



Volume 28, No. 3

November, 1978

MEETINGS:

BOARD MEETING, NOVEMBER 7, TUESDAY, 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, NOVEMBER 9, THURSDAY, 8:00 PM at the San Mateo Garden Center, located on Parkside Way--between 26th and 27th Avenues--just west of Alameda de las Pulgas in San Mateo.

Our guest speaker will be Mr. Warren Nute, Civil Engineer from San Rafael, California and a member of Marin Audubon Society. Mr. Nute was responsible for designing the MOUNTAIN VIEW Sanitary district's sewage treatment facility visible from Highway 680, east of Martinez. The unique feature of this plant is that it has created a freshwater marsh, supported by the converted waste water. Mt. Diablo Audubon Society recently awarded an Audubon Chapter Industrial citation to the Mountain View Sanitary District for its role in developing a fresh water marsh. The eight-acre marsh has provided habitat for over 40 water related bird species and numerous mammals, amphibians and invertebrates.

Plan to see and enjoy this slide show of this unique area in Contra Costa County and then participate in the November 11 field trip.

FIELD TRIPS:

NOVEMBER 11, SATURDAY -- MOUNTAIN VIEW SANITARY DISTRICT

Meet at the Mountain View Sanitary District treatment plant and marsh at 9:30 AM. Bring lunch. The treatment plant and marsh are located east of Martinez on Highway 680, a few miles north of the Highway 4 intersection. Traveling northwest on 680, take the Pacheco Boulevard off-ramp, cross the freeway and make a right turn onto Arthur Road. Cross the freeway again and make a left turn in order to stay on Arthur Road. Continue northwest and Arthur Road becomes Sewage Plant Road, parallel to the freeway, passes once again across the freeway and ends at the treatment plant.

Our leaders will be Warren Nute and Francesca Demgen, resident biologist.

If you have any questions call the McElhansys (343-3219) or Georgia Perkins (583-7815)

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NOVEMBER 14 - TUESDAY BIRDERS TO COYOTE HILLS

Meet at Jean Jones' residence - 1417 Sanchez in Burlingame - at 9:00 sharp for carpooling to Coyote Hills Regional Park--OR-- Meet us at "Parking for Birdwatchers" sign at the P.G. & E. Station on the Dumbarton Bridge approach. This is one of our best birding areas, so bring a warm jacket, lunch, and plan to stay until 2:00.

NOVEMBER 18, SATURDAY - COYOTE HILLS

Cross the Dumbarton Bridge and just beyond the toll plaza turn left onto Jarvis and then left again at the signal onto Newark. Just after crossing the railroad tracks turn left on Patterson Ranch Road which is marked as the park access road. Meet at the first parking lot on the right at 9:00 AM. Bring lunch and be prepared for some walking.

LEADERS: Georgia and Jerry Perkins (583-7815).

NOVEMBER 28, TUESDAY BIRDERS -- FOSTER CITY

Meet at the Werder Fishing Pier at the end of Hillsdale Boulevard at 9:00. We will spend the morning looking at ducks and shorebirds.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS:

September 19 - Tuesday Birders - Dumbarton Bridge

TUESDAY BIRDERS started the year September 19 looking at slides of Phalaropes. Then on to viewing of Northern Phalaropes at Dumbarton Bridge area. Avocets, Black-necked Stilts and a group of Horned Larks were also good additions to our lists.

-- Jean Jones

September 30 - Point Reyes

As we arrived in the heavy, dripping fog, we wondered whether or not we would be able to see a bird anywhere. However, the fog gave way to beautiful sunshine and along with the sun came some great birds. The fog followed by sun gave us the finest birding conditions for vagrants that we could hope for. Sixteen participants viewed a total of 58 species. Some people even managed to get a life bird or two. Our species included: Hooded, Prairie, Palm, Magnolia and Orange-crowned warblers, Rock, Bewicks and Winter wrens, Brewers' sparrow, Tricolored blackbird and Great-horned owl.

-- Jerry and Georgia Perkins

October 10 - Tuesday Birders - Marin Headlands

After seeing slides of hawks, we arrived at Hawk Mountain, Marin Headlands, to find Red-tailed, Sharp-shinned, and Cooper's hawks soaring overhead. Once 12 red-tailed hawks were circling. Then came 21 Turkey vultures and an immature Golden eagle! It was a great day for hawks.

