

SAS GENERAL MEETING

December brings Christmas, the Christmas Bird Counts (see Page 5), and - to some of us - one of the highlights of the Audubon year, the **DECEMBER POTLUCK!**

Our program for the month features Sequoia's own Maryanne Danielson who will present - with the help of sound and slides - BIRDING IN COSTA RICA, PANAMA AND PERU. This program offers something for everyone, featuring tropical birding, but with elements of travel and conservation in this ecologically sensitive area.

Maryanne will show us unusual birds that may be seen in these areas and will let us listen to those elusive ones that you may hear but not see.

Please remember to bring your own utensils and plates and a paper bag in which to take them home. Those people whose last names begin with the letters A through E should bring a dessert, those whose names begin with the letters F through L, a casserole or other hot dish, and M through Z should provide the salads.

Festivities begin at 6:30 P.M. on Thursday, December 13, at the San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside, West of the Alameda.

We look forward to seeing all of you there!

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DECEMBER                                DECEMBER
 22 <-----MAKE IT A DATE----->29
  JOIN THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS
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SHUTTERBUG ALERT!

PUBLICITY PHOTOS NEEDED!
OFFICIAL (?) PHOTOGRAPHER NEEDED!

Sequoia Audubon needs to build up a small collection of black and white still photos to be used for publicity purposes when the need arises. If you are willing to donate your time and services or know of someone who might be talked into it, please call Anne Scanlan-Rohrer at 571-7972, evenings.

--- Anne Scanlan-Rohrer

FROM THE PRESIDENT

There are several chapter events I'd like to share with you that make this Christmas season a memorable one for our Sequoia Audubon Society chapter.

NEW PENINSULA BIRDING GUIDE: First, through the efforts of Anne Scanlan-Rohrer and her hard-working committee, Sequoia Audubon has published a 137 page bird-finding guide to the San Francisco Peninsula, entitled SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA BIRDWATCHING, telling where most of those local hot birding spots are. Its many fine maps and a well written narrative will help you and your friends better enjoy birding in our area.

This project not only fills a public need but is a fundraiser for our chapter so we hope to sell a lot of these fine guides. At only \$8.95 each (plus tax and handling) they make a fantastic present. Order several today and we'll mail them in plenty of time for Christmas. Use the order blank on Page 5 or pick them up at any of our events.

NEW CHAPTER OFFICE: Second, at the November board meeting, the board authorized leasing an office for our chapter. On November 20 we moved into a 235 square foot office located at 720 El Camino Real in Belmont. Our phone number remains 415-593-7368.

Office hours are 2:30 to 5:30 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. We would love to have any or all of our members visit the office. Our administrative assistant Donna Kirsacko will be responsible for the office and its operation. We expect committee meetings to be held here. We will have an opportunity to start the environmental library we've talked about for so many years as well as a spot for us to consolidate the many records which our chapter keeps. All in all, its an exciting step for our chapter.

We can use office furniture, filing cabinets, chairs, etc., so your donation would be appreciated. Please call Donna to let her know what you might contribute.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT: Third, don't forget to take part in our Christmas bird counts. Details are elsewhere in this issue. Our chapter consistently ranks in the top five in species counts nationwide. And we want to maintain this record. Your continuing participation will make this possible. It's always a fun day too.

CHRISTMAS POT LUCK: Plan to come to our Annual Christmas Potluck at the December General Meeting. It's always one of the best meetings of the year and with Maryanne Danielson as our speaker this one should be outstanding. See you there!

MERRY CHRISTMAS: Last but not least , on behalf of myself and our board, have a safe wonderful Christmas season and a good new year.

--- Rick Baird

CALENDAR

DEC. 6 SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 P.M. at the Bank of THURSDAY America Building, 400 El Camino Real (at Chapin), Burlingame. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME. NOTE THE CHANGE OF LOCATION FOR THIS MONTH.

DEC. 8 THE RAIL WALK AT RAVENSWOOD HAS BEEN CANCELED. SATURDAY The Fish and Wildlife Service has opened a portion of the SFBNWR to hunting and access to the more productive birding areas of lower Ravenswood Slough is by permit only until the end of the hunting season. See below for the alternate field trip for this day.

