



sequoia needles

Bulletin of the

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

San Mateo County, Ca.

December, 1988/January, 1989

Vol. 37, #4

DECEMBER'S PROGRAM

Maryann Danielson, educator, naturalist, tour leader, lecturer and birder will be our featured speaker for the December meeting. Her topic will be The Birds of Chile. Her talk will be illustrated with slides taken on her recent exploration of this far southern land.

Chile has been relatively unexplored as far as birders are concerned and few of us have any great knowledge about this long narrow country which forms so much of the West Coast of South America - so be prepared for surprises.

December also brings our annual Potluck Dinner. Dust off your favorite recipes!

Remember to bring your own utensils and plates and a bag in which to take them home. People whose last names begin with the letters *A through F* should bring a *SEROLE* or other hot dish, those whose names begin with the letters *G through M*, a *SALAD*, and *N through Z* should provide the *DESSERT*. Lately we seem to be close to running short of entrees so you *G through Z*ers are welcome to bring your favorite hot dishes if you prefer.

Bring enough to serve *FIVE* times the number in your party. The meeting is at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside with the Potluck beginning at 6:30 PM, and the General Meeting immediately after.

JANUARY'S PROGRAM

Juanita Heinemann, often characterized as one of the world's busiest people, will pause long enough to present her program, "Wings Over The Gardens".

As a volunteer at the Peninsula Humane Society, Juanita has become an expert in the rehabilitation and rearing of injured and orphaned birds - especially insect eaters and hummingbirds, among the most difficult and demanding challenges for the wildlife rehabilitator.

She is also a well known authority on the toxic effects of garden pesticides and will share some of that knowledge.

Meetings are held at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside on the second Thursday of every month. The Social Mixer begins at 7:30 P.M. with the General Meeting and Program at 8:00. The public is invited.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

CLIFF RICHER

REMEMBER THIS IS A DOUBLE ISSUE!

Because of budget considerations and the Editor's increasingly heavy involvement with the Christmas Bird Counts, (more on that later) there will be no January issue of the *NEEDLES*. So if there's something going on in January that you don't want to miss, be sure and keep this issue for an extra month.

THE CHRISTMAS COUNTS

A lot of birders, and most of the participants in the annual Christmas Counts think of them as great fun and to most of us they are just that. But I - to tell the truth - don't enjoy them. Now that sounds like rank sacrilege. But it's the awful truth. I enjoy identifying birds. I enjoy watching them. But I don't enjoy counting and recording them.

So why is it that I'm going to be freezing my bottom off at 12:01 A.M. on the morning of the Christmas Count straining my ears to hear rails and owls? Why have I endured 50 mile per hour winds and horizontal rain while trying to out-wait a rock sandpiper? And why have I once again volunteered to be the substitute compiler for this year's counts?

Repayment. Just as people in ancient times poured a little wine onto the ground to repay the gods, so do I try in a small way to repay Sequoia Audubon and birding for the enjoyment they have brought me. By contributing this time and this effort I am helping to build and maintain the largest single wildlife data base in the world. If I count 6 less coots and two fewer mergansers on this year's count than on last year's it's meaningless, but if everyone counts fewer coots and mergansers, it will be like an alarm bell going off.

So whether you do it for repayment, for duty, for fun or for curiosity - do it! Sign up for this year's Christmas Counts now!

AND NOW FOR A WORD...

There are two changes to be made from last month's Christmas Count announcements. Barry Sauppe's work schedule this year will not permit him the time to do the actual compiling, so I once again agreed to give it a try. Barry, along with Peter Metropulos, will be able to do some intensive scouting in the weeks before the counts and he'll be able to give us his expertise for more than half of one count day and (hopefully) all of the other. As coordinator, Peter will do the bulk of the work in assigning areas and teams. The real birding work will be in the hands of the experts so the compiler will be doing mostly the after-count bookkeeping.

Traditionally, after each count we get together for some hot food and for a preliminary species count of the birds seen. We will be continuing this tradition after the Crystal Springs Count but, because the Año Nuevo count is on New Year's Eve day, we'll be foregoing that compilation. Area leaders will receive information on where and how to turn in their count results with their area assignments. Next year we plan on going back to the two compilations.

CALENDAR

December 1988						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

DEC. 1 SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 PM at the Kypta residence. THURSDAY ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME, but those wishing to attend should contact the Sequoia Office (593-7368) to be sure there is room to accommodate everyone.

