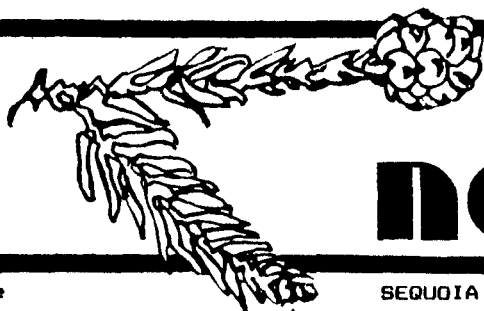




sequoia needles

Bulletin of the

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

San Mateo County, Ca.

December, 1989/January, 1990

Vol. 38, #4

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

Our December potluck meeting will begin with a 15 minute slide presentation by Dr. William Tuohy of the San Francisco Estuary Program. This five year Environmental Protection Agency program is designed to promote effective management of our bays and the Delta. Dr. Tuohy will briefly discuss some of the current environmental issues that confront the estuary, ongoing projects concerning our waterways, and how we can become involved in the project.

This month's main presentation will introduce us to the mysterious mountain island in the Sacramento Valley, the Sutter Buttes. Don Schmoldt is a wildlife biologist and former coordinator of the Sutter Buttes Naturalist Program (a program developed by Walt Anderson). He will share the wonders and mysteries of it was to the Maidu Indians the center of the world. Our journey into the private lands of Sutter Buttes will reveal the unique geological origin and the flora and fauna resulting from 10,000 years of isolation. We will also visit the state and federal wildlife refuges which flank the buttes. Each winter, these refuges offer a haven to millions of ducks, geese, and swans. It is here that we can still take part in the breathtaking experience of seeing tens of thousands of waterfowl filling the air, one of the truly great wildlife spectacles of the world.

JANUARY'S PROGRAM

John Silliman, frequent world traveler, as well as former president of Sequoia Audubon, has consented to stay home long enough to share with us his experiences during his recent trip to the Galapagos.

Because of their isolated location the Galapagos Islands have developed their own distinct ecosystem. It was Charles Darwin's study of the Galapagos' finches that led to the theory of evolution.

Today the islands are an ecological preserve with restricted access and strict environmental protections.

John is culling through hundreds of his slides and his inimitable and informal style will bring them to life for us.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

By the time you read this I will have packed all my belongings and moved 300 miles north of here to a little town called Trinidad, on the coast of northern California. When I assumed the Presidency of Sequoia Audubon Society, I had every intention of filling the full term and maybe even a second year's term. But such is life. My boyfriend, who lives in Trinidad, has talked me into moving back there where I lived three years ago and it is too good an offer to refuse.

SAS will go on without me. One of the hardest things for me to leave is my involvement with SAS. I have been enjoying being President, though it does sometimes make inconvenient demands, and I have developed parts of myself that have been hidden until now. I will miss my birding buddies and the SAS members that I have worked the closest with. Janet Duerr, the current Vice President will assume the responsibility of the presidency until otherwise decided.

Currently, SAS has been working on some fundraisers. Our bird seed sale was successful as we sold over \$1,000.00 worth of seed and netted about \$300.00 for the chapter. We wish to thank Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society for generously allowing us to pool our bird seed orders with theirs to ensure a larger profit for us. By the time you read this the Wild Goose Chase will be over. I hope all of you supported it.

The Christmas Bird Counts are coming right up. The Crystal Springs Count is on December 16 and the Año Nuevo Count is on December 30. I highly recommend the Christmas count experience. I have participated in these counts for the last three years and found the experience rewarding. We don't often go out to count every bird we see and it makes for a different type of experience. It forces you to try to see every bird equally. I will never forget the hundreds of migrating robins I saw last year in Big Basin, and the immature peregrine falcon I spotted high on a redwood tree in Big Basin the same year. Then there was the prairie falcon and pileated woodpecker we spotted last year in the Crystal Springs watershed. The funnest part of the Christmas count is the compilation dinners, where you get to meet with all the other birders, hear their stories of the day, and find out just how well the count went. Remember, it doesn't matter what your level of expertise, we can find something useful for you to do.

A few years ago a young lady burst onto the Sequoia Audubon scene. Suddenly it seemed she was everywhere. She threw herself wholeheartedly into the tasks she undertook. And once in a while she would offer suggestions. More and more we found ourselves listening to and following them. It didn't take long for us to realize we had a future SAS president in the making. Now President Gail Smithson is moving on, to continue growing. She takes with her our best wishes and our confidence in her future.