DEC. 8 PALO ALTO FLOOD CONTROL BASIN FIELD TRIP. SATURDAY Geographically isolated from the other areas of the Palo Alto Baylands, this complex area of salt and freshwater ponds, brackish marshes, creeks, sloughs, grasslands and riparian growth offers a wide variety of wildlife in the midst of the highly industrialized and developed western bay-front. As a result it offers much to both the beginning and the skilled birder. Relatively rare birds such as blue-winged teal, redheads, merlins, moorhens, short-eared owls and Lincoln's sparrows are regular winter residents and a wide variety of other species can be observed in a relatively small area with a minimal expenditure of time. To get there, take Hwy. 101 to the Embarcadero exit and proceed east to the first traffic light at Frontage Road. Take a right on Frontage Rd. and look for a small parking lot on the left after approximately a half mile. We will meet there at 9:00 A.M. and bird until noon. Heavy rains will cancel the trip. Regardless of weather expect to encounter some muddy going. Other than that the terrain is flat and the small amount of walking that will be done will be easy going. A good trip for beginners and good practice for the Christmas counts.

LEADER ELGIN JURI 325-7470

/=====\
/===== WELCOME! \=====\
! FIELD TRIPS AND THE GENERAL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO ALL !
! MEMBERS AND TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC. BEGINNERS ARE WELCOME !
! ON ALL OF OUR FIELD TRIPS. SOME TRIPS ARE DESIGNATED AS !
! BEGINNERS' TRIPS BECAUSE THEY ARE RELATIVELY NEARBY AND !
! MAY BE ENJOYED WITHOUT SPECIAL EQUIPMENT, CLOTHING OR !
\===== PRIOR EXPERIENCE. /=====\
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DEC. 13 SAS GENERAL MEETING. THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS POTLUCK THURSDAY + BIRDING IN COSTA RICA, PANAMA AND PERU with Maryanne Danielson. At the San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside, west of the Alameda, San Mateo. Social mixer begins at 6:30 P.M., Dinner at 7:00 P.M., Program at 8:00 P.M. Be sure to bring your own plates and utensils, a paper bag to take home the dirty dishes and your contribution to the potluck. See Page One for your assigned "class" of dish to bring and bring enough for four times the number of people in your party.

DEC. 18 CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING ---- Time and place TUESDAY to be determined - Call the chairman, Rick Johnson for details (349-4546). 3rd tuesday of each month.

DEC. 22 CRYSTAL SPRINGS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT kicks off our SATURDAY participation in the 85th Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Active (in the field) and passive (back yards and feeders) birders are both needed. Even if you don't know a vireo from a vulture you can help as a scorekeeper or driver or can make a pot of hamburger soup for the returning birders (recipe and ingredients supplied). Call the coordinator to volunteer in any capacity.

COORDINATOR FRANK ALLEN 344-9339

(Continued on Page Three)

NEWS FROM AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

The Board of Directors of Audubon Canyon Ranch held their twenty-third annual meeting on October 13. The following officers were elected:

Flora MacLise	Madrone	Chairman & Pres.
Rick Baird	Sequoia	1st Vice Pres.
Thomas Price	Marin	2d Vice Pres.
Ed McElhaney	Sequoia	Treasurer and
		Chief Financial Officer
Debbie Ablin	Marin	Secretary
Nancy Barbour	Marin	VP-Public Prog.
Clifford Conley	Marin	VP-Properties
Jane Ferguson	Marin	VP-Education
George Peyton	Golden Gate	VP-Legal

All staff and committee heads reported on the year's activities. Of particular interest was Ray Peterson's report. Ray, the resident biologist, was involved with many groups and events - speaker at the Bolinas Symposium held at Volunteer Canyon, working with persons from the San Francisco Handicapped Center, participating in discussions about books on the environment, directing (along with Skip Schwartz) the California Conservation Corps leaders' training program and preparing ACR's public programs for this winter.

THE BIRD SCHOOL WITH RICH STALLCUP

The Point Reyes Bird Observatory is sponsoring a repetition of Rich Stallcup's critique of the new edition of Birds of North America by Robbins, et al, taking it "on the road" to the East Bay and to the Coyote Point Museum in San Mateo and will also critique the National Geographic Society's Birds of North America in a separate course in Marin county.