DEC. 3 FOSTER CITY AREAS FIELD TRIP. Wintering ducks and shorebirds will be our main interests along the bays and lagoons of Foster City as we look for the fieldmarks that separate Barrow's from Common Goldeneye and greater from lesser scaup. Learn how to identify the red knot (who is really gray) and pick the knot out of the flocks of dowitchers, plovers, willets and dunlins. Meet in the parking lot at the Recreation Center on Shell Blvd. at 9:00 A.M. rain or shine. The trip should end at noon.

LEADER NICK COIRO 349-1834

DEC. 8 SAS GENERAL MEETING. MARYANNE DANIELSON: THE BIRDS OF CHILE. Maryanne, well known as a long-time member and friend of Sequoia Audubon, a lecturer and teacher on bird identification, and founder and leader of Sunshine Ecological Safaris will be our program lecturer for December. December is potluck time. See Page One for full details.

DEC. 17 THE CRYSTAL SPRINGS CHRISTMAS COUNT.

SATURDAY AND
DEC. 31 THE AÑO NUEVO CHRISTMAS COUNT. SEE PAGE FOUR FOR DETAILS AND THE SIGN-UP SHEET. This year for the first time Sequoia Audubon joins the rest of the Christmas Count sponsors in requiring a \$4.00 fee from all counters who wish to be listed and have their birds included in the compilation. Call the Audubon office (593-7368) now to sign up, fill out and mail in the form or contact one of the coordinators.

COORDINATOR PETER METROPULOS 591-2417
COMPILER CLIFF RICHER 355-4058

January 1989						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

JANUARY 5 SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 PM at the Kypta residence. THURSDAY ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME, but those wishing to attend should contact the Sequoia Office (593-7368) to be sure there is room to accommodate everyone.

JANUARY 7 SAN PEDRO COUNTY PARK FIELD TRIP. This wooded park provides a variety of habitat for migrating and wintering species of forest and grassland birds. Our leader birds the park on a regular basis and usually has a surprise or two for us. The trip will entail some walking along easy trails. The trip will begin at 9:00 AM in the parking lot of the park and should break up at noon. To get there take Highway 1 to Pacifica and, turn inland at Linda Mar Boulevard. Follow Linda Mar to its end, take a right and then an immediate left into the park.

LEADER SCOTT SMITHSON

(Continued on Page Three)

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

DAN MURPHY

At our October Board of Directors' Meeting ACR elected officers, directors and advisors for the coming year. The sponsoring Audubon chapters continue to provide vital leadership roles for ACR. New president Jack Harper (the past president of Madrone) and first vice president Gary Holloway (past president of Marin) are only two of the many chapter representatives involved with the Ranch. New board members include Art Feinstein, Cliff Richer and Tom White. New members on the Advisory Board are Katie Beacock, Susie Coleman and Sue Hossfeld.

Our energetic docents remain the life blood of the ACR environmental education programs. The Bouverie Audubon Council informs us that its 96 docents worked with 2557 children and 1282 adults during the past year. This includes those who attended guided walks, talks, seminars, workshops and special events. Bouverie Preserve biologist John Petersen announced publication of two new books prepared especially for docent training in Sonoma. At the Ranch, the ACR Volunteer Council's 68 docents guided 3526 children from 109 schools through their program which includes uncounted school visits. They updated their fall teaching manual and renovated the teaching kits they bring to schools around the Bay Area.

Plans are being made to develop trails on both the east and west shores of Tomales Bay. Both may pass adjacent to or through ACR preserves. Aquaculture leases are also being made there by the State Department of Fish and Game. ACR biologists and the Properties and Conservation Committee continues to evaluate the role we will play in both developments.

There is still time to make your tax deductible contribution to ACR this year. Your gift of \$5 will enable us to send you ACR bulletins. Donors of \$100 or more are invited to our annual thank you party at an ACR preserve. Of course this annual appeal is a major fund raiser for operations, maintenance and programs at various Ranch preserves.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

One of the most rewarding experiences you can have with friends is to share the Ranch with them. Watch the heronry, hike the trails and picnic in the yard. Make the Ranch a resolution you will keep.

Training begins for Ranch Guides in February. Perhaps this is the year you will resolve to be more active in the Ranch family and help interpret wonderful preserve at Bolinas Lagoons. You can call the Ranch at (415) 868-0000 to sign up now or wait until the next "News from the Ranch" for more details.

A HERON'S LIFE

STEVE SCHAFFER

The great blue heron quietly works the edge of the lily pads lining the shore of a small pond. The bird's every movement is slow, precise, calculated. It peers into the water with singular diligence. A light breeze ripples the pond's surface, breaking up the images below into a jumble of colors and reflections; the heron concentrates even more carefully, searching for a telltale flash, a dark, drifting shape.