-- Jean Jones

October 14 - Marin Headlands

On a cool, foggy day, fifteen birders got good looks at Snowy and Common egrets, Great Blue herons and Black-crowned Night herons. A Green heron gave us a good show by circling and landing nearby for all to see. A Say's phoebe sang to us from a low Coyote bush on the hill. Red-tailed hawks and kestrels were grounded due to the fog, so we got to see them sitting on poles. Sharp-shinned hawks were seen flying over Hawk Mountain before it fogged in. Later, at Tiburon, we saw Yellow-rumped warblers and a Spotted sandpiper was

feeding on the beach at Richardson's Bay. Forty-nine species were seen before we had lunch under the trees at Audubon's Western Education Center.

-- Frank Allen

CONSERVATION NEWS:

The Alaska Lands Bill which SAS members had joined with a nation-wide coalition of conservationists to support, failed in the Senate on the eve of Congressional adjournment. A frantic stop-gap bill was being composed at the time of this writing to extend protection of Alaska lands for another year. Otherwise such protection will end December 18 and all will become open to development. Passage of such a bill by both Houses would be extremely unlikely before adjournment. If Congressional action failed entirely, Secretary of the Interior Andrus said he will attempt to set aside much of the land considered in the bill under an already existing law.

Another Congressional blow against conservation, however, was countered by President Carter's veto of the Public Works Bill and Congress failed to override. The bill contained six of the nine water projects which the President and conservationists considered both economically and environmentally unsound. SAS members should thank Rep. McCloskey for his vote to sustain the veto on this bill. Write Rep Paul N. McCloskey, Jr., House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.

The Senate passed the Omnibus Parks Bill, supported by Senator Cranston but opposed by Senator Hayakawa. The latter particularly opposed the transfer in the Bill of Mineral King from the Forest Service to Sequoia National Park, as he favored the Disneyland ski development. The Parks Bill would also set aside 70,000 acres in the Santa Monica Mountains as a National Recreation Area. This ties in with the bill passed by the State Legislature and signed by Governor Brown last month to acquire state park lands in the Santa Monica Mountains but only if federal funding is made available in the Omnibus Parks Bill for federal reimbursement of the state.

The Governor also signed the bill funding study of riparian forests along designated water courses in the Central Valley, the Tulare Basin and the California Desert. This will hopefully form a basis for protection of this fast-vanishing resource.

State Senator Foran who represents a small northern segment of San Mateo County, introduced an amendment to S.1667, an essentially unrelated bill, in the last two weeks of the Legislative session. This would have required plaintiffs seeking to enjoin projects presumably violating the Environmental Quality Act to post a bond covering costs and damages from possible delays of the project. This would have created a financial means test for judicial review, and it was, fortunately, not passed in this session. However, the issue will very probably be brought up again in the 1979 session.

Finally, and most importantly, don't forget November 7th--Election Day--will soon be here. Above all, don't forget to vote!

There will not be the excitement to be expected in the presidential election year, but seats in both the House of Representatives and the State Legislature are open. Congressman Paul N. McCloskey, Jr., in Southern San Mateo County and State Senator Arlen Gregorio, who have



SPOTTED SANDPIPER

both consistently supported conservation issues, will be facing challenges Kirsten Olsen and Marz Garcia respectively.

Among those running for County posts, former Burlingame Mayor and boat owner, A. C. Harrison and Sierra Club member Rick Thurber, are running as a team for seats on the San Mateo County Harbor Commission with the unusual platform of voting themselves out of office if elected. They advocate dissolution of this special District and return of its functions to the Board of Supervisors. None of the other candidates, so far as is known, hold this view.

-- Ruth Smith, Conservation Chmn.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 1978

The Sequoia Audubon Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Peter Metropulos as Compiler of our Crystal Springs Bird Count which will be held on December 30 this year. Peter is a student of Natural Sciences at San Francisco State University and is known by all of us since he has been a member of Sequoia Audubon Society since the age of twelve. We are especially fortunate in having such a dedicated ornithologist to compile our Annual Christmas Bird Count.

Christmas Bird Counts are of great ornithological value. Since 1974 our Crystal Springs species count has gone from eighteenth to seventh place among birding organizations in the United States. In order to maintain this record we are going to need the help of every birder in Sequoia Audubon Society.

If you are willing to participate this December 30th, we ask that you immediately call our Personnel Coordinator:

Frank Allen --- 593-9504

or

Jean Jones, Assistant, 344-9339

They will consult with Peter Metropulos and you will receive your assignment by mail shortly.