The Robbins guide will be corrected in five evening sessions, the NGS guide in four. Both will be reviewed page-by-page, writing and sketching corrections with the help of slides, graphics and study skins.

The East Bay sessions will be held on successive Tuesdays from January 22 to February 19. (Robbins)

The Coyote Point Museum sessions will be held on successive Thursdays from January 24 to February 21. (Robbins)

The Marin sessions will be held on four Tuesdays in March. (NGS)

Each three hour session will begin at 7:00 P.M. The cost for each evening session will be \$15 and reservations are recommended.

Contact PRBO, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, 94970 or call 868-1221 for more information or to make reservations.

CALENDAR
(Continued from page two)

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!WHATEVER AREA YOU ARE ASSIGNED TO ON THE CHRISTMAS COUNTS!
! YOU'LL FIND THE NEW SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA BIRDWATCHING
! GUIDE TO BE OF VALUE. AVAILABLE FROM YOUR FRIENDLY LOCAL
! SEQUOIA AUDUBON OFFICE FOR $8.95 (Plus tax and handling)
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DEC. 25
TUESDAY

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

DEC. 29 THE AND NUEVO CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT is the second
SATURDAY of our Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Counts. See
the December 22 calendar item for details.

COORDINATOR

FRANK ALLEN

344-9339

JAN. 1 AND A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR TO ALL!!
TUESDAY

JAN. 3 SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 P.M. at the Sears Savings
THURSDAY Bank Building, 1820 S. Grant St., San Mateo. ALL
MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.

Naturalist Saul Samsky will show how a variety of animals, including people, prepare for the cold months. Participants will learn how some animals can live comfortably in snow and freezing temperatures. Suitable for ages 8-12. Pre-registration required. Fees are \$4 for members; \$6 for non-members.

Children will learn to appreciate and understand more about their environment through playing educational games in two days at the Museum, the Coyote Point Marsh and the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. Pre-registration is required. Suitable for grades 1-4. Fees \$18 for members and \$25 for non-members.

Collecting trips into prime mushroom sites in the county. Any mushrooms collected will be used at the Mushroom Fair on January 13. FREE.

Displays of mushrooms in natural habitats. Lectures, slide shows, activities and displays. Free with museum admission.

Dr. Alan Wilson, of UC Berkeley, will lecture on his research into cloning extinct genes at the molecular level and its significance in testing the theories of the evolutionary process. A fee will be charged.

LOS ANGELES (213) 874-1318
+ MONTEREY (408) 899-3030
SAN BERNADINO (714) 793-5599
\\ SACRAMENTO (916) 481-0118
SAN DIEGO (619) 435-6761
+ SAN FRANCISCO (415) 843-2211
SANTA BARBARA (805) 964-824

Ornithology - Mexico, November
Winter Ecology Ski Tour - Yellowstone,
Boundary Water Wilderness, Jan., Feb.
Nature Photography - Florida, March
Desert Ecology - California, April
Led by Audubon Instructors-Naturalists

● **FREE BROCHURE** ●
● **MANY OTHER SEMINARS** ●
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
4150 DARLEY AVE., DEPT. A
BOULDER, CO 80303
TEL 303/499-5409

THE AUDUBON CAUSE

CONSERVE NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS AND THEIR HABITATS

PROMOTE RATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AND
USE, STRESSING CONSERVATION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

PROTECT LIFE FROM POLLUTION, RADIATION AND TOXIC SUBSTANCES

FURTHER THE WISE USE OF LAND AND WATER

SEEK SOLUTIONS FOR GLOBAL PROBLEMS INVOLVING THE
INTERACTIONS OF POPULATION RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

WILD GOOSE CHASE RESULTS

The wild goose chasers - Linda Kypta, Cliff Richer, Scott Rohrer and Anne Scanlan Rohrer - failed in their quest for a wild goose but they did find black-vented shearwaters, a cattle egret, an Eurasian wigeon, a merlin, a Thayer's gull, and marbled murrelets and 110 other species. The total of 116 species, when totaled up at the end of the bay, came as a surprise to the participants, who had had to struggle for nearly every inland bird and shorebird. The high tides and light wind from the northwest proved beneficial and all of the expected coastal birds were seen at Pigeon Point, Pebble Beach, Pescadero Point and Princeton Harbor.