The fish, a small bass, is of moderate size, perhaps three or four years old. It is unaware of the heron as it swims placidly along the boundary between the shelter of the lily pads and the danger of the open water.

The heron first sees the fish when it is well outside of striking range. Its undulating fins reflect the sunlight in characteristic patterns. The heron is not concerned with the identity of the fish, but senses only that this object in the water will fulfill its need for food.

The heron waits patiently for the fish to come closer. Watching. Slowly, imperceptibly, it turns its head for a better view. Waiting.

The heron prepares to strike. Ever so slowly, it retracts its head, storing explosive energy in its coiled neck. Every muscle in its body tenses; all effort is directed towards the single goal. Below the water's surface, the heron's long toes firmly grip the algae covered rocks, bracing the bird against the imminent recoil. Anxiously waiting.

A gust lifts a plume from the heron's neck. The shadow of the feather falls across the fish's eye. Startled, it darts for the safety of the lily pads. Waiting. The heron begins to relax, but the fish returns almost immediately, and the vigil continues. Carefully watching.

When the precise moment to strike arrives, the heron will know. When its prey has reached the perfect position, when the probability of a miss falls to near zero. Meanwhile, there is nothing to do but watch. And wait.

The fish inches closer. The hunter, the hunted. Patiently waiting. One heron, one fish; all else fades away. Silently waiting.

Ever closer. Waiting. Closer still. Waiting. How near must the fish come? Waiting. The fish pauses, begins to turn away. Watching. Waiting. NOW!

Scientists tell us that the great blue heron and many other predaceous waders lack binocular vision except when looking downward. When looking ahead or to the side, they see 2 separate images.

CALENDAR

(Continued from Page Two)

JAN. 11 BIRDING FOSTER CITY BY BICYCLE --- Enjoy the many species of Foster City birds while biking. Using bicycle paths we will make a complete circle around the city. The bikes allow the birders to cover more ground than they would by either auto or foot so they should see more species. (74 species were counted on a similar trip on January 10 of last year). We will meet - with bicycles - at the parking lot on the southeast corner of Foster City Boulevard and Beach Park Boulevard at 8:30 AM. The trip should last until noon. Limited to 8 participants. To reserve a space call the Sequoia Office at 593-7368.

LEADERS

NICK COIRO AND LINDA KYPTA

JAN. 12 SAS GENERAL MEETING. JUANITA HEINEMANN ON WINGS THURSDAY OVER THE GARDENS. Nationally acclaimed for her work in bird rehabilitation, SAS member Juanita Heinemann, will present a pastiche of information and anecdotes on the care, rehabilitation, feeding and protection of birds and on the perils and pleasures our gardens and back yards can be to them. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Social Mixer at 7:30 PM, General Meeting begins at 8:00. See the article on Page One for further details.

JAN. 21-22 LOS BANOS REFUGES AND PANOCHE VALLEY FIELD TRIP. SATURDAY One of our highlight field trips of the year SUNDAY covering two diverse areas and exposing us to a variety of rare and unusual birds. The four refuges north of Los Banos are noted for white-faced ibis, sandhill cranes, a large variety of waterfowl and shore birds, raptors and owls. Twenty miles south of Los Banos, Little Panoche Road winds its way through the Diablo Range into Panoche Valley where wintering flocks of mountain plovers, vesper sparrows, mountain bluebirds, long billed curlews, and perched raptors vie with the resident roadrunners, phainopeplas and chukars for the birders' attention. Saturday we plan on meeting in the parking lot of the Los Banos Wildlife Area on Henry Miller Road north of the town of Los Banos at 9:00 A.M. Sunday we will meet at the parking lot above Little Panoche Detention Reservoir at 8:30 AM. The trips will go on rain or shine. Motel reservations are recommended at this time of year. We have found the Bonanza Motel to be clean, economical and friendly in the past.

LEADER

CLIFF RICHER

355-4058

JAN. 28 PESCADERO MARSH FIELD TRIP. State Parks Ranger SATURDAY (and SAS Board Member) Dave Augustine truly loves "his" marsh and will share its complexities and secrets with us. This is a multi-faceted field trip which will deal with all aspects of the marsh's ecosystem, but of course, Pescadero Marsh is one of the premier birding spots in the county so birders need not worry that their hobby will be overlooked. The weather may be cool or warm, depending upon fog and wind conditions, so be prepared accordingly. Boots are recommended but any walking will be relatively easy and on level grades. We will meet at 9:00 A.M. at the parking lot opposite Pescadero Road on Hwy. 1.

