrog chorus! That such a tiny mite as the Pacific Treefrog can make such a big sound is still unbelievable to me! It is interesting how suddenly the concert stops from time to time--just like the dawn chorus of the birds and the vesper concert of the House Sparrows. Who and where is the concertmaster? Certainly the individual performers are spread over a large area except in the case of the House Sparrows. Anyway, at this season, I do look forward to beginning and ending my days with that most enjoyable music.

For several weeks during the winter, the order of business is to get our breakfast started, then hurry out to feed the birds and police the shrubs for cats ahead of the early arrivals. Now I can hardly make it because daylight comes earlier and so do the birds. Soon I must reverse my procedure and feed the birds first. Roy will have to take his chances on getting breakfast in time to catch the commute! Of course, he might have something to say about that!

As soon as I am back in, I begin to see little dark spots move around on the gravel where the scratch is and farther out even darker spots begin to appear. The dark spots are Golden and White-crowned Sparrows and the darker spots are the Fox Sparrows who usually head for the sunflower seeds first. Hot on their heels are Mourning Doves and more Mourning Doves! The sparrows are not concerned for their safety when these large birds alight. They know whom to expect at this time of the morning. It's too early for hawks.

This morning, there are twenty-one Mourning Doves and the sparrows are frantically trying to work around them to break their fast! It isn't easy when you're that little and there are so many big birds. The doves are built so close to the ground that they cover most of the seeds they aren't eating. At least with the Quail, they can forage under them if need be! The doves breakfast until the seeds are gone unless they are frightened away or the Quail take over.

A Brown Towhee arrives while there is still something left and I am glad. They seem to have the knack of arriving when everything is gone!

Then comes a flock of House Finches and another of House Sparrows. The latter have landed in the camelia sasanguas and are looking dismayed at the number of Mourning Doves. I'm sure they have long ago equated this with the rate of food consumption. As soon as the weather mellowes, I tell myself, I shall try to discourage a few doves by putting out less food for the early arrivals. Either way I go out after they leave with more seeds for my smaller friends.

This is the only beginning of the difficulties of competition for the small ones. Here comes a Quail! He stops just outside the xylosma senticosa to make three calls to the clan. One Quail is usually just the tip of the iceberg and this time is no exception! Soon we have fifteen. He calls intermittently because they haven't all arrived. His first three calls are accented on the last syllable and succeeding calls on the first and second.

Three Brewer's Blackbirds, one a shiny black male with yellow shoe-button eyes, land on the deck rail nervously jerking their tails upward and saying "chack". They join the breakfast club amid more Quail calls.

A large flock of Cedar Waxwings spread themselves across the top of the birch clump. Their high-pitched squeals have announced their presence. They are joined by a flock of Robins as I am checking the flock for a Bohemian waxwing as I usually do. The chances of finding one are extremely small. If I don't try, they are even smaller!

The female Robin who owns the raisin supply is here and is scolding some other Robins who would like to share in the bounty. She dives on them as soon as they get close to "her" raisins and judging from the tone of voice she is using on them, it may be just as well I can't translate it literally. It's a lot like the tone of voice she uses on me when there are no raisins out there. Her language is especially strong when I have been gone and she has been deprived for a longer period than usual.

A chorus of Redwings now dominates the scene. I can't see them but they aren't far away! Twice more the Cedar Waxwings have come to be checked. I have no way to know if the composition of the flock is the same and maybe that Bohemian is here this time! A House Finch is belting out his cheerful song! More Quail calls! Where is the rest of that covey?

Something startles the birds. The small ones take wing and the Quail run swiftly for cover. What a beautiful sight it is to see Quail running! Heads are extended forward to the limit on rigid necks and, like fashion models, there is no perceptible body movement except for the legs and they really move! How differently they walk--chicken-like, with heads pumping back and forth!