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

Highlights from Helen Pratt's Report - The Great Blues occupied nests on about January 31 and commenced laying about March 1. On the 29th of the month the first eggs were hatched. There were 43 pairs of Herons, two more than last year; and 66 young were raised. Losses consisted of a brood from one nest before fledging and 12 nests lost all of their eggs before hatching. Great Horned owls were suspected in these losses. The brooding pair average of 1.5 per pair approximates that of the average for the last 11 years.

About March 12 the Great egrets began to gather in the herony. The first egret egg was laid between the afternoon of March 26 and the next morning. Breeding pairs numbered 88, an increase of four over 1977, and 139 young were raised. The proportion of nesting attempts losing chicks (18%) was less than it has been in four years and fewer nests (14%) lost eggs. The last young egrets left on August 9.

The Ranch is deeply grateful to the Directors of the Bothin Helping Fund for a grant of \$12,500 which the Fund has just made towards the completion of the new Education Center in Volunteer Canyon. This grant has made it possible for ACR to start work on the enlargement and remodelling of the main farm house in the canyon. This will be used for an assembly hall and student center for the education program there.

OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING:

Our speaker, Ron LeValley, Biologist with the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, has been doing research with sea and land birds and marine mammals on the Farallone Islands since 1968. On these granite islands, 27 miles offshore of San Francisco, nearly 350 species of birds have been recorded. During breeding season as many as a quarter-million adult nesting birds may be found.

Since 1969, these tiny islands have been a National Wildlife Refuge. They are staffed the year around by a small band of biologists from PRBO who are aided by volunteers, some of whom work on the Islands, while others, like those from the Oceanic Society, transport personnel and supplies. PRBO staff conducts one of the most intensive programs in research in the United States, research not only on birds but on the varieties of whale, seal and shark which make their homes on and around the Farallones.

These now-protected Islands are the largest breeding seabird colony in the 48 States. But it was not always so. For many decades they were exploited for bird eggs and meat, especially the Common Murre. The seals were taken for their fur and oil. And destruction was rampant by people wandering unrestrained over the Islands during critical nesting periods. In contrast, it was a pleasure to hear Ron tell us about the present, protected, super-abundant wildlife now found there and to see his slides of some of the species inhabiting the Islands.

Frank Allen presented our Bird-of-the-Month, Brewer's sparrow which he described humorously as "a basic sparrow." This rather colorless little bird is redeemed by its musical song "suggesting a canary but weaker" (Peterson).

--- (C.G.)

DECEMBER MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM:

John Olmstead will present a spectacular program following the December Potluck Dinner on December 14. His presentation is entitled "Transect of America" but will concentrate on the California portion. Mr. Olmstead uses four slide projectors so as to compare different scenes. We expect a "sell out" attendance so bring your friends and arrive early. More details in the December SEQUOIA.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE:

The Federal District Court in San Francisco on September 26, 1978, granted possession to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of 15,000 acres of land in the south Bay. The land consists mostly of salt ponds used by the Leslie Salt Co. for the production of salt. Leslie's use of the ponds for salt production will continue.

The Refuge administration is now authorized to post and patrol the area and manage it for refuge purposes. Hunting will not be permitted until the Service has approved a Public Use Plan for the

refuge. The area will remain closed to entry until it is made safe and ready for use by the public.

Persons who wish further information should telephone the Refuge office at (415) 792-0222, or write to the Refuge Manager, San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex, 3849 Peralta Blvd., Fremont, CA 94536.

OCTOBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:

The board of directors of Sequoia Audubon held their regular monthly meeting on October 3.

Mary Keohane volunteered to be our Social Chairman through December.

Georgia Perkins was appointed as our Alaska coordinator replacing Dr. Norman Fox.

Roy Nelson has detailed maps of our Christmas Count circle and will display them and explain them at the November meeting.

Jean Jones reported that Dr. Martyr, National Audubon representative in Sacramento, will attend the October 28 field trip to Pescadero Marsh.