LEADER

DAVE AUGUSTINE

879-0575

CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY

(Details in the February Newsletter)

Thursday, February 2 - SAS Board Meeting
Saturday, February 4 - Coyote Hills Field Trip - Nick Coiro
Wednesday, February 8 - Palo Alto/Mountain View-Linda Kypka
Thursday, February 9 - General Meeting - Dave Shuford
Saturday, February 11 - Point Reyes Field Trip - Dave Shuford
AND

Presidents' Day Weekend Field Trip
February, 18-19-20 - Tule Lake and the Great White North
Eagles and Swans - Janet Duerr

CHRISTMAS
COUNT AREAS

CRYSTAL SPRINGS COUNT
DECEMBER 17, 1988

AREA 1: PRINCETON HARBOR

AREA 2: HALF MOON BAY

AREA 3: HIGGINS-PURISMA ROAD

AREA 4: PILARCITOS CREEK

AREA 5: EL GRANADA

AREA 6: SAN PEDRO VALLEY

AREA 7: PILARCITOS LAKE

AREA 8: SAN ANDREAS LAKE
(SKYLINE/I-280 CORRIDOR)

AREA 9: CRYSTAL SPRINGS RESERVOIR

AREA 10: SOUTH CRYSTAL SPRINGS RES.

AREA 11: FILOLI

AREA 12: SKYLINE BLVD. (S. OF 92)

AREA 13: HUDDART PARK

AREA 14: BELMONT, SAN CARLOS

AREA 15: SAN MATEO, HILLSBOROUGH

AREA 16: BURLINGAME, HILLSBOROUGH

AREA 17: MILLBRAE

AREA 18: BAY SHORELINE
(AIRPORT TO FOSTER CITY)

AREA 19: FOSTER CITY

AÑO NUEVO COUNT
DECEMBER 31, 1988

If you are unable to participate in the field, could you, help out at home or at the Garden Center preparing the hot snacks for the hungry counters on December 17?

PLEASE TEAR OUT OR COPY THIS FORM AND SEND IT IN TO
THE AUDUBON OFFICE SO THAT WE CAN ASSIGN THE AREAS.

I will participate in the...

-----***-----

First Choice:

Second Choice:

Third Choice:

---***---

First Choice:

Second Choice:

Third Choice:

	Yes	No
I will count any area assigned.		

-----***-----

I will monitor and report my feeder on 12/17 12/31

***-----

I will make work behind the scenes on 12/17 12/31

-***----

I will be at the compilation on 12/17/88 12/31/88

Name(s) _____

Address

City.	Zip Code	Telephone Number
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AREA 1: LA HONDA-SAM MC DONALD PARK
AREA 2: PESCADERO MARSH
AREA 3: POMPONIO
AREA 4: LOMA MAR-MEMORIAL PARK
AREA 5: PORTOLA STATE PARK
AREA 6: BIG BASIN STATE PARK
AREA 7: BUTANO STATE PARK
AREA 8: CLOVERDALE ROAD
AREA 9: BEAN HOLLOW
AREA 10: PIGEON POINT
AREA 11: GAZOS CREEK
AREA 12: AJO NUEVO POINT
AREA 13: WHITEHOUSE

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

JANET DUERR

HAYWARD SHORELINE: Tuesday, October 25

A small but select group joined leader Nick Coiro for a midweek trip to Hayward Shoreline. Those who braved the terrible traffic across the San Mateo bridge were rewarded with beautiful weather and the wide open spaces of the newly accessible shoreline park. A number of different waterfowl species were seen, although they were not yet in great numbers, as well as several species of shorebirds. The highlights of the trip included a passing peregrine falcon and good looks at the unusual stilt sandpiper. This park, not visited frequently by those of us on the peninsula, is definitely worth visiting in future field trips.

SAN BRUNO MOUNTAIN: Saturday, October 29

Leader Al Seubert was joined by 13 members of Sequoia Audubon for a trip on San Bruno Mountain. Although this mountain looks very bleak to those of us driving by on the freeway, the north side is green and relatively undisturbed. The birds were relatively scarce this late in the fall, so Al, who is very familiar with this mountain at all seasons, turned the morning into a general nature hike. Everybody made it up to the top of the mountain, where they were rewarded by great views of the Bay Area. Al will be repeating this trip next spring, when the scenic views will be supplemented by wildflowers and more species of birds. (Note: Two of the field trip participants took the Editor aside to tell him how much they enjoyed the field trip, because it was different and because Al Seubert showed both his knowledge and love of San Bruno Mountain. ---Editor)

PALO ALTO BAYLANDS: Saturday, November 5

Twelve members and three guests joined Steve Schafer for a morning in this park along the edge of San Francisco Bay. As usual, the ducks and gulls in the small duck pond were not at all shy, allowing many close-up views. While some members examined the 10 species of waterfowl, others challenged themselves with trying to separate the different plumages of six species of gulls. Highlights of the trip included an American Bittern in full view, discovered by a visitor on her first birding trip, and glances at several Virginia Rails, mostly skulking in the pickleweed, but including one which flew across a small channel, legs dangling. The tides were not high enough to chase out any lurking Clapper Rails, but it was great to be out in the warm, sunny weather with friends and 53 species of birds.

