



sequoia needles

Bulletin of the
June, 1989

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

San Mateo County, Ca.

Vol. 37, #9

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Joe Morlan will present the program at our June potluck. Joe is an extraordinary birder, teaches several bird identification classes, and is the voice and brains of the "Northern California Rare Bird Alert". His slide program will feature the flycatchers of California. And don't forget that June is Potluck time. (See the related article below).

CLIFF RICHER

This is my last column as President, although, barring unforeseen disaster, I intend to continue as your *NEEDLES* editor and so will hardly drop out of sight.

I suppose it's traditional in these goodbye columns to point with pride to the accomplishments of your term as President. I wish I could do so. Unfortunately a number of things (including the necessity of earning a living) prevented me from doing the job I would have liked to do. As I had suspected when I first agreed to be nominated for the Presidency, the time demands of being both President and Newsletter Editor meant that I could do neither job as well as I would have wished and there were a number of occasions when one or both of these tasks suffered from a lack of attention.

Doing either job would have been impossible without some outstanding work by our two most important committees. Conservation, headed by Rick Johnson, and Education, first with Walter Smithy and later with Janet Duerr as the chairperson did some outstanding work. Conservation continued its struggle to retain and maintain our shrinking wildlife habitat in the county and its members worked tirelessly as individuals, as a group and in concert with other groups on a series of county, regional, state and national issues. The Education Committee expanded its environmental education scholarship program to include a number of institutions and programs outside of Audubon and set the ground work for a major expansion in the future.

Almost as important as the actual committee work was the reporting of it. Gail Smithson proved to be a diligent and dependable correspondent as the voice of Conservation and Janet did the same for Education. Communication of their work and their aims is important to the work of both committees. I have no idea as to the exact number of protest or support letters that were written as a result of Gail's Conservation Notes but I have had enough feedback to be satisfied that there was an increase in participation by our membership.

These committees owe nothing to the Presidency but the President owes much to them.

All of the others who served on the Board of Directors and on our various committees are deserving of praise and I warmly thank all of them for their work and their support.

But I would like to reserve a special thanks for our non-elected and invaluable staff person, Sunny Green. She is this year's unsung heroine. Conscientious, devoted and underpaid, Sunny has been the glue that has held us together. At times she has been my conscience, my calendar and my woman-of-all-work, doing everything in a quiet and self-effacing manner. (She even apologized to me because I misspelled her name for several months in the *NEEDLES*!)

I am extremely pleased with the slate picked by our Nominating Committee. I wholeheartedly endorse them. With Gail and Janet leading Sequoia Audubon we can expect a dynamic, energetic and forward-looking SAS.

Regardless of who our officers are for next year, I know they will enjoy your support as I have. Thank you all.

SEPTEMBER'S PROGRAM

"SHOW AND TELL" NIGHT has become a tradition for our first meeting of the new Audubon year. It has also become one of our most popular programs. Our members bring their own slides and narrate their summer adventures.

Everyone is welcome to bring their slides (up to a maximum of 20) and share their experiences with the rest of us.

POTLUCK TIME!

June brings our annual Potluck Dinner so dust off your favorite recipes. Please 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 the *DESSERT*, those whose names begin with the letters *G* through *M*, a *CASSEROLE* or other hot dish, and *N* through *Z* should provide the *SALAD* or other hot dish. (Since we're usually a bit short on hot dishes, all you *A-F*'s and *N-Z*'s can choose that as an option.)

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.

1989 CANDIDATES

The Nominating Committee of Rick Baird, John Silliman and Al Wofchuck has named the following candidates for officers and directors for 1989.

For President	Gail Smithson
For Vice-President	Janet Duerr
For Secretary	Ed Mc Elhany
For Treasurer	Dale Hand
For Directors	
Term expiring June '91	Colleen Horner
Term expiring June '92	Linda Kypta
Term expiring June '92	Rick Johnson

Nominations for any office can be made from the floor by any SAS member (with the permission of the nominee).

CALENDAR

June 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		

JUNE 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.

JUNE 3 GAZOS CREEK AND BUTANO STATE PARK. The riparian corridor of Gazos Creek is one of the finest year-round birding areas of San Mateo County. From its mouth, where resting gulls and terns roost, to its origins in the redwoods the creek is a summer home to a large number of passerine species and a representative population of hawks and owls. For even more diversity, we will also bird Butano State Park and the grasslands between the two areas. We will meet at the intersection of Hwy. 1 and Gazos Creek Road, just south of the Pigeon Point Lighthouse at 9:00 A.M. The trip should break up at lunchtime. Our leader is our Christmas Count coordinator, the author of our "Birding" column and one of the best birders to be found anywhere.