BARRY SAUPPE:

Barry recently wrote Fran and Roy Nelson describing some of his Vancouver, B.C. birding. Here are some excerpts:

"The birding as usual is exciting around here. In the past week I found a rusty blackbird which there are only a few records for the Vancouver area, and a broad-winged hawk which there is no record in the Vancouver area. Up to four sharp-tailed sandpipers have been seen off and on at Iona for the past month, and a few stilt sandpipers have been around also. On a boat trip out of Westport, Washington Suann and I saw 110 B-F Albatross, 5 Fulmar, 26 Pink-foots, 35 New Zealands, 250 Sooties, 2 Short-tailed shearwater, 8 Fork-tailed storm-petrels, 1 red phalarope, 3 Parasitic Jaegers, 15 Pomarine Jaegers, 3 Skuas, 4 Kittiwakes, 1 Arctic Tern, 300 Murres, 5 Tufted Puffins, 45 Rhinoceros Auklets, 450 Cassin's Auklets, 4 Sabine's Gulls, 12 Xantus' Murrelets, and one Flesh-footed Shearwater. Kind of a nice assortment. This weekend I'm going out on another pelagic trip off of Bamfield on the west side of Vancouver Island. They go out as far as 30 miles on that one if weather permits. Possibilities this time of year might be scaled petrel, horned puffin, parakeet auklet, laysan albatross and who knows what else."

Barry also sent a copy of DISCOVERY, the quarterly newsletter of the Vancouver Natural History Society. On the front cover appears an excellent photograph of the Spoon-bill Sandpiper which Barry discovered on July 30 at the Iona Island Sewage Treatment Plant. Hundreds of birders visited the site during the five days (July 30 to August 3) this rare bird was present. Visitors came from all West Coast States plus Arizona, Idaho, Connecticut, Ohio, Tennessee, from five Canadian Provinces and parties already birding nearby from France, Belgium and Germany. A special viewing tower was erected by local authorities. The bird had not been observed previously in Canada. Barry was using a Swift Master spotting scope with a 45X eyepiece.

The Spoon-bill Sandpiper breeds in northeastern Siberia and winters in Indochina, Burma and India.

1978	SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY	1979	
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DANIELSON, MARYANN		848 Edgehill Drive Burlingame, 94010	342-6919
DAVIES, BYRON		606 Cambridge St. San Francisco 94134	334-2851
FRIDAY, BOB		80 Amber Court San Carlos 94070	365-1194
GALES, CARMEN	Publicity	2828 Edison St, #15 San Mateo 94403	349-6927
HOBBS, DEAN	Treasurer	844 Constitution Dr. Foster City 94404	341-9850
JONES, JEAN	Membership	1417 Sanchez Avenue Burlingame 94010	344-9339
KEOHANE, MARY	Hospitality	675 Sharon Park Dr. Menlo Park 94025	854-6346
LUCAS, HAL & BARBARA	Field Trips	130 Newton Drive Burlingame 94010	344-3796
McELHANY, AMY & ED	Editors	1009 Laguna Ave Burlingame 94010	343-3219
METROPULOS, PETER	Christmas Count	336 Chesterton Ave Belmont 94002	591-9898
MONTGOMERY, A.E.		2270 Summit Drive Hillsborough 94010	344-4249
NELSON, FRAN & LEROY		1035 Lassen Drive Belmont 94002	593-7941
NEWMAN, CHARLES	Habitat Acquisition	25 Corte Alegre Millbrae 94030	697-5601
PERKINS, GEORGIA	Secretary & Alaska Coord.	24 Bayview Court Millbrae 94030	583-7815
PRIME, JOHN	Finance	848 W. Hillsdale Bl. San Mateo 94403	573-5889
ROCKMAN, WILMA	Education	1166 Grand Redwood City 94061	366-3434
SILLIMAN, JOHN	Vice Pres. & Program	375 Woodside Ave. San Francisco 94127	731-5740 (Business)
SMITH, RUTH	Conservation	120 Cornell Road Menlo Park 94025	322-5279

Northern California Rare Bird Alert (Recording) 843-2211

National Audubon Society, Western Regional Office
555 Audubon Place, Sacramento, CA 95825 Phone (916) 481-5332

George Whittell Education Center & Richardson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
376 Greenwood Beach Road, Tiburon, CA 94920 Phone (415) 388-2524

SEQUOIA CALENDAR

- November 7 - Board Meeting
9 - Monthly Meeting at the Garden Center
11 - Field Trip - Mountain View Sanitation District
14 - Tuesday Birders - Coyote Hills
18 - Field Trip - Coyote Hills
28 - Tuesday Birders - Foster City
- December 5 - Board Meeting
15 - Potluck Dinner and Monthly Meeting at Garden Center
30 - Christmas Count

THE SEQUOIA November, 1978
Sequoia Audubon Society
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