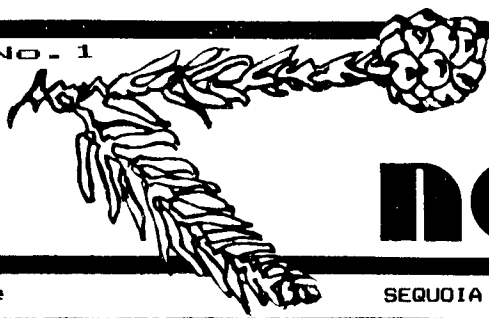




sequoia needles

Bulletin of the

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

San Mateo County, Ca.

SAS GENERAL MEETING

Once again it's time for our traditional opening meeting called - variously - **DO IT YOURSELF** or **SHOW AND TELL** or **WHAT I DID LAST SUMMER**. No matter what you call it, it's good fun. The program for Thursday, September 12 will be a members' participation meeting. If you want to take part, please bring some slides (up to 20) that show off some activity that you participated in during the past year.

Please arrange your slides in the order in which you want them projected. Be sure to orient them correctly. Even slides of Australia should not be shown upside down.

Start your Audubon year out right by arriving at 7:30 PM to enjoy a social mixer, then watch and enjoy as your friends show and narrate their slides.

NEXT MONTH'S PROGRAM

We're in for a very special treat with next month's program. Our featured speaker is one of the finest birders in California. Don Roberson is the author of *Birders' California* and *Rare Birds of the West Coast*. The first of these is an amusing and informative account of Don's first try for a "big year" and is supplemented by his itinerary and a number of excellent bird-finding articles by other well-known California birders. The second is one of the three indispensable reference works on the distribution of our state birds and is particularly valuable since it includes not only the "accepted" records of rare bird occurrences but many of the more reliable "pending" or "un-accepted" sightings.

In 1983 and 1984 he became well-known as the planner and ramrod of the record-setting California "Big Day" team. He is sought after as a tour guide, pelagic trip leader and lecturer and - when he's not birding - is a practicing attorney in Monterey.

Don's talk will concentrate on our migrating and winter-resident shore-birds, be augmented with slides and preceded by a very special field trip. (See below and **CALENDAR** on Page Two).

Those of us who have attended other programs given by Don will certainly be there and will recommend that every birder - from casual beginner to fanatic veteran - be in attendance.

Don will also lead SAS' first field trip of the year to Moss Beach and the Monterey Bay Area. See the **CALENDAR** and the related article on Page Two for details.

THE AUDUBON SUMMER

While most of us were taking a break from Audubon activities the officers and directors were hard at work preparing for the new Audubon year.

President John Silliman found time for orientation meetings with Rick Baird and others and chaired a planning session (and impromptu board meeting) at Rick Baird's house in Foster City before departing for the jungles of New Guinea.

Past President Rick Baird took on new assignments as ACR representative and Pescadero Marsh Committee Chairman.

Vice-president Linda Kypta asked for and was appointed assistant Field Trip Chair in addition to taking on Programs and Hospitality for the coming year. She once again showed her abilities by lining up super-birder Don Roberson for our first field trip and second program!

Treasurer Ruth Simonson met several times with former Treasurer Nick Coiro (Our new Finance Committee Chairman) and Secretary Emily Freeman did the same with former Secretary Mary Bresler in order to guarantee an orderly transition.

Former Vice-president Anne Scanlan-Rohrer ordered another printing of *San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching* including correction of some minor errors in the original. Anne continued to handle publicity work through the summer and will be in charge of Publicity during the coming year.

Rick Johnson, continuing as Conservation Committee Chairman for 1985-86, held Committee meetings in both June and July. All of the Committee members stayed active through the summer, monitoring and recommending action on conservation matters.

Field Trip Chairman and Newsletter Editor Cliff Richer led two field trips, purchased SAS's first computer system and prepared this newsletter.

Frank Allen was reappointed as Christmas Count Coordinator and Jean will continue in the Membership Chair. In addition, they will of course continue to perform those myriad, un-heralded, tasks that have to be done in order to insure the smooth operation of any organization.

And pulling it all together was Donna Kirsacko, holding down the office, polling the board by phone on important issues, reminding us of important dates and meetings, assembling a policy manual and simply being invaluable.

So as you begin a new Audubon year, remember that for some of us there never was an old or a new Audubon year but simply an ongoing commitment to the Audubon Cause.

CALENDAR

SEP. 5 **SAS BOARD MEETING.** 7:30 P.M. at the Sears Savings Bank Building, 1820 S. Grant St., San Mateo. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME.