---The Editor

CALENDAR

December 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						

DEC. 7 SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 PM at the Kypta residence.
THURSDAY ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME but should call the office ahead of time to confirm the meeting site and to be sure there is room.

DEC. 9 SAN PEDRO VALLEY COUNTY PARK FIELD TRIP. This SATURDAY park provides a variety of wooded, riparian and grasslands habitat for many wintering species of birds. The trip will entail some walking along easy trails. It begins at 9:00 AM in the parking lot of the park. To get there take Highway 1 to Pacifica and, turn inland at Linda Mar Boulevard. Follow Linda Mar to its end and then follow the signs to the park. The trip should break up at noon.

LEADER SCOTT SMITHSON

DEC. 13 FOSTER CITY AREAS FIELD TRIP. Wintering ducks and WEDNESDAY 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. **NOTE THAT THIS IS A CHANGE OF DATE FROM EARLIER ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

LEADER NICK COIRO 349-1834

DEC. 14 GENERAL MEETING AND POTLUCK. At the San Mateo THURSDAY Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. See next month's **NEEDLES** for further details.

Dec. 16 Saturday CRYSTAL SPRINGS CHRISTMAS COUNT

Dec. 30 Saturday AÑO NUEVO CHRISTMAS COUNT

January 1990						
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			

JAN. 6 FOSTER CITY AREAS FIELD TRIP. Wintering ducks and SATURDAY 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

JAN. 13 GOLDEN GATE PARK AND LAKE MERCED. We Peninsulans SATURDAY often overlook the fact that there are prime birding areas within the city limits of San Francisco. Here's a chance to visit two of the best. Every winter they hold a few surprises - tufted ducks, Eurasian wigeons, lost warblers and other vagrant passerines - as well as the expected wood ducks and green-backed herons. We will begin the trip at 9:00 AM at the large parking lot at the northern end of Lake Merced.

LEADERS LINDA KYPTA & DAN KELLER
PAGE TWO

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

DAN MURPHY

THANKS TO DOCENTS: Once again our wonderful volunteer docents have shared ACR's special brand of hands on environmental education with thousands of Bay Area school children. 2650 children took part in the program at the Bolinas Preserve and 2472 at the Bouverie Preserve. These programs not only take place at our preserves, but many docents visit classrooms around the area to prepare students for their visits. It's our docents who make this the internationally acclaimed program it is. For that they richly deserve the gratitude of everyone who supports ACR's educational goals. Thank you for your time, for your effort and congratulations on your success during the past year.

FAX IT: Thanks so much to Peter Tolger of Tam Systems in Corte Madera for his very generous donation of a fax machine to ACR. Now you can fax those very important messages to the Ranch. Call first to do so at 868-9244.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING AT THE RANCH: The Ranch bookstore will remain open to the public on Tuesdays through Fridays, between 1:30 PM and 4 PM until Christmas. It will also be open on Saturday, December 9 from 10 AM until 4 PM. Our new selection of merchandise for the naturalist is sure to be just what you need to fill that very special Christmas stocking.

Since ACR is a bit out of the way for many of us, why not make a day of it? Plan to spend Saturday, December 9 exploring Marin and shopping at ACR. Be sure to pack a special picnic lunch and leave early so you can enjoy the entire day. From Hwy. 101 take the Hwy. 1 Mill Valley exit. Follow the signs to Muir Woods where a winter walk in the redwoods is especially dramatic, and who knows, maybe you will be lucky enough to see the steelhead migrate up the creek as you meander along the path. From Muir Woods return to Hwy. 1 and continue north past the town of Stinson Beach to Bolinas Lagoon. Make several stops along the way to see the many ducks, waders and shorebirds which winter here. Be sure to watch for harbor seals which may pull out near the road.

About 3 miles north of Stinson Beach stop at ACR. Check the bird blind for landbirds, check out Zumwalt Gallery, picnic in the Ranch yard and don't forget that very special Christmas shopping in the Bookstore.

From the ranch, continue north toward Pt. Reyes National Seashore. When you get to Five Brooks turn left and drive up the dirt road to the parking area. Walk out to the pond where you have a better than even chance of seeing a wood duck or a hooded merganser. The walk around the pond is less than a mile, the

(Continued on Page Three)

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

(Continued from Page Two)

trees will have dropped their leaves and you will get a real feeling of winter on this afternoon meander.