ANO NUEVO: Saturday, October 25

Leader Gary Strachan made a last minute change in the scheduled field trip by substituting Ano Nuevo for Cascade Ranch. The change was dictated by an overnight rain that turned the Cascade Ranch roads and trails into mud. The twenty-three participants were not short-changed however as they were rewarded by a view of a captured San Francisco Garter Snake (to be identified, tagged and released.) The highlight birds of the trip were a distant marbled murrelet, a palm warbler, good views of a male harlequin duck and several pectoral sandpipers.

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY PATCHES ---- \$4.00 BY MAIL
San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching is Sequoia Audubon Society's guide to birding sites in San Francisco and San Mateo County. More than 30 different spots are described and accompanied by maps, directions and helpful notes about each spot. A species index directs you to habitats for the birds you want to see. Order one for yourself and several as gifts! Only \$6.00!

(Taxes, shipping and handling included).

Also available by mail - including postage and tax
The Birder's Handbook-Ehrlich, Dobkin & Wheye 17.60
National Geographic Field Guides-New Edition 17.25
Birding Northern California - Jean Richmond 12.00
Mono Lake Guidebooks 7.50
Pacific Coast Checklist-in pads of 25 3.50

BIRDING VIDEOTAPES AVAILABLE FOR RENTAL

TECHNIQUES OF BIRDING by Arnold Small - \$2/wk.

VIDEO GUIDE TO BIRDS OF NORTH AMERICA - \$5/wk.

Send checks to: Sequoia Audubon Society
720 El Camino Real #403
Belmont, Ca. 94002
Allow 14-18 days for delivery



**San Francisco
Peninsula
Birdwatching**

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

ALSO AVAILABLE AT MEETINGS AND SOME FIELD TRIPS

CONSERVATION NOTES

GAIL SMITHSON

TOXIC METAL POLLUTION AND MARSH CONVERSION IN THE SOUTH BAY

In 1975 the Regional Water Quality Control Board ordered that municipal sewage treatment plants could no longer discharge their effluent into the Bay south of the Dumbarton Bridge. The three water treatment plants, which are run by the cities of Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara and Sunnyvale asked for a temporary exemption to this rule in order to study the situation. Working together as the South Bay Dischargers' Authority (SBDA), they recently completed a 5 year study which claims that their discharges really provide a net environmental benefit to the Bay. They are now requesting a permanent exemption from the RWQCB's prohibition against dumping treated water into the South Bay.

The Peninsula Conservation Center, Citizens for a Better Environment (CBE), Save San Francisco Bay Association, Santa Clara Valley Audubon, Sierra Club and other groups have joined a coalition called CLEAN (Coalition for Effluent Action Now) to express concerns about the effect of granting an unconditional permit for continued discharges into the South Bay.

There are two major concerns about SBDA's discharges: toxic metal pollution and marsh conversion.

The treated effluent water contains heavy metals (cadmium, chrome, copper, lead, nickel, silver and zinc) which then become even more concentrated in South Bay water and mud. SBDA proposes no solution to this problem even though it anticipates a 25% increase in such discharges by 1995. CLEAN is suggesting that significant reductions can be accomplished by removing metals before they are put into the sewage pipes. Continuing to allow heavy metals into the marshes can result in sick and dying wildlife from heavy metal poisoning.

Salt marshes at the point of discharge have been converted to brackish marshes. Salt marsh is being encroached upon daily by development. Increased fresh water in the marshes is also changing the habitat and excluding salt marsh dependent species such as the endangered California clapper rail and the salt marsh harvest mouse. Counts of clapper rails have shown a drastic reduction in recent years, particularly in areas near the treatment plant outflows.

CLEAN is asking that we write to the Regional Water Quality Control Board with the following points:

1. The board should set enforceable standards for heavy metals and other toxins being discharged into the Bay. These standards should set maximums not only for allowable concentrations, but also for net amounts of pollutants.
2. These discharge standards should at least match the standards for discharges into the ocean adopted by the State Water Quality Control Board.
3. The treatment plants should set up a toxics reduction audit program to monitor the discharges entering the system.