It is now 8:00 AM and the male Quail who has been calling, is still calling. He is having a time getting the gang together this morning. Those that are here are at the edge of the xylosmas resting and preening. The small birds seem anxious to stoke their furnaces before the next onslaught of wind and rain. They are industriously searching for anything left by the larger birds.

Facing away from my kitchen window, I am reminded that it looks as if the storms have ravaged the inside of our house and I, too, had better show some industry!

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH: Audubon Canyon Ranch is a 100-acre wildlife sanctuary and education center located on Bolinas lagoon four miles north of Stinson Beach on State Highway 1. It is open to the public on weekends and holidays from March 4 through July 4. Special visits may be arranged by phoning the Ranch, 383-1644. The Ranch is sponsored by Golden Gate, Marin and Sequoia Audubon Societies. In 1969 the Ranch was designated by the U.S. Department of the Interior as a Registered Natural Landmark.

Sequoia Audubon will provide volunteer hosts at the Ranch commencing with Memorial Day on May 29, each Saturday and Sunday and concluding with the Ranch closing on July 4. This is a total of 12 dates. Host duty is a most pleasant experience requiring no special skills or expertise. Clear and complete written suggestions will be provided each host. Hosts greet the arriving visitors, point out the parking lot, bookstore, display hall, trails, and handle visitor registration. Many interesting people visit the Ranch and often fascinating conversations result. Last year there were visitors from 45 States and 17 foreign countries. Here is an opportunity to perform a worthwhile service in a superb natural set-

ting among interesting dedicated people. Phone Hal Lucas 314-3796 and ask him to put your name on his host service list for one or more dates.

News from the Ranch - from Betty Boyd

The Ranch will be open to visitors without charge on March 4 through July 5 on weekends, holidays and during Easter week. Visiting hours are from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Groups interested in guided tours during the week may arrange for same by calling Edris Cole at 383-1644 for an appointment. Parking facilities and picnic tables are available. The Ranch is located on Highway 1 about four miles north of Stinson Beach. For public transportation call the Golden Gate Transit Company (332-6000) for their schedule.

Please help - Bay Area schools are finding it increasingly difficult to budget the \$140 to pay for a bus for a trip to the Ranch. The Audubon Canyon Ranch Board of Directors and Volunteer Council of the Ranch are attempting to help some of the schools meet the cost. Your contributions, large or small, will be gratefully received. Please send your check, made out to Audubon Canyon Ranch to the Ranch and indicate that the money is for this project. Many of the children are from the Bay Area's inner schools and they have not been blessed with the opportunity to see, touch and otherwise experience some of nature's glories.

Exhibit Hall - A display of artifacts and materials used by the Coast Miwok in the gathering and preparation of food, trade and transportation will become a permanent addition to the Exhibit Hall. A few more items are needed, such as a seed beater and baskets that were used for cooking, trinkets, seeds, decorative objects and a sifter and winnow. If you can be of help or need more information, please call Nadine Hastings at 388-2473.

Acknowledgements - Audubon Canyon Ranch is most grateful to have received a generous bequest from the late Celia A. Paroni. Like all the bequests we receive, the money has become part of our Endowment Fund and will help to support the Ranch for the foreseeable future.

FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING:

A large appreciative audience came on February 9 to hear Ted Chandik's scholarly illustrated talk on "Shorebirds," one of the more difficult groups for study and identification.

Ted led us through an orderly explanation of the various species and their distinguishing field marks, comparative sizes, feeding habits, distribution and migration patterns.

We saw birds in and out of their breeding plumages, learned about the five or six species which nest in the Bay Area and how birds are caught for study and markings.

We were once again impressed with the prime importance of the remaining mud flats which provide myriads of organisms as food supply for shorebirds.

Charles Newman's most recent (January) birding trip to Mexico produced pictures of the Tufted and Vermillion Flycatchers which he showed as Birds of the Month. Other slides showed the wide variety of birds encountered on his trip.

