



The Sequoia

BULLETIN OF SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY
A CHAPTER OF NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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May, 1978

MEETINGS:

BOARD MEETING, MAY 4, 7:30 PM in the conference room of Northern California Savings & Loan office, 1430 Chapin Avenue in Burlingame. Board members and committee chairmen should attend. Other members are welcome.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING MAY 11, THURSDAY, 7:30 PM at the Shoong Auditorium in the San Francisco Zoo. The Shoong Auditorium is reached through the main entrance of the Zoo and is in the Children's zoo area.

Our speaker will be Tony Bila, Senior Zookeeper, who is in charge of the zoo's carnivores and has a special interest in wolves. Mr. Bila will have as his guest, Kiowa, an Eastern timber wolf. He--Mr. Bila, not Kiowa--will tell us of his experiences with wolves.

Our program will also include an excellent wolf documentary movie, "Death of a Legend," produced by the Canadian Film Board.

It has been suggested that we each bring a flashlight to the meeting.

ELD 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.

MAY 6 and 7 MYSTERY TRIP

See April SEQUOIA for details. It now appears that the Garden Center area in San Mateo is probably not the most secure spot for overnight parking. A good arrangement for those going on the Mystery Trip would be to have someone drive you to the Garden Center on Saturday morning (departure 8:00 AM) and call for you on Sunday evening at 5:00 PM. If you must park in the vicinity it has been suggested that a side street on the east side of Alameda de las Pulgas--near a streetlight--might be safer.

See the SEQUOIA CALENDAR on Page 8 for other Field Trips

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Coyote Hills -- March 18

About 25 birders met at 8:30 a.m. to begin what was to be an unusual day of birding. Conditions were ideal--warm, slight overcast with a feeling of spring in the air. The Mounds area was checked first with mixed

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results. We soon moved to the main headquarters area to see the Saw-whet owl that had been sighted the previous Saturday. Sure enough, he was still there, (in a different, more sheltered tree, but easily seen). Then we heard that there was a second Saw-whet owl in a nearby tree and he was duly admired and viewed as well. A little later, while scouting the Great Horned owl nest box, the two adults were spotted, one roosting in a nearby tree, the other in the box brooding an owlet. Scopes came out and all had a chance to see the little white downy fellow with his black beak, nestling against his parent. In another area Jean Jones spotted a pair of Rock wrens busy building their nest in a rock crevice in the hillside. There birds had not been seen in the area for a year or two. Our total species for the day was 73 and included two more owls--Short-eared and Burrowing. A Virginia rail was heard in the marsh area. Also seen that day was a Northern oriole. The park has been restored to its former condition by the heavy winter rains and the birds were there in full force in all the varied habitats the area provides. It was truly a beautiful day for the birds and the birders!

-- Hal and Barbara Lucas, Leaders.

San Bruno Mountain -- April 8

On a beautiful April day with a temperature of 70°F, twenty-one people witnessed Mother Nature's display of wildflowers on San Bruno Mountain. The following is a list of flowers seen on that day:

Poison oak, Coast barberry, blue elderberry, chickweed, California dandelion, California sagebrush, chaparral broom, goldfields, New Zealand fireweed, seaside daisy, lizard tail, gum weed, hairy cat's-ear, stone crop, Franciscan wallflower, shining pepper-grass, wild radish, wild cucumber, manzanita, red-stemmed filaree, crane's bill geranium, Phacelia sp., spearmint, crimson sage, hedge nettle, French brome, Pacific pea, lupine sp., gorse, American vetch, cheeseweed, checker bloom, suncup, cape oxalis, California poppy, California plantain, wild buckwheat, sheep sorrel, rumex sp., scarlet pimpernel, blue larkspur, California buttercup, California coffee berry, California strawberry, toyon, cinquefoil, California blackberry, bedstraw, California gooseberry, Franciscan paint brush, sticky monkey flower, Johnny Tuck, California bee plant, nightshade sp., poison hemlock, sweet fennel, footsteps-of-spring, California golden violet, foxtail, Douglas iris, harvest Brodiaea, soap plant, mission bells.