A few miles north of Five Brooks is the headquarters of the Point Reyes National Seashore at Olema. Be sure to spend a few minutes in the very attractive visitor's center. Perhaps this is the year you should walk the half-mile Earthquake Trail --- perhaps it isn't.

You can return east to Hwy. 101 on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard or continue north on Hwy. 1. If your trip begins to the north, you can just as easily reverse the course described here.

Enjoy a wonderful picnic, good birding and successful shopping on Saturday, December 9. On behalf of everyone at ACR, we wish you a happy holiday season.

ESTATE PLANNING SEMINAR ON THE USE OF LIVING TRUSTS: Selling appreciated stock or real estate in a way that decreases your taxes, increases your income, provides for your heirs and helps a good cause will be among the topics treated at "Living Trusts: Tax and Estate Planning for the Nineties.", a 10 AM to noon estate planning seminar sponsored by ACR. Select one of three Saturday presentations; February 3 at Volunteer Canyon; February 17 at the Marin Art and Garden Center; and March 3 at the Bouverie Audubon Preserve.

Topics will include living trusts, how to avoid probate, life support systems and your legal rights, serving as your own trustee, choosing a trustee, and the tax and income benefits of charitable trusts.

Speakers will include estate planning attorney Carolyn Farren, professional trust manager Jack Harper and charitable trust consultant to ACR, Philip Murphy.

There's no charge to attend the seminar but reservations are suggested. To make them call 868-9244.

RANCH GUIDES TRAINING: ACR is such a special place because so many visitors leave with the feeling they have been enriched and learned from their visit. Ranch Guides have become an integral part of that process. Join us in continuing this exemplary environmental education program. Training for weekend guides begin on February 10 and runs through March 24. Ranch naturalist Ray Peterson will prepare you to meet our weekend visitors at the overlook, over the marsh or by the pond. Be a Ranch Guide. For more details call Ray Peterson at 868-9244.

Experiment and theory often show remarkable agreement when performed in the same laboratory. ---Daniel Bershader

CALENDAR

(Continued from Page Two)

JAN. 17 MOUNTAIN VIEW FOREBAY AND SHORELINE PARK. This WEDNESDAY area affords some of the most varied shorebird and waterfowl wintering habitat in a small area and in every year it has produced a surprise bird or two. Parasitic jaegers, red-necked grebes, Ross' geese and tufted ducks are only some of the past visitors. The trip will involve walking on level well-defined paths. We will meet at 9:00 AM at the foot of San Antonio Rd. near the entrance to Mountain View Shoreline Park. To get there, take Hwy. 101 to San Antonio Rd. and take the San Antonio Rd. (North) exit. Follow San Antonio Road for a short distance until it makes a right angle turn and becomes Terminal Road. Stop and park as close to the intersection as feasible. Trip breaks up at noon.

LEADER NICK COIRO 349-1834

JAN. 20-21 LOS BANOS REFUGES AND PANOCHE VALLEY FIELD TRIP. SATURDAY This trip covers 2 very diverse areas and exposes SUNDAY 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.

LEADERS CLIFF RICHER (LOS BANOS) 355-4058
GIL WEST (PANOCHE VALLEY) 359-0820

JAN. 27 PESCADERO MARSH FIELD TRIP. State Parks Ranger SATURDAY 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. 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'll meet at 9:00 AM at the parking lot opposite Pescadero Rd on Hwy. 1.

LEADER DAVE AUGUSTINE 879-0575

February 1990						
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			

FEB. 1 SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 PM at the Kypta residence. THURSDAY ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME but should call the office ahead of time to confirm the meeting site and to be sure there is room.

FEB. 3 TOMALES POINT AT POINT REYES. Join us for a walk SATURDAY out to the "other end" of the Pt. Reyes Peninsula. We can expect grassland birds, possible rarities and a spectacular luncheon view over Tomales Bay where resident oystercatchers and wintering waterfowl will keep you occupied. The trip involves a three mile walk up a modest grade and the return along the same route. Sturdy shoes are recommended and you should bring clothing appropriate for almost any weather at this time of year. The trip will begin at 9:00 AM from the parking lot at the end of Pierce Point Road at Point Reyes.

LEADER DAVE SHUFORD

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Once again it's time to welcome our new members (and welcome back a few familiar names and faces as well) and express the hope that we'll be seeing them at some of our meetings and field trips.

