



sequoia needles

Bulletin of the

SEQUOIA AUDUBON SOCIETY

San Mateo County, Ca.

September, 1990

Vol. 33, #1

FROM THE PRESIDENT

39

THIS MONTH'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 the membership.

Just make sure that your slides are in the order you want them and properly oriented. It can be very embarrassing when that one very special slide that you were so proud of is the one that makes everyone tilt their head and start whispering "what is it?".

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.

NEXT MONTH'S PROGRAM

A last minute cancellation has our Program Chairwoman, Janet Duerr, scrambling for a replacement. In the meantime let the suspense build until next month's **NEEDLES**.

DFG NATIVE SPECIES STAMPS

The California Department of Fish and Game have released the 1990 California Native Species Stamps. This year's stamps feature a white pelican.

Although they sell for \$8.75 the stamps have no intrinsic value. However, the receipts from the stamps will be used for the purchase and improvement of wildlife areas in the state with emphasis on wetlands.

The wildlife stamps can be purchased from Sequoia Audubon by contacting Nick Coiro (349-1834) at 1171 Compass Lane, #112, Foster City 94404.

1990 Wildlife Area passes are still available at the office for \$11.50.

MARY BRESLER

I would like to express my gratitude to the members of SAS for the opportunity to serve as President and to mirror their dedication to the Society. Being aware of your loyalty and efforts in the past, I realize that our current and future needs will require ongoing assistance in the coming year. I am therefore equally appreciative that the Board of Directors, the committee chairpeople and members have rededicated their participation for the new season.

Much has happened since the June issue of the **NEEDLES** was published. In July the new Board of Directors has its first meeting to project future action under the changes in its organizational structure. Gratefully, Janet Duerr, our Past President, has re-assumed responsibility as Program and Education Chairwoman. New Board Member David Moon will be Fundraising Chairman while former Chairwoman Colleen Horner will remain active on several committees. The other standing committee leaders, bless them, will remain dedicated incumbents.

In other developing news this summer...

Rick Baird reports another successful year at Audubon Canyon Ranch despite the limitation of access caused by the landslide on Highway 1.

The Finance and Budget Committees have been preparing their annual reports for presentation at the September General Meeting.*

The July meeting of the Bay Area Audubon Council (BAAC) was a stimulating event. Jesse Grantham was introduced as the new Western Region Wetlands Coordinator of the National Audubon Society. He informed us about the new NAS Williams Sanctuary located here in San Mateo County and spoke of our long-term role in its development and care.

Sequoia Audubon Society will host the next BAAC meeting on Saturday, October 6. The meeting will be held at the Hayward Regional Shoreline Interpretive Center. Circle this date on your calendar! All members are welcome. We will have more details on the agenda at the September General Meeting. A BAAC meeting provides members an unusual opportunity to be informed and participate in environmental concerns of our Bay Area and elsewhere.

I hope during the coming year I can merit your continued support and participation.

SAS FINANCIAL STATEMENT AVAILABLE

Sequoia Audubon Society's 1989-1990 financial statements are now available on request. For a copy, call the office (593-7368) or write us at:

Sequoia Audubon Society
720 El Camino Real, Suite 403
Belmont, CA 94002

A copy of the statement will be mailed to you by October 15.

CALENDAR

September 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						

SEP 1 COASTAL VAGRANT CRAWL. The first in a series of SATURDAY special "high-intensity" field trips searching for vagrants along the San Mateo Coast. Limited to 5 participants. See the article on this page for more details.

LEADER DAN KELLER 334-3431

SEP 6 SAS BOARD MEETING. 7:30 PM. Place to be announced. THURSDAY ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME. Please contact the Sequoia Office (593-7368) for details.

SEP 8 COASTAL VAGRANT CRAWL. The second in a series of SATURDAY special "high-intensity" field trips searching for vagrants along the San Mateo Coast. Limited to 5 participants. See the article on this page for more details.