An indication of the slowness of the birding can be best found in a list of the birds which were not seen. Greater scaup, semi-palmated plover, long-billed curlews, western and least sandpipers (!), woodpeckers (except flicker), white-breasted nuthatches, rufous-sided towhees, both goldfinches and savannah sparrows were all missed. Many of the common birds were represented by only one or two sightings - the lone pintail, the avocets, the stilts, the dunlins and the phalaropes were only seen at the last stop in rapidly failing light.

From 5:30 A.M. until nearly 5:30 P.M. the group was almost constantly on the move, only stopping for sandwiches (while birding) at Princeton Harbor.

The first bird of the day - ironic in view of the leader's concern about not having one "staked out" - was a common barn owl, very cooperatively perched by the roadside near the intersection of Pescadero Road and the Coastal Highway. The last birds were the red-necked phalaropes, well silhouetted in the half-light at Belmont Slough and identified by a combination of small size (in comparison to nearby dowitchers) and the thin needle-like bill.

Overall, the First Annual Wild Goose Chase, must be considered a success. Depending upon late pledges not yet received and possible pledges not honored, we should have raised between \$800 to \$900 with total expenditures (for postage) of \$26.40.

Top contributors, and deserving special thanks, were member Hadley Osborne, executive director of Filoli Estate, and non-member Mike Colzani, a San Mateo insurance executive, who, as a duck hunter, recognizes many of the common concerns which Audubon has in common with groups such as Ducks, Unlimited.

A complete list of the birds seen and the locations where they were first spotted follows:

WILD GOOSE CHASE CHECKLIST

NAME	CITY
LOON, RED-THROATED	PRNCTN HRBR
LOON, ARCTIC	PIGEON POINT
LOON, COMMON	PRNCTN HRBR
GREBE, PIE-BILLED	PESCADERO MA
GREBE, HORNED	PRNCTN HRBR
GREBE, EARED	PESCADERO MA
GREBE, WESTERN	PIGEON POINT
SHEARWATER, BLACK-VE	PESCADERO PT
PELICAN, BROWN	PIGEDN POINT
CORMORANT, DOUBLE-CR	PRNCTN HRBR
CORMORANT, BRANDT'S	PIGEON POINT
CORMORANT, PELAGIC	PIGEON POINT
HERON, GREAT BLUE	PESCADERO MA
EGRET, GREAT	PESCADERO MA
EGRET, SNOWY	PESCADERO MA
EGRET, CATTLE	PESCADERO
NIGHT-HERON, BLACK-C	PESCADERO MA
TEAL, GREEN-WINGED	PESCADERO MA
MALLARD	PESCADERO MA
PINTAIL, NORTHERN	FOSTER CITY
TEAL, CINNABON	PESCADERO MA
SHOVELER, NORTHERN	PESCADERO MA
WIGEON, EURASIAN	G G PARK
WIGEON, AMERICAN	G G PARK
CANVASBACK	FOSTER CITY
DUCK, RING-NECKED	G G PARK
SCAUP, LESSER	FOSTER CITY
SCOTER, BLACK	PIGEON POINT
SCOTER, WHITE-WINGED	PIGEON POINT
SCOTER, SURF	PRNCTN HRBR
GOLDENEYE, COMMON	FOSTER CITY
BUFFLEHEAD	PESCADERO MA
MERGANSEER, RED-BREAS	PRNCTN HRBR
DUCK, RUDDY	PESCADERO MA
VULTURE, TURKEY	CLVRDALE RD
KITE, BLACK-SHOULDER	PESCADERO MA
HARRIER, NORTHERN	PESCADERO MA
HAWK, COOPER'S	G G PARK
HAWK, RED-SHOULDERED	BUTANO PARK
HAWK, RED-TAILED	CLVRDALE RD
KESTREL, AMERICAN	CLVRDALE RD
MERLIN	CLVRDALE RD
QUAIL, CALIFORNIA	CLVRDALE RD
RAIL, VIRGINIA	PESCADERO MA
SORA	PESCADERO MA
COOT, AMERICAN	PESCADERO MA
PLOVER, BLACK-BELLIE	PRNCTN HRBR
KILLDEER	PESCADERO MA
OYSTERCATCHER, AM. BLK	PIGEON POINT
STILT, BLACK-NECKED	FOSTER CITY
AVOCET, AMERICAN	FOSTER CITY
YELLOWLEGS, GREATER	PESCADERO MA
WILLET	PIGEON POINT
WHIMBREL	PRNCTN HRBR