ATHERTON

Aaron Cutler, Ellen & David Elliott, David Fritz, Lynn C. Gale, E. Alexander Glover, Phil E. Held

BELMONT

Victoria R. Credle, Roxanne Farwell, Marye M. Harding, Peter Heiler, Linda James, Anthony Kenaston, Joycelyn Moulton, Mr. B. D. M. Nixon

BRISBANE

Joyce Walton

BURLINGAME

Terrigal Burn, T. Infusino, Benita Ruff, Daria Van Bergen

DALY CITY

Anna M. Bratton, F. L. Buckley, Janine and Jeff Cohen, Richard Graham, Mrs. M. Steinbert Hall, Alan Keel, Mr. Jason Koulouris, Chris P. Lauderdale, Ronald Miketa, Mike Miller, Mattie Peckenham, David Pucci, B. Brooke Pugs, Dale V. Thomas, L. J. Wilson

EL GRANADA

Millard Holliday, Jim Johnson, Jim Johnson, Kathy Miller

FOSTER CITY

Carma L. Bamber, Meridith Foulke, Ms. Melinda S. Money, Alma P. Saye

HALF MOON BAY

Angela Banister, Don Godshall, Connie Grajeda, Mrs. Jeanette W. McDaniel, Mrs. J. S. Neal, Linda Prara, Robert G. Vestdyke

LA HONDA

Richard Carter, Sharon Carthy, Henry Selkirk, Vandy Shrader

MENLO PARK

William & Jane Bagby, Sandra M. Bartlett, Robin Boselli, Carol Chapman, Martha Claypool, Raymond L. Cleary, F. Cox, James Crooks, Constance A. Davis, Stephen H. Field, Peggy Fuller, Susan David Green, Brian C. Hagenbuch, Victoria Harris, Jan Harwood, Susan Hunt, Steven Kiarura, K. Kreitner, Rebecca Larsen, Helen Latorre, William B. Lupfer, Norma McCluskey, Joseph G. McCrate, Gary Mele, Robert F. Mozley, Hal Murray, Jesse M. Phillips, Betty A. Plumb, Alex Sorger, Carol Taggart, Bettye N. Taylor, Mary Ann Tyrrell

MILLBRAE

Kellie S. Moore, Rod Neubert

MONTARA

Ted Wilson

MOSS BEACH

Richard Moyer, Mrs. G. B. Thibodeau

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Tont Alexander

OAKLAND

Barbara J. Denniston

PACIFICA

L. Bergeson, Karen Blount, Ranjit A. Buch, Suzanne B. Duncel, T. Eving, Doug Newberg, B. Okin, Wendy Pierro, Claire Pryor

PESCADERO

David J. Chapman, Laura Tucker

PORTOLA VALLEY

Bernard P. Hand, Dr. & Mrs. R. Hewlett Lee, Caroline Palmer, Mrs. Jeanne L. Porter, Thomas H. Sinton, Rod Williams

REDWOOD CITY

Jeanne Ahern, Mrs. E. Ahlberg, M. Kristin Asmus, Charles O. Bangs, Ann Benninger, Rebecca J. Brown, William Hardy, Steve Harper, Ruth Heffernan, Eleanor Hiles, Delphine M. Ipsen, J. I. Jennings, Thomas S. Kaine, Thom Klesch, R. Lawrence, John Mandas, Matilda M. Nieri, M. Orosina, Michael Stinson, Pamela H. Tavernier, Richard Tsukushi, Carri M. Wagner, Susan Varton, Perry B. Wilson

SAN BRUNO

Enid Brawny, ? Condensa, Renna S. Kaufman, Lisa Luke, K. M. Magee, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Merriam, Kenneth D. Poland, Kim Rosenbaum, David Vales
(Continued on Page Six)

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

JANET DUERR

SAN BRUNO MOUNTAIN
Saturday, 7 October 1989

Al Seubert led a group of nine adventurous souls on a natural history tour of San Bruno Mountain. In the morning, the group concentrated on birdwatching, and saw many of the area's year-round resident species. Some migrating warblers were also spotted in the wooded areas. After lunch, several of the group continued their hike to the top of the mountain, where they were rewarded with a panoramic view of the Bay Area.

SAN MATEO NORTH COAST
Sunday, 8 October 1989

Five hardy birders joined Dan Keller, leading his first field trip for Sequoia Audubon, on a foray through his favorite coastal hotspots. The group saw numerous migrating and resident species, including most of the wrens. A palm warbler was the 'rarest' bird of the day, but two common birds, a Hutton's vireo and a ruby-crowned kinglet, stole the show by perching very near each other and providing an unusual side-by-side comparison. Dan was able to point out the subtle differences that distinguish these two species, which are often difficult to separate in the field.