LEADER DAN KELLER 334-3431

SEP 13 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 from A to Z. At the San Mateo Garden Center on the Alameda at Parkside. Social Mixer at 7:30 PM. General Meeting begins at 8:00. See Page One for further details.

SEP 15 COASTAL VAGRANT CRAWL. The third in a series of SATURDAY special "high-intensity" field trips searching for vagrants along the San Mateo Coast. Limited to 5 participants. See the article on this page for more details.

LEADER DAN KELLER 334-3431

SEP 16 POINT REYES FIELD TRIP. A search through the SUNDAY "warbler traps" of Point Reyes can yield almost anything at this time of year. We'll be looking for inland and eastern vagrants but can expect migrants and some early arriving winter residents as well. Walking will be minimal but sturdy shoes are recommended. Clothing should be layered since the weather on Pt. Reyes is extremely changeable. We will meet at the new Point Reyes National Seashore Headquarters building at 9:00 AM. The trip will take place rain or shine. Bring lunch. The trip normally lasts until 2 PM.

LEADER; CLIFF RICHER 355-4058

SEP 22 COASTAL VAGRANT CRAWL. The fourth and last in a SATURDAY series of special "high-intensity" trips looking for vagrants along the San Mateo Coast. Limited to 5 birders. See the article on this page for more details.

LEADER DAN KELLER 334-3431

October 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			

Thursday, October 4 - SAS Board Meeting

Thursday, October 10 - SAS General Meeting - Program to be announced. See next month's NEEDLES for details.

Look for a complete year's field trip schedule next month.

DAN KELLER TO LEAD VAGRANT CRAWLS

Christmas Count Compiler Dan Keller will lead a special series of field trips each Saturday this September. The announced purpose of these trips will be to find some of those out-of-season, out-of-place birds that tend to wander up our coast every fall.

These trips are not for the faint of heart. Centered on Half Moon Bay, these trips will require your maintaining a fast pace from 7:30 AM to noon. You can expect to visit places and habitats you never knew existed, some of which can only be visited by crawling or wading.

Each trip is limited to a maximum of five birders. Reservations for any particular trip must be made directly with the leader who will provide detailed instructions on where to meet.

For more information or to make your reservations call Dan at 364-3431.

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Belmont, CA 94002

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA PELAGIC TRIP

Gail Kenny, the Field Trip Coordinator of Redwood Region Audubon Society, (who was formerly Gail Smithson, the President of Sequoia Audubon Society), announces a pelagic trip out of Eureka in Humboldt County.

The date is Sunday, September 30. The Celtic, a 50 foot motor vessel, will leave dock D in Woodley Island Marina in Eureka at 7:30 AM and return about 2 PM. This is relatively unexplored birding territory but black-footed albatross, at least three species of shearwaters, ash storm petrels, marbled murrelets and marine mammals ought to be found in good numbers.

The skipper is Phil Glen and the leaders are Gary Lester and/or Ron LeValley. The trip is limited to 45 people.

The fee is \$30 payable in advance. Checks should be made out to Gail Kenny and mailed to her at PO Box 361, Trinidad, CA. For more details, or to reserve your spot, call Gail at (707) 677-0515. In the event of bad weather or lack of interest, the trip will be cancelled and the fee returned.

LAWBREAKERS

Did you know that many innocent-looking birders and other nature-lovers are criminals flouting the migratory bird treaty and other wildlife protection measures?

State and federal laws prohibit the possession of any protected species or any part of any protected species except those that were taken legally. This means that if you find a road-killed animal or bird, the skull or bones of a naturally deceased animal or even a molted feather you cannot keep these unless you are a licensed collector or scientific researcher.

The only exceptions are for animals and birds that are legally classified as pests or vermin. In California (and most states) the starling, house sparrow and rock dove are the only birds specifically exempted from protection.