LEADER: PETER METROPULOS 592-2417

JUNE 8 GENERAL MEETING AND POTLUCK. FLYCATCHERS are the subject of our program with Joe Morlan, noted expert in bird identification, and the voice of the Northern California Rare Bird Alert, giving us the latest details on identifying these elusive and difficult species. 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.

JUNE 17 YUBA PASS - "THE CALL OF THE HIGH SIERRA" - This trip affords a chance to see birds rarely seen on any of our other field trips. The trip features easy trail walking through lovely mountain and Sierra Valley habitats. On Saturday we will meet at 9 AM at Wild Plum Campground just out of Sierra City and bird the mountain areas for dipper, black-backed woodpecker, evening grosbeak, summer warblers, flycatchers, etc. On Sunday we'll meet at the Summit Campground at 8 AM. From there we will caravan to Sierra Valley to see the birds of the Eastern Slope and Modoc Plateau. Arrangements have been made for us to use the facilities of the Sierra Nevada Field Campus of San Francisco State University. Camping in platform tents with mattresses and cots, hot showers and three meals a day are available for \$21 a day (1988 prices - 1989 rates not available at press time.). Just bring your own bedding. Motels are also available in Sierra City. Reservations are required for this trip and for the accommodations at the Field Campus. Call the leader for details and to make reservations.

LEADER CLIFF RICHER 355-4058

THERE WILL BE NO NEWSLETTER FOR THE MONTHS OF JULY & AUGUST.

SEPT. 7 SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 PM at a place to be announced. ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME. Please contact the Sequoia Office (593-7368) for details.
THURSDAY

SEPT. 14 SAS GENERAL MEETING. Our annual "SHOW AND TELL" THURSDAY NIGHT in which our members share their 20 (more or less) vacation slides. In the past these have featured scenery and wildlife from around the world - Año Nuevo to Australia. San Mateo Garden Center, the Alameda at Parkside. Social Mixer at 7:30 PM, General Meeting at 8:00.

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

DAN MURPHY

YEAR OF THE EAGLE: As you no doubt know, an immature golden eagle disrupted the nesting cycle at ACR. It took young from the nests and scared off the adult birds. Ranch biologists decided to temporarily close the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve on the weekend of April 8 & 9. But school children from around the Bay were scheduled to visit us. Rather than cancel the school program, our incredible docents met the challenge. They developed a special program with ACR biologist Ray Peterson, shifting the school visitation to Volunteer Canyon and providing an alternate educational experience. Some of our wonderfully creative docents from the Bouverie Preserve wrote this song about the plight of our herons and egrets.

BOLINAS LAGOON

We're here at Bolinas Lagoon.
We hope you will come to see us soon.
We'll show you a nest,
Our eggs are the best.
Come visit Bolinas Lagoon.

An eagle has paid us a call.
He stooped and Mom took a fall.
The herons all flew,
And wouldn't you too?
Alas, poor Bolinas Lagoon.

We're here at Bolinas Lagoon.
The eagle has flown to the moon.
The herons are back,
They're right on the track.
Hurrah for Bolinas Lagoon.

There's still time to visit the Ranch & see the heronry. The eagle has returned too, but we remain hopeful the heronry remains active until the Ranch's public season ends on July 16. Don't miss us!

FRANCISCO MESA: Among the goals of ACR is that of preserving land adjacent to Bolinas Lagoon and Tomales Bay. With your help, we have been very successful in meeting this goal. However, the task of preservation is an ongoing one. One which presents itself once again.

Francisco Mesa, the largest headland at the north end of Bolinas Lagoon, and the last major privately owned parcel adjacent to the Lagoon, is scheduled for probate sale. This lovely site offers one of the finest views of the Lagoon has the possibility of being sub-divided for five homesites. ACR and a consortium of other conservation organizations are working to obtain this pristine area for public open space. If you can help in our effort please call Skip at 866-9244. If we are successful in purchasing this parcel we will certainly seek your help.

Of course the crises never seem to stop. On Tomales Bay, a parcel adjacent to Tom's Point, the site of a rare fresh water pond, is for sale as well. For the present we are watching and waiting.