-- Enes Millar, Leader

CONSERVATION NEWS:

There has been more good news from the federal front in the past month with the agreement of the Congressional joint conference committee on the bill to enlarge Redwoods National Park and its signing into law by President Carter. But this has unfortunately been countered by what NAS President Stahr calls "knuckling under to election year politics" by the Interior Department in its latest Garrison Diversion project proposals. Instead of an environmentally sound modification of the project, the latest proposals still embody some of the worst shortcomings of the original and would still destroy an entire national wildlife refuge.

The Garrison project is one of the "Terrible Twenty" such pork-barrel water projects which NAS along with 24 other conservation organizations have joined in a coalition to fight. Two California projects are on the list--the Auburn Dam and the Marysville Dam. The latter is a billion

dollar project to provide 1,350 Megawatts of pumped storage hydroelectric capacity in a basin which has now 998 Megawatts of unused conventional hydroelectric capacity at existing dams. Audubon members can still help by writing President Carter (White House, Washington, D.C. 20500) urging him to fight these costly and environmentally harmful projects.

The proposed Warm Springs Dam in Sonoma County, another environmentally unsound and costly project, is still being challenged in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. This case is testing the ruling made by 5 U.S. Circuit Courts that a project with serious adverse environmental effects can be stopped by court order. Two other Circuit Courts ruled the opposite and only the Supreme Court can resolve the conflict. It is hoped the Warm Springs case will become the test case to provide a landmark decision, important for many other similar projects. Funds will be increasingly needed. They should now be sent (and check made out) to Sierra Club Foundation, Warm Springs Legal, P.O. Box 6181, Santa Rosa, CA 95406. Contributions are still tax deductible.

At the Bay Area Audubon Council meeting held April 1, Martha Bentley of Madrone Chapter reported that a good and needed forestry bill, AB 1236, sponsored by Assemblyman Calvo of Mountain View, would be going to the Senate Resources Committee. It allows public appeal of timber permits, opposed by Senator John A. Nejedly and the timber industry. Letters are needed to him and Senator Arlen Gregorio (State Capitol, Sacramento 95814) urging passage of this essential part of the bill.

With the signing of final documents by the Supervisors on April 4 and payment made to the Crocker Land Co., North County residents have finally achieved a county park on San Bruno Mountain of 1,711 acres. In addition, the State expects to purchase the saddle area. Development by the county is now planned in three phases with only basic necessities to be constructed in the first phase such as fencing, headquarters for maintenance and some trails.

The Supervisors also agreed to join the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District in buying the 477-acre Edgewood Road State College site, each paying half of the total cost of \$1,167,500. Senator Gregorio has introduced a bill, SB 2124, seeking acquisition of the land at this price which is only half of its appraised value. Opposition to the price reduction is expected from State College Trustees and from the Department of Finance.

BIRDING FROM MY KITCHEN WINDOW

by Fran Nelson

Roy is reroofing our house--putting shakes over shingles. He is a bird disruptor par excellence! Just as the birds regain enough confidence to resume their feeding, he hammers, tosses something, turns on the electric saw or walks across the roof. In between, the wind comes along and helps itself to a shake or the kneeling pad and sends it sailing toward the birds! Needless to say, they all head for cover. They need him and his operation like they needed that Cooper's Hawk who sent them scurrying when he flew low over the backyard a couple of days ago barely clearing the fences.

The roofer has been, and is, disrupting twenty-four Quail, among others, who have moments ago resumed eating. Another noise from the roof! They hasten to move en masse toward cover. However, a few in the center

are moving more slowly, perhaps a bit reluctantly, and one female brushes the shoulder of another as she passes. Suddenly, she puts on the brakes, doubles back and gives the female she has just stumbled over a couple of sound pecks on the back and continues on her way!

And now a different kind of threat! They have just made still another retreat to the xylosma bed and now I am hearing warning calls from them. I look up to see twenty-four Quail just outside the shrubbery, all packed together, all facing the shrubs and all calling their rapid "pit-pit-pit" calls. It can only mean we have an uninvited feline visitor. Then, en masse, they move up into the juniper bed, still all facing the shrubbery and scolding excitedly. At this point, the cat appears at the edge of the planting. Out like a shot, flies this chronic cat-chaser! Could I have been sure there would be no danger to any other bird when he was ready to give up on the Quail, who had the situation well in hand, I would have watched the show but I could think of one thing and that was to get him out of here!