This is not a silly or arbitrary interpretation of the law. If it was possible to keep a molted eagle feather or an innocently found set of antlers or bear claws, it would provide a ready-made defense for the poacher or the trader in illegal wildlife parts or artifacts. Bear claws and entire bear paws bring high prices in the Far East as do authentic native American costumes in Europe.

Invariably when dealers have been caught with feathers, bones, antlers and even entire carcasses they have claimed these were innocently acquired. In some cases they have been able to convince the judge or jury of this and managed to get off with a small fine or just with confiscation of the "innocently" acquired goods. Unfortunately there are just enough truly innocent and well-meaning collectors out there to make that defense believable.

So, if you find a feather, or a road-kill, or any other animal or bird part, examine it at your leisure but satisfy your curiosity in the field and leave it behind.

SCOPE & BINO SHOW

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory and the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory are sponsoring the second annual Scope and Binocular Show. The show will be held at Fort Mason in San Francisco on Sunday, October 14 from 10 AM to 4 PM.

Representatives from the major manufacturers will be there and there will be lectures and workshops on gull, shore bird and hawk identification as well as on the proper care of optical equipment.

Admission is \$3.00. Contact either the SFBBO (408-946-6548) or the GGRO (331-0730) for more details.

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

DAN MURPHY

It seems the Ranch just ended its public season, but already the fall program is in gear and ready to go. Docent training at Bouverie and Bolinas Lagoon Preserves is scheduled. It may be too late, but if you want to see if a slot remains open in one of our docent training classes call the Bouverie Preserve at (707) 938-4554 or the Bolinas Preserve at 868-9244.

As school starts again, our docents are prepared to meet the first groups of visiting children. Would you believe at least two board members failed to reserve spots for their classes at the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve? That's how I know the program is full this fall.

Did you get our Bulletin? If you donated \$5 or more during the past year you should have received one. I know we had quite a drop in visitations this season. They say its because so many people thought they couldn't get to Stinson Beach and Bolinas Lagoon from the south. Not so. The Mt. Tam Road remains open. So if you didn't get out to see us this year you still have a chance. You really have no excuse for missing the fall seminars.

The Coast Week Seminar at Cypress Grove on Saturday, September 22, is actually free. John Kelly, Nicole Gallagher and Jean Starkweather will give you a morning of birding at Cypress Grove Preserve and Tomales Bay if you promise to stick around and help collect litter from the Bay's shoreline in the afternoon. There's no free lunch though. Bring your own.

The Bouverie Preserve will host "Native American Lifestyles" on Saturday, October 13. For \$20 you can join Foley Benson and John Petersen on a walk through the Bouverie Preserve and times past as you can learn about the native people of Sonoma County. You can even take a short but steep trail to the cave behind Stuart Falls.

Halloween for the whole family! Yes, with "Bat, Toads and Autumn Tricks". John Kipping and Ray Peterson will make your Halloween a natural holiday. Go out to Bolinas Lagoon Preserve on the weekend of October 27 and 28. You'll need a family for this one. The cost is \$75 for your family of 4. The bonus on this seminar is that you get to float your jack-o'-lantern on the lagoon.

Finally, there is such a thing as a free lunch. On November 10 the entire ACR staff will be at the Bolinas Lagoon Preserve to give you just that reward for helping with all the chores that need doing at the Ranch. ACR lunches are great, so it's almost like being paid for doing a little work.

The list goes on, but you will have to check the Bulletin or watch the next *NEEDLES* for other seminars. Remember to register for any events you want to participate in. If you don't there may not be enough free lunches for everyone. Just call the numbers listed in the first paragraph.

John Kelly needs a bit of help from qualified birders with his fall and winter shorebird censuses at Tomales Bay. The first fall census was August 23 but there will be two more on September 6 and 18. Winter counts will be on November 10 and 26 and on December 8. Call John at 663-8203. Here's a chance to become involved in ACR's field work. Okay, its another chance to go birding too, but if you like to watch shorebirds here's a golden opportunity to mix pleasure with work.