SEP. 8 **MOSS LANDING AND MONTEREY HARBOR with DON ROBERSON**
SUNDAY See the related articles on this page and on Page One for details. Bring lunch and dress for typical North coast weather at this time of year. This will be an all-day trip although there may be a different leader after lunch. There will be some walking on level areas. Muddy going may be encountered. The itinerary and duration of the trip are still inexact at this time. All members are welcome but beginning birders should be aware that this trip is designed with the intermediate and advanced birder in mind. We will meet at 9:00 AM at the intersection of Jetty Road and Highway 1, approximately one mile north of the town of Moss Landing. Allow two hours driving time.

LEADER DON ROBERSON
SAS COORDINATOR LINDA KYPTA 591-9053

SEP. 12 **SAS GENERAL MEETING. THE ANNUAL "SHOW AND TELL"**
THURSDAY in which our members bring their favorite slides to share with the rest of us. See the article on Page One for details. At the San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside, west of the Alameda in San Mateo. Social mixer begins at 7:30 P.M. Meeting starts at 8:00 P.M.

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/=====/ 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 CLOTHING, EQUIPMENT OR :
\\=====\\ PRIOR EXPERIENCE./=====/
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SEP.15 **POINT REYES FIELD TRIP.** A search through the
SUNDAY "warbler traps" of Point Reyes can yield almost anything at this time of year. We'll be looking for inland and eastern vagrants, migrants and early winter residents as well. Walking will be minimal but sturdy shoes are recommended. Clothing should be layered since the weather on Pt. Reyes is extremely changeable although fall is normally the most pleasant time of year the Point. We will meet at the new Point Reyes National Seashore Headquarters building at 9:00 AM. To get there take Hwy 101 or I-280 north to Hwy 1. Take Hwy 1 across the Golden Gate Bridge where it once again joins 101. Follow 101 north to the San Anselmo-San Quentin exit and take a left at the bottom of the ramp. You will now be on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. Follow this all the way to Olema. At Olema, take a right at the stop sign and within a hundred yards take a left. In about half a mile, you will come to the Headquarters complex. The trip will take place rain or shine. Bring lunch. The trip normally lasts until 2 PM.

LEADER CLIFF RICHER 355-4058

SEP. 17 **FIELD TRIP PLANNING SESSION. OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS.**
TUESDAY Do you have a favorite area you would like to share with the rest of us? An area you've never been to but would like to see us include in our Field Trip Schedule? A special non-birding interest? A suggestion to improve the trips? A criticism? Would you like to organize a study group or a photo group or any other group to be tied into the field trips? Beginners can be just as helpful as the experts in this kind of forum since the field trip "regulars" tend to do things just the same way they've always been done and often overlook the obvious. Any input is welcome. 7:30 P.M. at the Sears Savings Bank Building, 1820 S. Grant St., San Mateo. If you need directions or can't attend, but have a suggestion, please call Cliff Richer (355-4058) or Linda Kypta (591-9053).

DON ROBERSON TO LEAD SAS 1ST FIELD TRIP

As a preview of his October Program, Don Roberson has agreed to lead our first trip of the 1985-1986 SAS year. In addition to his birding expertise, Don will share his intimate knowledge of the Monterey Bay area with us. Although the exact itinerary will depend upon tides, recent sightings, weather and other variables, the list of prospective birding sites in the area is enough to attract the most jaded birder. Moss Landing, Elkhorn Slough, Fishermen's Wharf, the Coast Guard Pier, Pacific Grove, Crespi Pond and Point Lobos are only a few of the major attractions in the area.

Mark off Sunday, September 8 as a very special birding day!

Although this trip is designed with the intermediate and advanced birder in mind, all are welcome.

Please refer to the CALENDAR for details as to time and place and see the related article on Page One.

AT THE RANCH

JEANNE PRICE

Seasonal totals for 1985 show over 3500 people used the Bolinas and Bouverie Audubon Preserves educational programs. From March to May Bouverie was visited by 1305 children and 457 adults. ACR had 51 educational groups with 1800 students and 20,000 weekend and holiday visitors.

By late June the heronry had 111 egret nests, 82 with young and 29 with eggs. There were 16 great blue heron nests, 15 with fledglings and one with eggs. The central nesting area was avoided this year and the birds chose to build around the edges, thus expanding the heronry.

During the summer the ranch received national coverage. In the June issue of "Travel and Leisure" ACR was included as one of three "Scenic Wonders Beyond San Francisco" and in July "House & Garden" featured the "naturally grand" northern California ranch of David Bouverie.

There were also feature stories on the Ranch in the "Santa Rosa News Herald" and in US Leasing's "Insight"—the first of a series of articles it plans to publish on non-profit organizations to which the company has contributed. US Leasing donated the Ranch's computer. In May the Ranch published an overview of the three properties and an update on the activities at each. Simply called "Audubon Canyon Ranch", it may be published annually.