BIRDING IN SAN MATEO COUNTY

THE SPRING MIGRATION

Peter Metropulos

A deep sea birding expedition 20 miles off of Año Nuevo Point, April 2, encountered an impressive array of tubenoses; 200 SOOTY SHEARWATERS, a PINK-FOOTED SHEARWATER, 4 NORTHERN FULMARS, 20 BLACK-FOOTED and 1 LAYSAN ALBATROSS. (RST)

A migrant GREEN-BACKED HERON was at San Gregorio Creek mouth on May 7 and two birds suspected of nesting were at Pescadero Creek the same day (RST). Two at Searsville Lake on April 23 (RST) were at another potential breeding locality.

A flight of twenty-one WHITE-FACED IBIS flying in V-formation north of Año Nuevo Point on May 8 (GJS) must have been a sight. Ibis are very rare stragglers to the coast.

A pair of WOOD DUCKS landing on a large horizontal limb of a tall eucalyptus at Pescadero Marsh on April 17 (PJM) was an unexpected observation.

A drake BLUE-WINGED TEAL was at Pescadero Marsh from March 5 (GSM) to April 17 (PJM).

An immature KING EIDER "rafting" with scoters off Pomponio Beach caused quite a stir among local birders from April 29 to May 7. (RST, LK, et al)

A handsome drake HARLEQUIN DUCK was showing off at Año Nuevo Point on April 22 (GJS) while a hen, 8 miles offshore from Martin's Beach on April 2 (RST) was doing its best to avoid detection.

Northbound migrant OSPREYS were spotted at Año Nuevo Point on March 10 and April 22 (GJS), Portola Valley on March 20 (PJM) and Pescadero Marsh on April 17 (PJM).

A pair of ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS at Cloverdale Road on April 14 (RF) were the latest county record for this uncommon winter visitor.

Two PEREGRINES at Año Nuevo Point on March 20 (GJS) were attempting to put a dent in the local rock dove population.

A pair of RING-NECKED PHEASANTS at the KKH radio tower near Belmont in April (RST, PJM) may be the last pair remaining in our county baylands.

The wintering PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER at Año Nuevo Point was last seen displaying its formal nuptial attire on April 16 (GJS).

A SURFBIRD, normally a denizen of the rocky outer coast, was flocking with other waders at Foster City on April 20 (AK). They are very rare in south San Francisco Bay.

Normally only found in our area in fall, a BAIRD'S SANDPIPER, was at Princeton Harbor on April 16 (JM), providing us with our second spring record.

A second winter GLAUCOUS GULL was present at Año Nuevo Point from March 19 to April 29 (GJS).

A total of 540 BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES counted on a deep-sea birding excursion off our coast on March 4 (PJM) was the highest number ever recorded in our area, although the status of many pelagic species off our coast is not well-known.

A single ANCIENT MURRELET, 8 miles offshore from Pigeon Point on March 4 (PJM), was the only report of this locally uncommon alcid.

A tally of alcids in our off-shore waters on March 4 yielded 245 CASSIN'S AUKLETS and 590 RHINOCEROS AUKLETS (PJM).

A BURROWING OWL south of Half Moon Bay on March 1 (JMa) may have been a migrant or wandering bird. Their status in our region is precarious. Perhaps only a pair or two still remain in the county.

Wintering NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWLS normally depart in March, so a bird calling at El Granada on April 21 (BS), may be considered a migrant or wanderer.

Three VAUX'S SWIFTS at Pescadero Marsh on April 25 (PJM) were the first of these spring arrivals.

Three BANK SWALLOWS were at Pescadero Marsh on April 17 (PJM) and another was at the Redwood Shores sewage ponds on April 23 (RST). This species is rarely recorded away from the immediate coast in our county.

AMERICAN CROWS have undergone a population explosion on the San Francisco Peninsula. Until recently considered uncommon and with few nesting records, they have become fairly common and conspicuous during the breeding season in residential and commercial neighborhoods from Millbrae to Menlo Park and west to Highway 280.

Lone RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES at Burlingame on April 7 and May 5 and at Atherton on April 19 (both PJM) were migrant or wandering individuals in lowland urban areas several miles from their known nesting range in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

A BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER at Woodside on March 14 (DK) was the first arrival of this species.

A "wave" of at least 15 SWAINSON'S THRUSHES passed over El Granada on the evening of May 3 (BS).