(The variant spelling of the two Peterse(o)ns names is not an accident. They do spell their names differently.
--The Editor

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

JASPER RIDGE - APRIL 29, 1990

Thirty birders led by four docents enjoyed a beautiful day at Stanford's 1200 acre Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve. The preserve offers a variety of habitats: a lake, fresh water marsh, blue oak woodlands, mixed evergreen forest, redwoods, riparian growth and chaparral. The total of 178 bird species recorded at Jasper Ridge reflects this diversity. Of the 75-80 species which can normally be seen at this time of year 70 were spotted.

Although not all participants saw the osprey, the brown creeper, the belted kingfisher or the pair of western tanagers, all groups should have seen and heard the blue-gray gnatcatchers, the black-headed grosbeak, the olive-sided, ash-throated and Pacific slope flycatchers and the nesting pygmy nuthatches.

Emphasis was placed on birding by ear which opens up a whole new dimension in bird watching. The Jasper Ridge docents included Jane Becker-Haven, Bob Buell and Len Rush.

---Louise Fletcher

MONO BASIN -MAY 28-29, 1990

The leader, Cliff Richer and his wife Nancy, met five of their six co-participants at the Crane Flat Chevron station in Yosemite at Saturday noon. Brown creepers, red-breasted nuthatches and yellow-rumped warblers greeted them. Tipped off by the sight of a birder with a scope hurrying off into the woods the leader then proceeded to lead the group unerringly to the nearby nest of a great gray owl. While waiting for the adult to return to feed the one downy owlet, the group admired the flocks of Lincoln's sparrows which flitted back and forth across the meadow.

In Tioga Pass we found the usual high altitude birds and were even able to flush a female blue grouse at Olmstead Point. On the other side of the pass we found nesting rosy-finch at the famous green bridge. For once there was no wind coming out of the Mono Basin so the birders were quite comfortable as they saw several females at close range, carrying nesting material to their nests in the rock crevices above the bridge. We finished the day at the north end of Mono Lake with the sage thrashers, sage sparrows and green-tailed towhees as well as a gray flycatcher, a lone yellow-headed blackbird and the osprey nesting on the tufa tower off of Navy Beach.

The following morning we were joined at Lee Vining by one more birder and we ventured to Mono County Park for the sight and sound of the early morning winnowing snipes. All of the expected species were found in all of the expected places (with the exception of the woodpeckers which seem to have been displaced by the ubiquitous starlings). A trip to Bodie uncovered a nesting pair of prairie falcons, some elusive pinon jays, a flock of up-close common nighthawks... but no sage grouse. (The leader has never failed to find sage grouse on the Bodie Road or in the town of Bodie except when he has been leading a trip.) For some unknown reason Bodie was enjoying its heaviest visitor use day in several years and the crowds did not lend themselves to good birding.

In the afternoon we ventured east toward Benson Hot Springs and birded two of the desert marshes where we found nesting canvasbacks, redheads, gadwalls, mallards, ruddy ducks, avocets, black-necked stilts, Wilson's phalaropes, egrets and herons and completed our list of swallows with a pair of bank swallows.

On Monday we found ourselves snowed out with Tioga Pass closed, so the trip officially broke up with the birders finding their individual ways back to the Bay area.

---Cliff Richer

ONE LESS GULL?

The latest research by Canadian ornithologist Richard R. Snell, when combined with some previously unpublished work by B. Knudsen, make it likely that Thayer's gull is going to be "un-split" and once again classified as a sub-species of Iceland gull.

Both ornithologists found the Thayer's and Kumlien's gulls (a sub-species of Iceland gull) interbreeding freely at their nesting sites. Since this was in direct contradiction of earlier studies, both scientists tried to duplicate earlier studies. Serious inconsistencies were found in the previous work. These inconsistencies led Snell to examine the timing of the earlier studies. These studies were conducted in the region of Home Bay near Baffin Island from 1959 to 1961 by a researcher travelling by kayak and dogsled. Snell came to the conclusion that it would have been all but impossible for the original investigator to have visited all of the documented nesting sites. And finally, a visit to the sites showed many with no evidence of nesting activity.