-- C. G.

1978 NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Sequoia Audubon Society by-laws require that the board of directors appoint a nominating committee whose duty shall be to submit (at the

annual meeting on June 8) nominations for officers and directors for the coming year. The board has selected the following for the 1978 nominating committee:

Al Bergeron	349-2960
Roy Nelson	593-7941
Jerry Perkins	583-7815

Members who wish to volunteer to serve as officers or directors or who wish to suggest other members for such service should phone a member of the nominating committee. At the annual meeting on June 8 nominations from the floor will also be solicited. Anyone making such a nomination should be sure that the member he nominates is willing to serve.

FEBRUARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:

The board of directors of Sequoia Audubon held their regular monthly meeting on February 2.

President Prime reported the need of a host coordinator for Audubon Canyon Ranch. He will solicit volunteers at the February 9 membership meeting.

Our publicity chairman, Carmen Gales, reported that notices of meetings and field trips are regularly printed in most local newspapers except the San Mateo Times. In this paper notices appear only about three times a year because of the great volume of similar notices. Purchased advertising was discussed but the cost seems more than we can justify. Notices in public libraries and public recreation centers were discussed and will be investigated further.

Eila Fox, membership chairman, reported a decline in the number of members. Several suggestions for recruiting new members were discussed.

AUDUBON CAMP IN THE WEST:

For many years Sequoia Audubon has provided several scholarships to the National Audubon summer camp in Wyoming. Our committee is now selecting two people for 1978 scholarships. The camp is, of course, open to everyone, Audubon members and non-members alike. The cost is \$300 for a two-week session. This includes meals, housing, field trips and instruction. There are four sessions available from which to choose - June 25 to July 7, July 9 to July 21, July 23 to August 4 and August 6 to August 18. Norman Fox has a brochure which he will be pleased to send anyone who is interested. (Phone 343-1406).

GEORGE WHITTEL EDUCATION CENTER - RICHARDSON BAY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY:
376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon. Phone 388-2524 Operated by National Audubon Society

SUNDAY SEMINARS FOR ADVANCED BIRDERS

March sees the continuation of the special field identification classes being conducted by Jon Winter at Audubon's Whittell Center on Sundays from 10am to 12:30 pm.

March 5 - Petrels-Shearwaters-Albatrosses-Immature Cormorants-Vireos-Kinglets-Pipits-Female Tanagers

March 12 - Shrikes-Thrashers-Carpodacus Finches-Sapsuckers-Woodpeckers-Female Grosbeaks and Finches

Registration for these programs (\$6.50 per person for each seminar) can be made by mail or at the Center. Please make check payable to

National Audubon Society, 376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon, CA 94920.

FREE CATALOGUE

The Society's Whittell Audubon Center offers a large mail-order selection of field guides, children's books, educational materials and field accessories from binoculars to bug boxes. For a free catalogue, "The Book Nest", write to the Center 376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon.

SWAMP SPARROWS KNOW THEIR ROOTS A pair of Rockefeller University researchers found that baby swamp sparrows selectively learn the song of their species and block out the chirps of their close cousins, the song sparrows. Infant male swamp sparrows were reared in acoustically shielded chambers and exposed to spliced tape recordings of swamp sparrow and song sparrow song patterns. The swamp sparrows learned only those songs made of swamp sparrow syllables, the researchers reported. Findings: apparently the birds are predisposed to learn the appropriate song, thus lessening the hazard of learning songs of another species.

PENINSULA HUMANE SOCIETY ---- IN-HOME ORPHANED BIRD PROGRAM

If you would like to help give abandoned, orphaned and/or injured young song birds--there are hundreds of them every year from April through August--a chance to fly free as healthy young adults, you will be interested in the Peninsula Humane Society's new program. Yes, the program has been attempted before but was severely handicapped by the lack of trained volunteers.