(Continued in next column)

4. The SBDA should provide mitigation or restore converted salt marshes in order to provide habitat for the clapper rail and the salt marsh harvest mouse.

Letters should be addressed to:

Members of the Board
Regional Water Quality Control Board
1111 Jackson Street -- Room 6040
Oakland, CA 94607

RIP-RAPPING THE BAYSHORE

It seems that at each monthly meeting of the Conservation Committee we are asked to comment on requests for permits from the Corps of Engineers for restaurants and other bay front owners to rip-rap (place large rocks) along their bayfront properties to prevent erosion. This month we were asked to comment on plans to rip-rap along the bay between Beni Hana's and Charlie Brown's in Burlingame. The Department of Fish and Game called us specifically to ask our comments on this. The rip-rap would be 40 feet long and 5 feet wide destroying yet another small strip of habitat for bay-dependent wildlife.

Members of the Conservation Committee went to the site in question and reviewed the plans for rip-rapping. The current plans would complete a biking path and walking path in the area but some marsh area would be destroyed by the rip-rapping. This tiny marsh is home to clapper rails which have been seen here on several Christmas Counts. We are suggesting that the plans be amended to protect the marsh.

MONO LAKE SCENIC AREA DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The National Forest Service has released the draft plan and environmental impact statement for the management of the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area. The plan includes several alternatives. The Conservation Committee is reviewing the plan and will let the Forest Service know our views. If you would also like to comment, send your request for a copy of the plan summary document to:

Inyo National Forest
73 North Main Street
Bishop, CA 93514

The review period has been extended to January 19.

BELMONT SLOUGH DEVELOPMENT

A private developer who own 20 acres of land at the mouth of Belmont Slough has plans to build 144 condominiums and possibly a marina at that site. Currently there are no other developments on that side of Foster City Boulevard. This parcel had been included in the plans for the Foster City Marina which was turned down last spring. Friends of Foster City, a local group which was instrumental in opposing those plans, intends to be active in opposing any development along this part of Belmont Slough. This site is adjacent to a wildlife preserve where least terns, clapper rails and other less endangered species breed.

RECYCLE! RECYCLE! RECYCLE!

The dumps are overflowing! Please join us in the recycling movement and help preserve the land. In order to make a difference in the garbage problem we must all pitch in to make less garbage now.

ACTION ALERTS!

Save Our Coast

The "Call for Information" period has begun for offshore oil drilling on Lease Sale #119 which includes the area from Monterey to Sonoma County. Please write now to the Minerals Management Service by Jan 3. and tell them you are opposed to any lease sales off of the Central California coast. Your comments can include personal observations and values. At particular risk from off shore oil drilling is the Farallons National Marine Sanctuary and Ano Nuevo State Reserve. The probability of a large oil spill is 99%. California's entire undeveloped coastal shelf holds a mere 35 to 77 days worth of oil. Each platform will produce up to 150,000 tons of toxic drilling wastes. Please address your comments to:

Minerals Management Service
Department of the Interior
1340 West 6th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90017

*HURRY - BEFORE
IT'S TOO LATE!!*

DRAFT MONO BASIN NATIONAL FOREST SCENIC AREA PLAN

YOUR COMMENTS NEEDED BY JANUARY 19

The U.S. Forest Service has just released a draft Comprehensive Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area that, if strengthened and enforced, could lead to permanent protection for Mono Lake and the millions of migratory waterbirds that depend upon it for survival.

In a LANDMARK DECISION, the Forest Service proposed keeping Mono Lake at a water level which protects the lake's sensitive and unique ecological balance and which lessens the risk of toxic air pollution caused by dust storms arising from Mono's exposed alkali lakebed.

The Forest Service pledged to take an active role in efforts to find water and power sources to replace Mono Basin diversions and to develop strategies and actions for ensuring that Mono Lake is maintained at the recommended water level. The Forest Service also stated that it would continue to "negotiate with public utility entities and other affected parties" to return water to portions of the following de-watered streams: Rush, Lee Vining, Mill and Wilson creeks.

The most important action you can take this year for Mono Lake is to comment on the draft management plan.

See the reverse side for details.

The Mono Lake Committee prepared the following recommendations which are also endorsed by National Audubon.

THE CHALLENGE FOR THE SCENIC AREA

The Scenic Area must somehow accommodate increasing numbers of visitors without sacrificing the qualities that brought them. These qualities include not only the pristine natural landscape with its abundant wildlife, but also the solitude of remote beaches and tufa groves, volcanoes and ridge tops.