So, all of you listers, get ready to cross one off life lists.

GGAS MOVES

The Golden Gate Audubon Society has moved. Its new address is:

2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite G
Berkeley, California 94702

The telephone number (843-2222) is unchanged.

DEMAND THAT EPA SET WATER QUALITY RULES

The Natural Resources Defense Council and the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund have filed a demand that the Environmental Protection Agency step in and set water quality standards for San Francisco Bay.

The state Water Resources Control Board has been holding hearings on this issue since 1987. Its initial conclusions in 1988 were protested by agricultural and Southern California water users and later withdrawn. It has announced that it now expects to come up with new conclusions in 1993!

If the EPA fails to act, the environmental groups can file suit to require the EPA to take action. The EPA could then be required to file suit against the state.

Those who eat only vegetables
Are logically called vegetarians.
Based on this thinking, shouldn't

cannibals

Be labeled humanitarians?

---George O. Ludcke

NATURAL RESERVE PROPOSED FOR BELIZE

Dr. Martin Biljeveld, the noted Dutch butterfly and raptor specialist, is leading a campaign to protect the forests and coral reefs of the tiny Central American republic of Belize.

The first step is to set up the proposed Shipstern Nature Reserve. This would set aside about 40 square miles on the northeastern coast of the country. The area contains forests, mangroves, lagoons and reefs.

Anyone wishing further information should contact Dr. Biljeveld at the International Tropical Conservation Foundation c/o Papiliorama, Case Postale 31, CH-2074 Marin/Neuchatel, Switzerland.

Prince Philip recently visited the US on behalf of the International Wildlife Federation. In a question and answer session he cited the Thames' clean-up as Britain's outstanding environmental achievement. Shortly thereafter dolphins were spotted behind Parliament. It is the first time they have been seen in the river this century.

NAS IMAGE

National Audubon's membership department commissioned a survey to determine how NAS is perceived by conservation-minded citizens.

While the Audubon Society was perceived as being solid and credible, it was also perceived as somewhat stodgy and narrowly focused on birds.

Staff recommendations for enhancing this image include:

Becoming more effective in communicating the Audubon message, its goals, programs and accomplishments.

Dropping "National" from the name for informal use.

Presenting a more consistent appearance in all publications and documents.

Designing a different logo.

Coming up with a compelling slogan.

These and other recommendations will be discussed at workshops and regional conferences in connection with improving chapter publicity efforts.



ITEMS FOR SALE AND RENTAL



PUBLICATIONS:

Prices by Mail Order

San Francisco Peninsula Birdwatching	\$ 6.00
National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds	17.25
Birder's Handbook--Ehlirch, Dobkin & Wheye	17.60
Birding Northern California--Jean Richmond	12.00
Mono Lake Guidebooks	7.50
Pacific Coast Checklists--in pads of 25	3.50
"I'd Rather Be Birding" bumper sticker	2.00
Sequoia Audubon Chapter Patch	3.75
San Mateo County Checklist	.75

Send checks to: Sequoia Audubon Society, 720 El Camino Real, #403, Belmont, CA 94002. Allow 14-18 days for delivery. Publications are also available at a reduced cost at the general meetings and at the office.

VIDEOS FOR RENTAL:

We have several bird identification videos that can be rented from the SAS office. They are also available at general meetings.

Techniques of Birding--Arnold Small	\$ 2.00/week
Video Guide to Birds of North America	5.00/week
(We now have the entire set available)	



**San Francisco
Peninsula
Birdwatching**

FROM THE REAL PAPERS

In declaring its sovereignty over the Moscow government, the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet made a strong declaration of environmental independence.