MONTEREY COUNTY: Sunday, 15 October 1989

Steve Schafer led six Sequoia members on a loop through some of Monterey County's best fall birding areas. The effects of our prolonged drought were much in evidence, as both the pond at Zmudowski State Beach and the slop pond at Moon Glow Dairy (the leader's favorite Monterey birding locale) were both dry. Nevertheless, the group finished off the day with a healthy list of 85 species seen or heard. The highlights of the trip included common murres and rhinoceros auklets offshore at Zmudowski, and an extremely cooperative juvenal ruff. The ruff had been present on and off at the Salinas Sewage Ponds for several days, and was thoughtful enough to be 'on' while the group was there.

1989/1990 AUDUBON WILDLIFE REPORT READY

The fifth annual Audubon Wildlife Report takes a detailed look at the US Army Corps of Engineers and its increasing importance in land and water use decisions. It also includes studies of the conflicts between water needs and wildlife, the battle over ancient forests and the growing menace of climate change. Eight species are profiled in depth giving their natural histories, significance, current status and recommendations for their management. To order the Report call Academic Press at 1-800-321-5068.

JOIN THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

Yes folks, its that time of year again. We are planning our annual Christmas bird counts and we are counting on you to get out and help us count the birds in our areas. Mark your calendars:

Crystal Springs Bird Count - - December 16, 1989
Ano Nuevo Bird Count - - December 30, 1989

We have a new compiler this year, Dan Keller. Dan has enthusiastically joined us as a field trip leader this year and he knows the birds in San Mateo County well. Peter Metropulos and Ron Thorn will also be helping with scouting before the count. In order to see the most birds we need lots of help. Even if you are a beginning birder or just like to get out in the open air we can use your help on a team to keep records in the field and count birds. Christmas counts mean dawn-to-dusk birding, plus owling for some. Even if you can only devote a few hours at a feeder or in a local park, we need your help. We need people who will walk city residential areas, school grounds, golf courses, parks and cemeteries within both count circles and report the population of each species they find. The Christmas count is important because it gives us a good idea of trends in the populations of the birds in our area and can alert us to changes. The count results are reported in American Birds and also with Cornell Laboratory.

If you are unable to participate in the field, could you help out at home counting backyard birds or at the Garden Center preparing the hot meal for the hungry counters on December 16 and/or 30?

Crystal Springs C.B.C. Ano Nuevo C.B.C.

Please tear out or copy this form and send it in to the Audubon office so that we can assign the areas.

*Sequoia Audubon Christmas Counts
720 El Camino Real, Suite 403
Belmont, CA 94002*

I will participate in the:

Crystal Springs C.B.C. I would like counting in this area:

First Choice: _____

Second Choice: _____

Third Choice: _____

For Ano Nuevo C.B.C., I would like counting in this area:

First Choice: _____

Second Choice: _____

Third Choice: _____

I will count any area assigned. Yes _____ No _____

I will monitor and report my feeder on 12/16 _____ 12/30 _____

I will help behind the scenes on 12/16 _____ 12/30 _____

I will be at the compilation on 12/16 _____ 12/30 _____

Names(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Please let us have your reply by **December 6, 1989**. To avoid errors please remit your **\$4.00** with the form. (The \$4.00 is for American Birds to report our count and each participant's name in American Birds.)

CHRISTMAS COUNT AREAS

CRYSTAL SPRINGS COUNT DECEMBER 16, 1989

- 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-880 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

ANO NUEVO COUNT DECEMBER 30, 1989

- AREA 1: LA HONDA-SAN MCDONALD 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: ANO NUEVO POINT
- AREA 13: WHITEHOUSE

WHAT'S IN A NAME (Scientifically speaking)

STEVE SCHAFER

A previous column dealt with the common (English) names of North American birds. This time, we'll look at their scientific names.

Every known living organism is given a two-part scientific name. These are based on Latin grammar, and are often called Latin names, even though many are derived from other languages, or from the names of persons or places.

The first part of a scientific name, the genus or generic name, classifies the organism into a group of one or more closely-related species. The second part of the name, the specific name, identifies a particular member of the genus in question. The generic name is always a noun, and is always capitalized, while the specific name is usually an adjective, and is never capitalized, even when it is derived from a proper name.