From the roof, Roy sees great masses of red pyracantha berries all over the neighborhood. Ours are long gone except for a few at the tip ends of branches accessible only to the Hermit Thrush who catches his berries on the fly. Perhaps ours are among the first to go because of the cat chasing service and other amenities we offer here.

There is much cutting to do to shape the shakes around the vents and along the hips and Roy is making a series of short saw-cuts. I realize the resemblance to a Thrasher's "chup" when I begin to notice that the Thrasher is answering him time after time. It's a most amusing conversation! I go out to call Roy's attention to it and he has not only noticed it but is deliberately prolonging the dialogue.

The Quail have again been trying to muster up enough courage to come in. A few at a time have been attempting various routes toward the seed and have been sent scampering back to cover. Now, after talking it over among themselves, they have apparently decided that there is strength in numbers and they form a solid mass and run in as one! They eat for several minutes before that ominous shadow from the roof is cast across them and they run out as one!

And so goes a typical day for the birds when Roy is on the roof. They must be relieved when Monday morning comes around again and the week-end do-it-yourselfer is out of their way!

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH is a 1000-acre wildlife sanctuary and education center located on Bolinas Lagoon three miles north of Stinson Beach on State Highway 1. It is open to the public on weekends and holidays from March 1 through July 4 each year. 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.

NEWS FROM THE RANCH From Betty Boyd

The Great Blue Herons are busy raising their young and the Great Egrets who arrived in March--right on schedule--have wasted no time setting up housekeeping. Many eggs have been laid, the very first on Easter Sunday, March 26.

Visitors arrive in greater numbers than ever before on weekends, both old-timers and newcomers. While the activities in the Heronry do not

change, guests enjoy the additions to the Exhibit Hall and spend time in the Book Store with its excellent selection of books, posters, postcards, etc. ACR T-shirts, binoculars, film and bird feeders are now also available.

This season the Ranch has been favored with some very fine publicity through the courtesy of Channel 7 on their evening newscast and a full page spread in the "Independent Journal," Marin County's daily newspaper. Last but not least is the cover on the 1978 telephone directory for Marin County. One of Clerin Zumwalt's beautiful pictures of the Egrets is shown and a brief history of the Ranch is on the back inner cover. Copies of the picture will be on sale in the Bookstore.

Directors of the Ranch board are appointees from Golden Gate, Marin and Sequoia Audubon Societies. They are basically responsible for the operation of the Ranch and its other properties. Sequoia is the smallest in membership of the three and its donation of \$1500 to the Ranch operating fund is truly appreciated.

WATERSHED HIKING AND BIRDING:

A good area to walk and bird is that part of the watershed on the east side of Highway 280, west of Belmont and south of the Highway 92 interchange. Here there are walking trails for humans only--chaparral, wildflowers everywhere all blooming now, hawks, meadowlarks, thrashers, and endless beautiful vistas and open space.

To enter, at the top, in Belmont, drive west on Ralston from the Alameda de las Pulgas and turn south onto Hallmark. Travel south on Hallmark to the stop sign at Wemberly. Turn right onto Wemberly for about a block to the stop sign at James. Turn right and drive about half a block on James and park. Gaze westward and you will see the watershed gate and the beginning of the walking path.

This area may also be entered by taking the first Vista Point off-ramp south of the interchange.

-- Norman Fox

SAN MATEO GARDEN CENTER MEETING - MAY 8, Monday, 8: PM

Audubon members and guests are invited to a slide lecture by Don Wobber, ex-businessman, oceanographer and author of "Jade Beneath the Sea--A Diving Adventure." He will present his experiences diving in New Zealand, Israel and other places.

BIRDS OF PREY CARDS:

Send 35 cents and a box top from Arm and Hammer Baking Soda to Church and Dwight Company, 2 Pennsylvania Plaza, New York, NY 10001. Soon you will receive 10 2½" X 3¾" cards reproducing paintings by Louis Agassiz Fuertes of a Bald Eagle, Osprey, White Gyrfalcon, Snowy Owl, Screech Owl, Goshawk, Swallow-tailed Kite, Short-eared Owl, Red-shouldered Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk. Descriptive material appears on the backs of the cards along with the admonition, "For the good of all, do not destroy the birds."