GODWIT, MARBLED	PESCADERO MA
TURNSTONE, BLACK	PEBBLE BEACH
SURFBIRD	PEBBLE BEACH
SANDERLING	PEBBLE BEACH
DUNLIN	FOSTER CITY
DOWITCHER, SHORT-BIL	PESCADERO MA
SNIFE, COMMON	PESCADERO MA
PHALAROPE, RED-NECKE	FOSTER CITY
GULL, BONAPARTE'S	PESCADERO MA
GULL, HEERMANN'S	PIGEON POINT
GULL, MEW	PEBBLE BEACH
GULL, RING-BILLED	PRNCTN HRBR
GULL, CALIFORNIA	PIGEON POINT
GULL, THAYER'S	FOSTER CITY
GULL, WESTERN	PIGEON POINT
GULL, GLAUCOUS-WINGE	PIGEON POINT
TERN, COMMON	PRNCTN HRBR
TERN, FORSTER'S	PRNCTN HRBR
MURRE, COMMON	PESCADERO PT
MURRELET, MARBLED	PIGEON POINT
DOVE, ROCK	COAST HWY
PIGEON, BAND-TAILED	GAZOS CREEK
DOVE, MOURNING	CLVRDALE RD
BARN-OWL, COMMON	PESCADERO MA
HUMMINGBIRD, ANNA'S	G.G.PARK
KINGFISHER, BELTED	GAZOS CREEK
FLICKER, NORTHERN	CLVRDALE RD
PHOEBE, BLACK	PESCADERO MA
PHOEBE, SAY'S	CLVRDALE RD
JAY, STELLER'S	CLVRDALE RD
JAY, SCRUB	CLVRDALE RD
RAVEN, COMMON	PRNCTN HRBR
CHICKADEE, CHESTNUT-	GAZOS CREEK
NUTHATCH, RED-BREAST	BUTANO PARK
NUTHATCH, PYGMY	GG PARK
CREEPER, BROWN	GG PARK
WREN, MARSH	PESCADERO MA
KINGLET, RUBY-CROWNED	GAZOS CREEK
ROBIN, AMERICAN	GAZOS CREEK
WRENTIT	CLVRDALE RD
PIPIT, WATER	PESCADERO
WAXWING, CEDAR	GAZOS CREEK
SHRIKE, LOGGERHEAD	CLVRDALE RD
STARLING, EUROPEAN	CLVRDALE RD
VIRED, HUTTON'S	G.G.PARK
WARBLER, YELLOW-RUMP	G G PARK
WARBLER, TOWNSEND'S	G G PARK
TOWHEE, BROWN	G G PARK
SPARROW, FOX	GAZOS CREEK
SPARROW, SONG	PHIPPS RANCH
SPARROW, GOLDEN-CROWN	CLVRDALE RD
SPARROW, WHITE-CROWNED	CLVRDALE RD
JUNCO, DARK-EYED	GAZOS CREEK
BLACKBIRD, RED-WINGE	CLVRDALE RD
BLACKBIRD, TRI-COLOR	CLVRDALE RD
MEADOWLARK, WESTERN	CLVRDALE RD
BLACKBIRD, BREWER'S	CLVRDALE RD
CONBIRD, BROWN-HEADE	LAKE MERCED
FINCH, PURPLE	G G PARK
FINCH, HOUSE	GAZOS CREEK
SISKIN, PINE	BUTANO PARK
SPARROW, HOUSE	PRNCTN HRBR

SOUTHERN MEXICO TRIP

The Point Reyes Bird Observatory is offering a trip to southern Mexico: Palenque and San Cristobal with an extension to Catemaco. This tour features outstanding birding and insights into Mayan Indian and modern Mexican cultures. The trip begins on February 16 at the ruins of Palenque and ends in Tuxtla on February 24 with an optional extension to Lake Catemaco until March 3. The basic trip costs \$650. and includes instruction, motels, breakfast and transportation in Mexico. For more information contact FRBO, 4990 Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach 94970 or call 868-1221.