This year with the help of volunteers Violet Subbotin and Pat De Lemos (Sequoia Audubon members) and Trudy Hartley, the Humane Society's Wildlife Team member, Kathleen Taft, and Carol Meany from Wildlife Rescue have put together a training program and renewed effort to care for the unfortunate songsters.

To completely raise and rehabilitate the birds takes a considerable amount of time, initially dawn to after-dusk scheduled care and feeding, particularly of the babies. Thereafter the feeding schedule isn't so demanding but they need a quiet place with room to learn to fly. The final stage, of course is a suitable place to release the bird and make sure of its adaptation.

If you don't have time to care for the very young perhaps you would like to help release them. But in whatever area you can help these little friends you will be welcome. Your reward, a song forever yours....

The training classes presented by Carol Meany of Wildlife Rescue in Mountain View will be held at the Humane Education Center, Peninsula Humane Society, 12 Airport Boulevard, San Mateo:

Saturday, April 1 From 10:00 to 11:30
Saturday, April 8 " " "

Classes will be limited to 30 members. There is no charge for the training.

To enroll in the classes send your name, address and telephone number to:

Kathleen Taft
Peninsula Humane Society Wildlife Team
12 Airport Boulevard
San Mateo, CA 94401

Phone: 344-7643, extension 222

POINT REYES FIELD SEMINARS:

Did you know that the Point Reyes National Seashore has weekend seminars on natural history topics? A different seminar is offered each weekend this spring, beginning on February 4 with "Seashore Life." The courses on birds are taught by either Bob Stewart of Dave Shuford of Point Reyes Bird Observatory and include:

- Migrating Shorebirds April 9 \$16 Dave Shuford
- Spring Bird Migration April 22-23 \$26 Bob Stewart (1 unit)
- Ecology of Pt. Reyes Birds May 6 \$16 Dave Shuford
- Breeding Birds and Their Habitats June 10-11 \$26 Bob Stewart (1 Unit)

These seminars are excellent and fun ways to become better acquainted with the natural and cultural history of this area. Costs are minimal and extension credit from Dominican College is available for certain seminars for an additional \$10 fee.

For a brochure or further information, write Seminar Coordinator, Point Reyes Field Seminars, Pt. Reyes Station, CA 94956. Or call 663-1200.

If you are a resident of San Mateo County, membership in National Audubon Society includes membership in Sequoia Audubon Society and a subscription to its newsletter, THE SEQUOIA. Annual subscription for non-members is \$2 per year. There are ten issues each year, September through June.

If you are moving, remember to send the SEQUOIA editors your change of address. If you are moving away from San Mateo County and want to transfer your membership to your new Audubon Chapter, include your request with your change of address to National Audubon Society as this transfer is made only upon specific direction from the subscriber.

Deadline for the April issue is March 15.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

National Audubon Society, 950 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Local Chapter SEQUOIA

Annual Membership:

Individual	\$15	Contributing	\$100
Family	\$18	Donor	\$250
Sustaining	\$30	Life	\$1000 (no further dues payment)
Supporting	\$50	Student	\$8.50 (for those under 21 years or students enrolled in full time educational program.)

Gift _____ Renewal _____ New _____

SEQUOIA CALENDAR

- March 2 - Board Meeting at Northern California Savings & Loan
 4 - Field trip - Point Reyes
 9 - Monthly meeting at the Garden Center
 11 - Field trip - Ano Nuevo
 18 - Field trip - Coyote Hills Regional Park
- April 1 - Butano Owls
 1 - In-Home Orphaned Bird training program, Peninsula
 Humane Society, Education Center (see Page 8)
 6 - Board Meeting
 8 - Field trip - San Bruno Mountain Wildflowers
 8 - In-Home Orphaned Bird training, 2nd session
 13 - Monthly Meeting at the Garden Center

THE SEQUOIA March, 1978
Sequoia Audubon Society
1009 Laguna Avenue
Burlingame, CA 94010

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