Two different species may have the same specific name, as long as their generic names are different. For example, we have *Laterallus jamaicensis* (Black Rail) and *Buteo jamaicensis* (Red-tailed Hawk). In both cases, *jamaicensis* refers to the site (Jamaica) where the first specimens were found. On the other hand, generic names are never duplicated, thus the name *Buteo*, which refers to the buzzards, or soaring hawks, cannot be used in any other context.

Because scientific names are often based on Latin or Greek roots, they can be difficult for an English-speaking person to remember. A good example is *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus* (Black-billed Cuckoo), which is impossible just to pronounce, let alone remember. Some birds, on the other hand, are easy. The Anhinga's scientific name is no problem at all; it's *Anhinga anhinga*. But beware of *Aiaia aiaia*, the Roseate Spoonbill. The generic and specific names look the same, but they aren't quite.

Who selects the scientific name for a newly discovered species? This privilege goes to the first person who publishes a paper describing the species. The rule of priority is strictly enforced; whoever describes a species first gets to choose the name. In addition, the name is used exactly as published, even if there are typographical or other errors. Thus we have *Toxostoma dorsale* (Crissal Thrasher), even though it was supposed to be *Toxostoma crissale*. The name *dorsale* came from a junco described in another paper in the same publication, and was accidentally substituted for *crissale* by a printer's error. Similarly, we have *Dendroica pensylvanica* (Chestnut-sided Warbler), even though Pennsylvania, where the species was first found, is spelled with two n's.

Frequently, scientific names have to be changed, usually as a result of new scientific data that shows that the generic relationships are different from what was previously believed. Whenever possible, only the generic name is changed, and the specific name is retained. Occasionally, a name is changed because it has been discovered that the species had been described earlier than commonly believed, and the original author is then given priority. In some cases, a species may experience several name changes as new information surfaces. A particularly messy example is

LeConte's Sparrow, whose various scientific names and the dates of their assignment are:

1790: *Fringilla caudacuta*
1843: *Emberiza lecontei*
1872: *Coturniculus lecontei*
1886: *Ammodramus lecontei*
1910: *Passerherbulus lecontei*
1931: *Passerherbulus caudacutus*
1973: *Ammospiza lecontei*
1983: *Ammodramus lecontei*

The repeated flip-flop between *caudacuta(us)* and *lecontei(i)* was the result of confusion about priority, and also conflict with the scientific name of the Sharp-tailed Sparrow (currently *Ammodramus caudacutus*).

One unusual species is Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*). It is the only case where a person (Thomas Say in this case) has been honored in all three names, common, generic, and specific. Actually, when the bird was first described by Charles Bonaparte, it was placed in a different genus, and not until later was it merged into the genus *Sayornis* with the other phoebes. Another interesting pair is *Otus asio* (Eastern Screech-Owl) and *Asio otus* (Long-eared Owl). *Asio* is from a Latin word meaning a kind of owl, while *otus* is from the Greek and refers to the owls' ear tufts.

The history behind the names of birds can be fascinating. As before, most of the material in this column comes from the *Dictionary of American Bird Names* (revised edition), by Ernest A. Choate. I heartily recommend this book to anyone interested in birds, and how names, both common and scientific, are bestowed upon them.

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A few American birders - usually those who also have scientific credentials as professional ornithologists - have been crusading for the use of scientific names. Most of their colleagues have greeted this call with profound apathy. However in Europe, particularly in Scandinavia, the use of scientific names by even casual birders is common. This eliminates the confusion created by a multiplicity of common names, national language differences and local dialects.

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS (Continued from Page Four)

SAN CARLOS

Linda K. Allen, Fran Cotter, Marilyn Cronk, Terry Davis, Robert Ewert, James Goesser, Cathy Gortner, George Heblack, Beverly Sacerdoti, Sandra Staricha

SAN FRANCISCO

Vendy Lieber-Poinsot

SAN MATEO

Joanne Allen, Kimberly Andrade, Carol Bergmann, Sally Bernstein, Richard Bielat, George Brewer, Vincent Bruno, Mary H. Cummings, Daniel Dibert, Sylvia R. Duval, Laurie A. Gilbert, Michael Goldstein, Annrena I. Gunn, Joe Harper, Cecilia Hodgins, John J. Holland Jr., Y. L. Kitano, Larry Kollerer, Laura L. Lambert, Walter K. Lindenau, William Louie, Jr., Joan Mancini, Minerva Massen, Gerald W. Matze, Peter McReynolds, Peter Moote, Richard Morris, Ms. H. Nuckolls, R. Olshausen, M. Claire Prescott, Page Roos, John Ruth, Monty Sattadarma, Jo Ann Sherin, Tom and Regina Taber, Gloria Walker, Lorraine Whyte, Philip G. Winters, Donna Woodside