ROBIN BANDING PROJECT

SHARON Hom, one of our more active members as a field trip leader, BAAER Fair hostess, and member of various committees is commencing a bird banding project on Jasper Ridge Preserve. Primary purpose of the project will be to determine the winter range of the large flock of robins that is resident at Jasper Ridge.

The project is still in its planning stage, but Sharon already sees a need for volunteers, and is asking anyone who might be interested in helping to contact her at 592-0243.

Also, any birder who sees a color-banded robin should note the color of the band and call her with the information as to where the bird was seen and the color and placement of the band.

NATIONAL AUDUBON CONVENTION

Lake George, in the magnificent Adirondacks of New York State, will be the setting for the 1985 National Audubon Society Biennial Convention from June 16-21, 1985.

Field trips, workshops, skits, folk singing, barbecues and contra and square dancing are only a few of the events planned.

Special air fares to the convention have been arranged with American Airlines (up to 30% off) through Connecticut Travel Center who are also equipped to assist you with other travel services as well. Call (800) 235-1216 to make arrangements or for further information.

Registration forms and further information will appear in the February issue of Audubon Action.

NATURE SOUNDS SOCIETY MEETING

The Nature Sounds Society and the National Audubon Society are co-sponsoring "Vocalizations of North American Owls" to be presented by Jon Winters at the Nature Sounds Society's fourth general meeting.

Jon Winters, who teaches at Santa Rosa Junior College and is a research assistant for the Point Reyes Bird Observatory is noted for his work on owls. The talk will include general taxonomy and some information on the evolution of owls and identification of North American owls by their calls. Tape recordings of these owls will accompany the talk.

Nature Sounds Society meetings are open to anyone - amateur or professional - with an interest in natural sounds. The society is dedicated to increasing the understanding of the natural world by furthering the knowledge of and skills in recording sounds. The meeting will be held at Audubon's Richardson Bay Sanctuary and Education Center on Sunday, January 13 at 2:00 P.M. The sanctuary is reached by taking the Tiburon Blvd. exit from Hwy. 101 (north of the Golden Gate Bridge) and going east for half a mile to Greenwood Cove Road. Turn right onto Greenwood Cove Road and follow it for about 5 blocks to the educational center on the right.

San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching is Sequoia Audubon Society's new guide to birdwatching sites from San Francisco to southern San Mateo County. Over 30 different spots are described and accompanied by maps, directions and helpful notes about each spot. A helpful species index directs you to habitats for the birds you want to see. Order one for yourself and several as gifts!

Only \$8.95 or \$8.00 each for three or more

Use this form to order your copy **today!**

Send checks to: Sequoia Audubon Society
Post Office Box 1131
Burlingame, Ca. 94011

Orders will be shipped in November

Just in Time for Christmas!



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books for \$24.00 + 1.56 tax + 1.25

for postage and handling = 26.81

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$.....

5

San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching

Sequoia Audubon Society

CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Sequoia Audubon Society sponsors two National Audubon Christmas Bird Counts: Crystal Springs on December 22 and Ano Nuevo on December 29. All members received a form to fill out in the November Needles. We need birders who can be in the field all day, as well as those who can spend a couple of hours listing back yard birds or birds where you work (on your lunch break of course) and call 344-9339 to report these bird numbers and species to the recorder on count day. Our compiler, Barry Saupe, had a goal of 200 species last year. We got 198. We need everyone to help us make it 200 this year.

Another way to participate in the Christmas Bird Counts is to make soup for one or other of the compilations. Just fill in the green form and send it to Frank Allen 1417 Sanchez Avenue, Burlingame 94010 or call 344-9339. We will send you complete details.

--- Frank Allen, CBC Coordinator

IN MEMORIAM LAVERNE GOODWIN

It is with deep regret that we have learned of the death in November of Laverne Goodwin, a member of the Sequoia Audubon Society for the past twenty-two years. She was always helpful and willing to serve and was a regular contributor of cookies at our General Meetings. Her friendly smile will be missed.