Rarely recorded locally during spring migration, a singing NASHVILLE WARBLER was at Pedro Valley County Park in Pacifica on April 30 (JS).

A singing BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER at Pedro Valley Park on April 30 (JS) was noteworthy. Although they nest in good numbers along Skyline near Woodside and other locations along the crest of the Santa Cruz Mountains, they are infrequently encountered in the coastal lowlands.

Another mountain-nesting species, a male HERMIT WARBLER was enjoyed as it sang along Ridge Road near Pescadero on May 4 (RF).

Two singing male MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLERS at El Granada on May 3 (BS) were thought to be birds establishing territories.

A singing YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT found April 27 at Gazos Creek (LC) lingered until at least May 7 (RST, et al). Chats are very rare in coastal California although they do nest very locally in the Santa Clara Valley.

BIRDING SAN MATEO COUNTY

(Continued from Page Seven)

A male BLUE GROSBEAK flushed from a weed patch in an El Granada neighborhood on April 27 (BS) was another coastal rarity. This is the first spring record for San Mateo County.

A pair of GRASSHOPPER SPARROWS was observed in the midst of nest-building along Cloverdale Road near Pescadero on April 14 (RF).

A WHITE-THROATED SPARROW lingered in Belmont as late as March 21 (PJM) but even more of a treat was a bird singing at Moss Beach on April 16 (JM).

A lone RED CROSSBILL uttered its characteristic "kip-kip-kip" call notes as it frequented pines in El Granada nearly every day from Apr. 17-May 4 (BS).

OBSERVERS: Larry Campbell, Roland Franz,
Dan Keller, Andy Kratter, Linda Kypta,
Jim Martin (JMa), Joe Morlan, Peter J. Metropulos,
Barry Sauppe, Gail Smithson (GSm), Judy Spitler,
Gary J. Strachan and Ron S. Thorn.

REPORT SIGHTINGS OF RARE OR UNUSUAL BIRDS

CALL 592-2417

CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE PROTECTION INITIATIVE

Efforts are being made to permanently protect the mountain lion in California through the California Wildlife Protection Initiative. Under this initiative, the mountain lion would be permanently protected and funds would be provided to purchase suitable lion and deer habitat for preserves.

To succeed your help is needed.

Beginning this month hundreds of volunteers will be staffing tables at fairs, shopping malls and local stores to collect the signatures required to qualify the initiative for the June 1990 state ballot.

We are also enclosing a postcard in this issue of the **NEEDLES** for you to fill out and return. If you want to volunteer to help, please call Tim Duff at 493-5466 or leave a message at the SAS office (593-7368) indicating your interest.

HELP SAVE CALIFORNIA'S MOUNTAIN LIONS!

OFFICERS:		DIRECTORS:		STANDING COMMITTEES:		Wknd Field Trips:	
President:	Cliff Richer 355-4058	Elected for Term Ending:		ACR Hostess:	Janet Duerr 689-0788	Steve Schafer	689-0788
Past Pres:	Linda Kypta 591-9053	June '89	Rick Johnson 571-8533	Bird Sightings:	Peter Metropulos 592-2417	Nick Coiro	349-1834
Vice-Pres:	Gail Smithson 367-6575		Janet Duerr 689-0788	& Christmas Count:	Cliff Richer 355-4058	Program:	Janet Duerr 689-0788
Secretary:	Ed Mc Elhany 343-2219	June '90	Dave Augustine 879-0575	Conservation:	Rick Johnson 571-8533	Hospitality:	Linda Kypta 591-9053
Treasurer:	Colleen Horner 366-4282		Rick Baird 574-1067	Audit:	Nick Coiro 349-1834	Publicity:	Gail Smithson 367-6575
		June '91	Steve Schafer 689-0788	Finance/Budget:	Rick Baird 574-1067	NEEDLES Editor:	Cliff Richer 355-4058
			Nick Coiro 349-1834	Membership:			
STAFF:	Sunny Greene			Education:	Walter Smithy 591-2501	SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICE	593-7368
						Rare Bird Alert	528-0288

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INFORMATION FOR ALL OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS --- INCLUDING EXCHANGE BULLETINS --- SHOULD BE MAILED TO: 720 EL CAMINO REAL, SUITE 403, BELMONT, CALIFORNIA 94002.

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Chapter C16 -- 7XCH

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