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO

M. Karla East, Gary Ferguson, Luc Monroe, Aieta Tuoto, Patricia Faroano, Charles E. Poffenberger, Patricia Rissman, Jane Salogga, Michele Tomlinson

WOODSIDE

James D. Bjorken, Dana Davis, Mr. & Mrs. James L. Ludwig, D. Warner North, Patricia K. Slider, Jayne Westbrook, Mrs. Harry C. Zaba

REDFORD TO NARRATE WOLF SERIES FOR NAS

Actor and environmentalist Robert Redford will be the narrator of the next Audubon Television Special, "Wolves". The one-hour program, shot on location in Mexico, North Carolina, Minnesota, Canada and in and around Yellowstone Park, takes a close-up look at the history and status of the wolf - from the animal's early eradication from almost all of the United States to the efforts now under way to bring it back in portions of its former range.

"Wolves" aired on TBS SuperStation on November 26 and 27 and will be shown again on Saturday, December 2 at noon and Monday, December 4 at 10:05 PM. (All times are Pacific Standard Time.)

THE SEASON'S FIRST AUDUBON SPECIAL, "RAGE OVER TREES", WAS THE SUBJECT OF AN INTENSE CAMPAIGN BY LOGGERS WHO DON'T WANT YOU TO KNOW ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING TO OUR ANCIENT FORESTS. THE LOGGERS' PRESSURE CAUSED THE LOSS OF THE SHOW'S ADVERTISING, BUT SUPERSTATION TBS STILL AIRED THE SPECIAL.

SEQUOIA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAVE, INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, SENT THEIR THANKS TO TED TURNER FOR STANDING UP FOR AUDUBON'S TELEVISION SPECIAL AND FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION.

EVERY LETTER AND POSTCARD FROM YOU WILL HELP ASSURE THAT THE AUDUBON SPECIALS WILL CONTINUE.

SEND YOUR THANKS TO TED TURNER C/O SUPERSTATION TBS, ONE CNN CENTER, ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30348-5366.

NAS WILDLIFE INTERNS

The National Audubon Society offers students and recent graduates an opportunity to gain training and experience in sanctuary management, while providing Audubon with much-needed help.

Internships are available at sanctuaries in Maine, Connecticut, South Carolina, Kentucky, Florida and Arizona as well as California.

Program benefits include:

- Practical experience in wildlife sanctuary work.
- College credit
- Personal instruction
- Free housing
- Eligibility for scholarships to Audubon Ecology Camps.

To learn more about intern and volunteer opportunities at Audubon Sanctuaries, write:

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
Sanctuary Department
93 West Cornwall Rd.
Sharon, CT 06069

MONO LAKE NEWS

The Mono Lake Committee's November newsletter is a gem, packing a wealth of information in its 24 pages. The last few months have seen a number of developments that may mean the 10+ year battle to save Mono Lake may be won and this newsletter has a joyous tone. If you're not a Mono Lake Committee member but you have the slightest interest in what happens to the lands east of the Sierras, you should join just for this newsletter. To sign up, send \$20 to the Mono Lake Committee, Post Office Box 29, Lee Vining, CA 93541.

Some highlights from the newsletter:

Thanks to a court-ordered preliminary injunction the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) has had to increase the flow of water down Rush Creek and into Mono Lake from a minimal 76 gallons per second to 720 gallons per second.

Nevertheless, Mono Lake's elevation is still dangerously low. At 6375 feet above sea level it is two feet below last year's level and only 6 inches above the level at which the landbridge connects with Negit Island. Two moderate dust storms have originated on the landbridge this fall and coyote tracks have been discovered on the island. National Audubon and the Mono Lake Committee are urging the court to expand its injunction to include Lee Vining, Parker and Walker Creeks in order to provide enough water to cover the landbridge and keep predators off the island before next year's nesting season.

In August the court also rejected DWP's argument that the lake be lowered another six feet in order to test whether any damage would be done to the environment. Patrick Flinn, an attorney for the National Audubon Society called the DWP plan "diagnosis by autopsy".

One of the means by which the DWP gained control of the Mono Lake watershed was through the purchase of most of the private land in the Mono Basin. Historically this land was over-grazed and DWP continued this trend by leasing it to sheep ranchers from throughout California. As a result antelope have been eliminated (although re-introduced in small numbers) and sage grouse seriously affected.