CALIFORNIA ALASKA COALITION:

The CAC will present a public meeting, "Alaska Evening" on Wednesday, May 3 at 8:00 PM at Syntex, 3401 Hillview Avenue in Palo Alto. There will

be a movie, "Alaska, Land in the Balance," plus a slide show by Wim de Wit, "In and Around the Gates of the Arctic."

HELP WANTED!

Late last year National Audubon asked member Chapters to choose between raising National dues and taking a reduction in the Chapter share. The majority of Chapters, including Sequoia Board of Directors, voted against the dues increase.

However, now that we have less National income and ever-increasing expenses as National has, we need to take some action to balance the budget. You can help by making good use of the enclosed brochure. All that we ask is that each member use the brochure to bring in a new member. Now, isn't that easy? Good luck!

-- Eila Fox, Membership Chairman

APRIL GENERAL MEETING:

One of our favorite birds, the restless, excitable Bewick's wren, was honored as our Bird-of-the-Month. Charles Newman presented the composite recording which he made at the Newman cabin near Santa Rosa. The song, vibrant and metallic, is very beautiful. The trill, normally heard as a repeated note was played in slow motion and the audience was startled to hear two notes, one high, one low, repeated alternately.

Monty and Lillian Montgomery came to the meeting to tell and show us about their recent trip to the South Polar Region on the maiden voyage of the World Discoverer. Monty whetted our interest for their pictures which followed his interesting talk on Tierra del Fuego, the Falkland Islands and Antarctica. Especially awesome, Antarctica of which most of us know very little, truly "another world" and a world where the only plant and animal life are lichens, seals and four species of penguins in very great abundance. Literally an ice and snow desert, with nine times as much ice below the surface as above, the area, including the permanent ice-shelves, is over twice the size of our United States.

The surrounding waters are very rich in sea life and they are one of the great whale areas of the world. There is no human habitation on Antarctica other than men of several different countries who maintain small, year-round scientific stations studying natural phenomenon.

Thank you, Monty and Lillian, for taking us with you on a rare trip. Our thanks, also, to Vi von Tauffkirchen, artist, who showed several of her bird paintings. Of the sales, Vi generously donated 20 percent to Sequoia Audubon.

-- C.G.

EUGENIA HEBBRON:

A bequest of \$2000 was received by Sequoia Audubon from the estate of Mrs. Hebbbron, a long-time Sequoia member and president in 1961.

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY 1977--1978

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Habitat Acquisition:	Charles Newman	697-5601
Christmas Count & Sightings:	Barry Sauppe	

Wildlife Rescue: 969-WILD

In-Home Orphaned Bird Program: 344-7643 (Peninsula Humane Society)

Northern California Rare Bird Alert: 843-2211

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

National Audubon Society, Western Regional Office

555 Audubon Place, Sacramento, CA 95825

National Audubon Society,

George Whittell Education Center and Richardson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon, CA 94920 Phone (415) 388-2524.

SEQUOIA CALENDAR

- May 4 - Board Meeting
- May 6,7 - Mystery Trip
- May 11 - Monthly meeting at San Francisco Zoo
- May 20 - Field Trip MINES ROAD AND SHADOW CLIFFS 9:00 AM

We will meet at Mines and Tesla Roads (start of Mines 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.

Alternatively, you can take the No. Livermore offramp (which is 2 offramps before Vasco) and go through the town of Livermore if you need a gas or a restroom stop. There are neither gas stations nor restrooms on Mines Road. So, Livermore Avenue becomes Tesla Road.

The weather can get very warm there. Plan your attire, lunch and beverage accordingly. Leaders: Georgia and Jerry Perkins, phone: 583-7815.

- June 1 - Board Meeting
- June 8 - Monthly Meeting
- June 24 & 25 - Field Trip - Yuba Pass and Sierra Valley

THE SEQUOIA May, 1978
Sequoia Audubon Society
1009 Laguna Avenue
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