While interpretation is an important educational tool, it should not be emphasized at the expense of sensitive natural values. Nor should it ruin the rich opportunities in the Scenic Area for discovery and exploration through extensive development of roads and visitor services.

ANALYSIS BY ALTERNATIVE

The Forest Service looked at a range of alternative management programs (and lake levels):

AMN (Amenities): Emphasize the protection and enhancement of wildlife, habitat and visual resources while continuing a moderate level of recreational opportunities (lake level range: 6390-6380).

CUR (Current): Current management direction; i.e. would continue existing programs and facilities (this is the no action alternative) (lake level range: 6385-6372);

DEV (Development): Emphasize developed recreational and interpretive facilities and opportunities; i.e., extensive campground and day use facilities (lake level range: 6390-6384);

INT (Interpretive): Emphasize interpretive facilities, wildlife and visual values (lake level range: 6390-6377).

PRO (Protection): Allow natural processes to shape and form Scenic Area but does not include enhancement of wildlife and vegetation resources (lake level range: 6390-6370).

While the Forest Service has selected INT as its preferred alternative, the Mono Lake Committee believes that the AMN ALTERNATIVE should be adopted because it adheres more truly to the legislative mandate of providing protection for the "scenic, geologic, ecologic and cultural resources" of the Scenic Area, while providing for scientific research activities and recreational and traditional uses.

Your letter is urgently needed to support the Forest Service's position on Mono Lake water levels as well as to request that the Forest Service adopt the Amenities Alternative as its preferred management policy. Send your letter to: Dennis Martin, Forest Supervisor, Inyo National Forest, 873 North Main, Bishop, CA 93514.

BIRDING SAN MATEO COUNTY

(Continued)

Peter Metropulos

up to 10 **PINKFOOTED** and 4 **BULLER'S SHEARWATERS** were studied from shore at Pescadero Beach on October 6 (AK,RT)

An **AMERICAN BITTERN** preening in the sunshine among rushes at Año Nuevo Point pond on October 8 (PM) and feeding at the same location on October 25 (GS,mob) were the only reports of this species. A **GREEN-BACKED HERON** flushed from Laguna Salada in Pacifica on October 9 (PM) was the only report.

A **GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** was at Pescadero Marsh on October 22 (RT). They occur sparingly along the coast in late fall and winter. A female **BLUE-WINGED TEAL** was with other drab dabblers (drabblers?) on a ranch stock pond south of Half Moon Bay on October 15 (PM). A drake **HARLEQUIN DUCK** returned to its usual wintering haunts in the rocky coves of Año Nuevo Point October 8 (PM). The first **HOODED Mergansers** to be found were 4 at Pescadero Marsh on October 30 (SF) and one at Redwood Shores (JB) on October 31.

A **ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK** was hunting at Pescadero Marsh (Opening Day of Rodent Season), October 30 (RT). A **FERRUGINOUS HAWK** perched on buildings and on the runways of the Half Moon Bay Airport from October 20 to 23 (AK,PM).

Four **LESSER GOLDEN-PLOVERS** were reported from their usual ocean-shore locations at Año Nuevo and Pigeon Point.

Both **POMARINE** and **PARASITIC JAEGERS** were observed at Pescadero Beach October 6 (AK,RT) attracted to flocks of feeding shearwaters and other sea-birds close to shore.

A lone **BURROWING OWL** at the Redwood City baylands on October 23 (GSm) is one of a mere handful remaining in the rapidly disappearing County baylands. **SAV-WHET OWLS** were back calling on their winter territories at Canyon Road near Pescadero (RF) and El Granada (BS) during mid-October.

A late migrant **VAUX'S SWIFT** zoomed south along the coast at Moss Beach on October 1 (DK).

A **MUTTALL'S WOODPECKER** wandered to Laurelwood Park, San Mateo on October 26 (AK). This species is resident in white oak woodlands from San Carlos south, and is a rare straggler elsewhere in our County. A **PILEATED WOODPECKER** continued to be heard hammering and calling along Canyon Road east of Pescadero through October (RF).

Following several local reports last month, a single **TROPICAL KINGBIRD** was found at Princeton Harbor on October 4 (DK) and two were seen together at the nearby Half Moon Bay airport on October 20 (AK,PM).

The only **RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH** reported this month was in a Burlingame yard on October 30 (AK).

A **BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER** flocking with bushtits in willows at Half Moon Bay airport from October 20 to 30 (PM) may be a bird which will winter in our area.