LEAST TERN UPDATE

The estimated number of breeding pairs in northern California was down by about 40%. The primary colony, the Naval Air Station at Alameda, hosted 54 nesting attempts. First attempts at Oakland Airport were probably by terns reneesting after failures at Alameda. Bair Island accommodated only three attempts later in the season. Seven to nine pairs nested at the PG&E plant in Pittsburg and this new colony had the best fledgling success of the northern colonies.

Unfortunately there appears to be a remarkable decrease in the number of least terns breeding in southern California and it is feared that there has been some as yet undocumented mortality in the tern population.

For the second consecutive season, adult least terns and their fledglings have used the Baumberg Tract near the San Mateo Bridge as a staging area before migrating to their wintering grounds. Up to 80 terns were seen there at one time. This area is now being proposed for development as a racetrack and entertainment complex.

NATURE EXPLORATIONS - TULEYOME

Nature Explorations is offering the following winter programs which may be of interest to SAS members:

MARSH AND SHORE BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY - Ken Gardiner, who specializes in black and white flight pictures, holds an indoor class to prepare students for solitary photography. January 7, 7:30 to 10:00 P.M., at the Peninsula Conservation Center. Fee - \$9.00.

PACIFIC FLYWAY WATCH - Elsie Richey will lead a group to the San Luis Reservoir and Gilroy area. January 26-27. The \$29 fee does not include accommodations.

ELKHORN SLOUGH BIRDS - Bob and Bernadette Ramer of the Moss Landing Marine Laboratory will take the group out to the Estuarine Sanctuary to observe feeding behavior and dig mud for microscopic inspection to determine its edible contents. February 17. Fees: \$9 adults, \$5 children, \$22 family.

For more information on these events or a brochure describing all of Nature Explorations' winter events call Jeanne McDonnell at 324-8737.

COUNTY GENERAL PLAN REVIEW

The County General Plan Review accommodates the evolution of the County's policy as it responds to changing conditions and needs of the community. While the fundamental goals of the County should remain unchanged over time, it is sometimes necessary to adjust the details of the General Plan.

The County Planning Commission continues the review and discussion of the Cultural and Recreational Resources Chapters of the General Plan Hearing Draft in a series of meetings at the Board Chambers, Hall of Justice and Records, Redwood City. Interested members of the public are invited to attend.

Wednesday, December 5, 3:00 P.M.: Historical Resources.

Wednesday, December 12, 3:00 P.M.: Park and Recreation Resources.

Wednesday, December 19, 3:00 P.M.: Resource Management

--- Jerry Perkins

CAL-TIP

If you become aware of poaching or other violations of fish and wildlife regulations call 800-952-5400, toll-free.

COOKIES

Among the unsung volunteers who contribute to the smooth operation and well-being of Sequoia Audubon and its members are those individuals who prepare the baked goods for consumption at the monthly meetings.

What better time than the holiday season to express our official appreciation and unofficial thank yous to:

Peggy Bechtell
Eleanor Blaich
Gladys Booher
Mary Bresler
Lee Brown
Margaret Caulkins
Betty Echternacht
Helen Erkin
Louise Fletcher
Emily Freeman

Margaret Hansen
Phyllis Kirsacko
Linda Kypta
Carla Moreno
Donna Palmer
Mabel Parker
Donna Petersen
Nancy Richer
Linda Votteri
Una Westigard

FROM THE FARALLONES

(The Point Reyes Bird Observatory is now making its "Farallon Poop Sheet" available to newsletter editors. The following is condensed and adapted freely from Poop Sheets #14 and #15.)

The massive schools of anchovies in August and September brought an unprecedented influx of seabirds into the Farallones and even into Bolinas Lagoon. The numbers of sooty shearwaters were nearly five times the previous record highs at the islands and by September 5, there were an estimated 100,000 of them at Duxbury Reef with considerable numbers even venturing into the lagoon itself. Apparently under the predator pressure from the shearwaters the anchovies were driven into the shallow bay where they were followed by elegant terns, Heermann's gulls and brown pelicans. The numbers were estimated to be respectively 2000 terns, 4000 gulls and 6000 pelicans! However the extreme tides of the full moon ended the feeding frenzy. At low water the anchovies soon consumed all the available oxygen in the lagoon and the high tide left millions of the dead and dying fish washed up on the south shore near Stinson Beach.