The bridge at Bolinas was dedicated June 9 in memory of Roger Shayne Sherri, whose family contributed its cost. The ribbon-cutting was attended by his wife, Carol, his children, Ellen and Derek, and other relatives, friends and ACR Board Members.

(Continued on Page Three)

CONDOR UPDATE

Cliff Richer

As of this writing there are only seven California condors left in the wild. By the time you read this the number will be down to six. Two of the nine condors which survived the winter and early spring have been captured. They are now at the San Diego Zoo practicing courtship rituals.

One additional bird - a newly matured female - was to be captured in August. As of August 12, all efforts to lure her to the capture nets had failed. The captors intend to mate this bird with the condor at the Los Angeles Zoo. If successful, this could reintroduce lost material into the genetic pool. The LA bird was captured when the condor population was over one hundred and may not be closely related to the present population.

One breeding pair is left in the wild and they have already laid two clutches of eggs (which are now incubating in San Diego). John Borneman of the Condor Research Center advised us that they are now well into their third nesting and hopes are high for success.

Borneman said, in a telephone interview, that although no birds will be released into the wild this year, plans are going forward for the release program. As evidence, the Los Angeles Zoo has added professional staff from the Andean Condor re-settlement program. These are the only people in the world who have any experience in "hacking" condors. The 14000 acre Hudson Ranch in the southeastern corner of Kern County is vital to the continuation of this project as it is the only large area in the condor's range where "clean" food can be guaranteed. *(In recent years the condor's food supply has consisted mainly of range-killed cattle and wounded game. Local ranchers often "lace" carcasses with poison to kill coyotes and deer and wounded game animals carry lead shot which are ingested by the condor.)*

The Hudson Ranch is privately owned but is - for wildlife purposes - currently under the management of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Continuation of this arrangement is contingent upon the purchase of this land by the Interior Department. Nine million dollars has been appropriated for this purpose and the owner - a Seattle developer - is a willing seller. The Hudson family, which has retained some ownership rights, prefers to sell to the government, since they would then be allowed to continue ranching. But Interior Secretary Hodel has declined to finalize the purchase. The reasons for his indecision are four-fold.

1. For tax purposes and in an effort to improve the price, the developer has asked that the Fish and Wildlife Service assume possession under a Declaration of Taking. The filing of this intention has caused some neighboring ranchers to panic and protest to one of Hodel's staff in fear that they "might be next".

2. The expenditure of \$9,000,000 - possibly as much as \$14,000,000 - on behalf of six very ugly and apparently very stupid birds would qualify the Secretary for Senator Proxmire's infamous "golden fleece" award. Most experts now feel that the condor is doomed as a wild species. Ample justification for the expenditure must be obtained.

3. There is a distinct possibility that the "zoo-keeper mentality" exemplified by the recent actions of the California Commissioners of Fish and

Game may prevail. The Commission is slated to meet on August 28 to ratify or amend their previous recommendation to take the entire population into captivity.

4. Should the Commissioner take the land, and should the condors - for whatever reason - not survive, the whole future of such land acquisitions could be threatened.

On the other hand, National Audubon has outlined these reasons for immediate acquisition:

A. Hudson Ranch is the only central feeding area where condors can consistently be provided with clean food and where hunting can be eliminated.

B. Failure to acquire the ranch may cause the landowner to terminate cooperation with the researchers, thereby halting the baiting and feeding of condors and causing the remaining six birds to disperse to more hazardous feeding areas.

C. Without the Ranch the Fish & Wildlife Service has no site to effectively release young condors back to the wild to augment the wild population.

D. Failure to acquire Hudson Ranch will result in landowners and conservationists getting the message that FWS has weakened its resolve to recover the California condor and result in further habitat degradation.

John Borneman further reasons that a failure to complete the acquisition could destroy the credibility of any future FWS acquisition proceedings.

To this time, the President has not intervened in this matter. Although his conservative ethic would rule against spending the funds without the certainty of a future payback, one of his most powerful supporters in Southern California is deeply involved in the Condor Recovery Program and is urging immediate acquisition of the property.

During the last two weeks of August, Secretary Hodel is touring California and holding public meetings. With a state as vast as California in which the Interior Department controls so many of its resources, it is not surprising that the Hudson Ranch is no higher than fifth in his list of priorities. Nevertheless, Sequoia and other interested groups will have been present to throw their support to acquisition of this land. It is possible that this may be the only thing standing between the California Condor and extinction.

If, by the time you are reading this, a decision has still not been made, or a negative decision has been made, we urge you to write your Congressman, Senators Cranston and Wilson, Secretary Hodel and even the President to urge that the land-taking and acquisition take place as soon as possible. The addresses are:

The Honorable _____
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable _____
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Donald P. Hodel
Secretary, Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20515

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