TENNESSEE WARBLER was part of a massive warbler flock at Pescadero Creek on October 15 (PM). With

only one previous County record, the **VIRGINIA'S WARBLER** at Pescadero Creek on October 10 and 11 (RT,DK) was of special interest. A flashy **MAGNOLIA WARBLER** joined the flock of migrants at Pescadero Creek October 15 (PM). An elusive dull-colored warbler feeding alone in the willows at Princeton Harbor on October 1 turned out to be a female **BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER** (DK). a **BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** flocking with a group of Townsend's warblers at Pescadero Creek on October 15 (PM) was the first of this species seen along our coast in several years. Ten **PALM WARBLERS** were detected among coastal willow thickets and open fields from Año Nuevo Point to Half Moon Bay this month. Another of the "vagrant" warblers occurring in small numbers each fall, single **BLACKPOLL WARBLERS** were observed as follows: Moss Beach, Oct. 2-3 (DK,PM); and different individuals at Pescadero Creek, Oct. 6 and 22 (RT) and on Oct. 15 (PM). An adult male **AMERICAN REDSTART** at Pescadero Creek on October 29 (RT) was suspected of being the bird that wintered here last year. A very late **MAC GILLIVRAY'S WARBLER** at Princeton Harbor from October 30 through November 4 (PM, AK) may be trying to winter locally.

A "vagrant" sparrow occurring with some regularity each fall, a **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** was at the Half Moon Bay Airport on October 18 (PM). Even rarer for San Mateo County, was a **BREWER'S SPARROW** at the same location on October 11 (PM). Extremely secretive and seldom detected during migration, a **GRASSHOPPER SPARROW** was also at the Half Moon Bay Airport on October 11 (PM). The first **SWAMP SPARROW** of the fall was at Moss Beach on October 3 (PM) and two more were at Pescadero Creek on October 23 to 29 (RT). A **WHITE-THROATED SPARROW** at Pedro Valley Park (JS) was the only one reported.

A **LAPLAND LONGSPUR** was along the trail at Año Nuevo Pt., Oct. 8 and two were flushed from stubble at the Half Moon Bay Airport on Oct. 11 (PM). Even more exciting were three hard-to-get-a-look-at **CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPURS** at the Half Moon Bay Airport on October 23-24 (PM,RT).

Close-up scrutiny of a 2000 bird blackbird flock at the Half Moon Bay Airport on October 30 yielded pone **YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD**, a very rare bird in our region (PM).

The only **RED CROSSBILL** reported this month was a lone bird at El Granada on October 8 (BS).

OBSERVERS

Jim Behnke,	Shawneen Finnegan,	Roland Franz,
Dan Keller,	Andy Kratter,	Peter Metropulos,
Barry Sauppe,	Gail Smithson,	Judy Spitzer,
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PLEASE CALL IN REPORTS OF RARE OR UNUSUAL BIRDS TO
PETER J. METROPULOS AT 592-2417.

Bird watching is for people who can handle long, slow treks in all kinds of terrain and all sorts of weather. Bird watching is for those who seek out wild scenes of deep harshness and remarkable beauty. And it's for those who do not shrink from witnessing the consequences of human progress on the lives and deaths of the inhabitants of the air. -- Paul Mc Hugh, Outdoor Features Reporter (and non-birder), San Francisco Chronicle, Nov. 7, 88

(Continued on next column)

CHRISTMAS COUNT RULES

OFFICIAL RULES

Counts must be made during a single calendar day within the official Christmas Bird Count period.

Counts of fewer than 8 hours will not be accepted.

The count area must be within the designated 15 mile circle.

Separate records must be kept for feeder-watchers, owl parties and regular field parties.

Separate records must be kept for miles traveled by different means of transportation (foot, auto, bike, boat, etc.)

The \$4.00 fee is required from each participant. Otherwise the participant will not be listed and his/her birds will not be counted. Feeder-watchers do not have to pay the fee unless they want to be listed in *American Birds*. Then they should pay the fee.

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COMPILER'S EXPLANATION

Makes sense to me.

This applies to the count itself, not to individual participation. We need your help even for half a day.

Last year we had two well-meaning last minute participants who decided to "free-lance" at some of their favorite birding areas - only one of which was within the count circle! Be sure your efforts won't be wasted.

Don't keep separate records for the birds, but do keep track of the hours, whether the party splits up into smaller parties, the miles traveled, etc. Recording the birds is easy, this part is the compiler's proverbial posterior pain, so PLEASE, PLEASE, fill out the bottom of the form.

In order to be sure that you'll be listed in *American Birds*, send your money in to Sunny at the office. On count day the leaders and compiler are tired and/or excited and it's easy to lose track of who paid and who didn't.