On the islands themselves most of the breeding birds were making a comeback from the El Nino disaster. Pelagic cormorants had a poor breeding year although the other cormorant species were back to normal. Tufted puffins and rhinoceros auklets had no verifiable breeding activity and pigeon guillemots, while recovering, were back to only half of their previous nesting sites. (Could this have been the reason why there were nesting puffins at the Pt. Reyes lighthouse and larger numbers of nesting guillemots at Ano Nuevo? -- Ed.)

The murrelets bred in near-normal numbers despite the total population being down to less than 40% of normal. The combination of El Nino and gill-netting probably accounts for most of the 55,000 missing birds. The Department of Fish and Game estimates the gill-net mortality as being at least 20,000 murrelets in the 1983-1984 season of which a substantial number were undoubtedly Farallones' birds.

The remaining breeding species - Cassin's auklets, black oystercatchers, Leach's and ash-colored storm-petrels, and western gulls - seemed to be at normal levels.

The marine mammals seem to be faring better under the new gill-netting regulations with far fewer seals and sea lions showing lacerated necks or bearing collars of the deadly monofilament fish line than in previous years. California sea lion numbers peaked at 5600 in August and young elephant seals began to haul up on the beaches through the fall. A few great white sharks were observed patrolling off-shore during the height of the sea lion season.

The fall season for vagrant landbirds was slow in arriving. The ideal conditions - overcast skies, 5-20 miles visibility, and low winds under 8 knots - didn't manifest themselves until September 20. Prior to that date, only west coast and great basin migrants - including a Virginia rail - had been recorded. September 20, however brought an immature brown shrike, a Siberian species previously unrecorded anywhere in North America

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south of Alaska! There was a brief debate concerning the ethics of collecting the bird in order to determine its specific race and point of origin, but the ornithologists quickly compromised on banding, photographing and collecting a few non-vital feathers. A bobolink, an American redstart and black-throated green, chestnut-sided, Connecticut, mourning and Tennessee warblers were the less spectacular vagrants. All in all, 60 birds representing 32 species were caught in the mist nets. Other Siberian species to be represented in the early fall included a peregrine falcon of the Siberian race over the island on September 26 and the mainland sightings of the dusky warbler and little whimbrel.

Things remained relatively quiet until October 2 when the biologists were awakened by an unusual volume of bird activity. 1700 birds were in the mist nets!

With no time for proper documentation on the more common species, the banders could only attach the bands and release the birds. This "ring and fling" method of banding was continued for three days as additional numbers of birds continued to arrive. The majority of the birds were of common west coast species - savannah sparrows (400), golden-crowned sparrows (300), ruby-crowned kinglets (200), white-crowned sparrows (180) and pine siskins (125) - but there were a total of 67 species represented in the final count - including some great basin birds, some eastern warblers and sparrows, a lark bunting and an orchard oriole.

By October 6th, the biologists were happy to see the weather clear and the wave of birds dwindle down to a normal level. The normal boring routine was welcomed with great relief.

--- With thanks to Stephanie Kaza,
Education Director, PRBO

SECTION 404

In 1972 Section 404 of the Clean Water Act gave the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction over all waters of the United States. Since that time there has been an ongoing debate over the meaning and intent of this section of the law.

Under this section, the Corps reviews all plans for filling in wetlands and decides whether to issue permits. Although the last 12 years have seen some change in attitudes, the Corps has generally favored the builders and developers, interpreting it's role as a guardian of water quality rather than as a protector of wetlands.

Most conservationists and many legislators feel differently. In the last session of Congress, Representative James Howard (D-NJ) introduced amendments to tighten up the provisions of Section 404 and specifically outline the Corps of Engineers stewardship role. It is expected that these will be re-introduced in the new session if they fail to survive the usual last-minute frenzy of the current lame-duck session.

In the meantime, it is important for all of us to keep reminding the Corps that we feel that their role goes beyond "just" clean water and that under any interpretation, that permits must be obtained and violators must be apprehended.

(Continued in next column)

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