In April the Mayor and City Council of Los Angeles committed the city to a 10% reduction in water usage. The city was joined by the Mono Lake Committee and Heal the Bay, a group dedicated to saving Santa Monica Bay in urging conservation. Although water use was reduced only 4%, this objective was achieved despite a steady growth in LA's population. In August, the LA Board of Public Works created the Office of Water Reclamation. The office will try to market the reclaimed water to agricultural and industrial users and to recharge the underground aquifer.

The Mono Lake Committee also acknowledged that the Environmental Water Fund Bill sponsored by Philip Isenberg (D-Sacramento) and Bill Baker (R-Danville) provided the mechanism by which the lake could be saved and could free the Mono Lake Committee to move ahead on innovative solutions for the lake. The legislature also authorized the expenditure of \$750,000 for the study of Mono's streams and fisheries.

The newsletter also contains Part One of a two part article by Emilie Strauss and Lauren Davis detailing the history of the disastrous effects of fifty years of water diversions. The article also hints at a probable next objective for the Mono Lake Committee - an elevation of 6388 feet.

Another possible future job for the Mono Lake Committee is contained in the first of several articles on the "Great Basin Lakes of the Western Flyway". The article is authored by Elmer R. Rusco of the Friends of Pyramid Lake and gives a brief natural history of the lake and a synopsis of the environmental problems threatening its future.

POTLUCK TIME!

This month also brings us to our annual December Potluck Dinner so dust off your favorite show-off recipes.

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 F should bring a SALAD, those whose names begin with the letters G through L, a DESSERT and M through Z should provide the CASSEROLES or other hot dishes. (Since we're usually a bit short on hot dishes, all you A-L's can choose that as an option.)

Bring enough to serve FIVE times the number in your party.

The meeting will be at the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside with the Potluck beginning at 6:30 PM, and the General Meeting immediately thereafter.

SEQUOIA NEEDLES IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY EXCEPT JANUARY, JULY AND AUGUST. MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT MATERIAL TO BE PUBLISHED IN SEQUOIA NEEDLES. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL IS THE FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH FOR INCLUSION IN THE FOLLOWING MONTH. THESE MAY BE ORIGINAL ARTICLES, ORIGINAL ARTWORK OR CARTOONS, OR UNCOPYRIGHTED MATERIAL FROM OTHER SOURCES. ITEMS DEALING WITH CURRENT CONSERVATION ISSUES MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.

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

SUBSCRIPTION TO NEEDLES SEPARATELY IS \$7.00 PER YEAR.

If you CHANGE YOUR NAME OR ADDRESS, send the label from a recent Audubon Magazine wrapper with your new name or address to: NATIONAL AUDUBON, MEMBERSHIP DATA CENTER, PO BOX 2066, Boulder, Co. 80322. Then, please notify the Sequoia Audubon office (593-7368) of the change. Be sure to give the name and address where Audubon Magazine is to be delivered. This avoids duplicate listings and incorrect expiration dates. Please send RENEWAL MEMBERSHIPS directly to National Audubon in the envelope accompanying your renewal notice. LATE RENEWALS should be sent through Sequoia to avoid a lapse in magazine or newsletter issues.

The following application is for NEW MEMBERSHIPS only.

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION---SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY
Chapter C16 -- 7XCH

[] YES, enroll me as a member in the NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY and of my local chapter. Please send Audubon magazine and my membership card to the address below.

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MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY PREFERRED

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() MY CHECK FOR \$ _____ IS ENCLOSED. () PLEASE BILL ME

Please make checks payable to the National Audubon Society and mail to:

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY
720 EL CAMINO REAL, SUITE 403
BELMONT, CALIFORNIA 94002

CHRISTMAS COUNTS - 1989

This is the 90th annual Audubon Christmas Count. SAS is participating with its usual two counts, 12/16 for Crystal Springs and 12/30 for Ano Nuevo.

It's not too late to sign up. Just send your check for \$4.00 for one count or \$8.00 for both, along with the name of the count and your telephone number. Dan Keller is Sequoia Audubon Society's compiler for the 1989 Christmas Counts.

DON'T DELAY! SIGN UP NOW!

COIRO DONATES FEES

For several years Nick Coiro has been doing slide programs on birds and birding for school and community groups. Nick has always done these talks free of charge as a community service, but was recently faced with two groups that insisted on providing him with an honorarium. Nick finally agreed, provided that the fees were paid to Sequoia Audubon. Thank you, Nick!

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Colleen Horner 366-4282
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