"The Ukrainian SSR has the right to ban construction and to halt the operation of any businesses, institutions, organizations and other objects that constitute a threat to ecological safety. The Ukrainian SSR cares about the ecological safety of its citizens, about the genetic stock of its people and about its young generation."

Chernobyl is in the Ukraine.

#####

"The polystyrene plastics industry is already making the conversion to chemicals which do not deplete the ozone layer," said Governor Deukmajian as he vetoed a bill outlawing most foam products.

#####

McDonald's has set up a task force with the Environmental Defense Fund to try to reduce or recycle its plastic and paper rubbish.

#####

William Reilly, the head of the EPA, has met with his Canadian counterpart, Robert de Cotret. The Ottawa meetings were a preliminary to a formal round of negotiations on acid rain. Meantime both houses of Congress have passed different versions of legislation to reduce sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions.

#####

The Santa Fe International Art Festival and National Audubon are taking 150 of the Art Fest's prize-winning environmental works on the road. The tour will visit 34 cities throughout the United States and Canada this fall, winter and spring.

#####

A rare sub-species of marsh rabbit found only in the Florida Keys has been added to the federal endangered species list. This sub-species is sometimes called the Playboy Bunny because it was named after *Playboy* magazine founder, Hugh Hefner. Its English name is the Lower Keys marsh rabbit, but its scientific name is *Sylvagius palustris hefneri*.

#####

By using recycled waste water to irrigate parks, golf courses and farms California could save 700,000 acre-feet of water each year - more than is used by the city of Los Angeles - according to a report given to the state Water Resources Control Board by the State Water Conservation Coalition.

#####

Virtually all of the nation's old-growth forests are found in Alaska, Northern California, Oregon and Washington. Estimates of the amount of old-growth remaining in the three states south of Alaska vary from 5% (Sierra Club) to 15% (Forest Industries Council). Under natural conditions approximately 40% of all forests are old-growth since such forests are periodically regenerated by fire and other natural disasters.

#####

The current crisis in the Middle East has many oil industry spokesmen pointing to the development of off-shore and Alaskan Wildlife Refuge oil drilling as a long term goal.

COYOTE POINT MUSEUM DOCENT TRAINING

Find out about becoming an environmental volunteer for Coyote Point Museum at a docent orientation meeting on Thursday September 6 from 10 to 11:30 AM at the Museum. Docents conduct interesting and rewarding tours of tidepools, the Museum and the new Wildlife Center scheduled for opening this coming spring.

This is a great opportunity to hear about the docent programs, ask questions and meet people who love nature. Refreshments will be served.

Coyote Point Museum is located at Coyote Point Recreation Area in San Mateo. For information and reservations call Cathy LaPorte at 342-7755.

COYOTE POINT MUSEUM PROGRAMS & EXHIBITS

ONGOING UNTIL SEPTEMBER 30: TRASH; AN ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS: Displays, graphics photos and videos. FREE with Museum admission.

SEPTEMBER 6: Docent Orientation (See above for details.)

SEPTEMBER 15: 9 AM to 4 PM: PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP - ALL ABOUT BEACHES: Fee - \$18 for members, \$25 for non-members.

SEPTEMBER 26 UNTIL NOVEMBER 25: IMAGERY OF THE BAY AREA: Mounted slides & prints from the Peninsula Colorslide Club. FREE with Museum admission.

OCTOBER 13: 1 to 4 PM: WETLAND WONDERS FAMILY ACTIVITY DAY: Crafts, games and demonstrations: FREE with Museum admission.

OCTOBER 27: 10 to 11:30 AM: FALCON FLIGHT - Lecture and Demonstration by falconer Gary Beeman. Fee - \$2/\$3.

October 28: 1 to 4 PM: HALLOWEEN FEST: Tricks, games, stories and crafts. Pre-carved pumpkin contest. FREE with Museum admission.

October 30: 7:30 to 9 PM: SAFE FOOD: Organic food and pesticide problems. FREE/\$2 for non-members.

ARIZONA HOTSPOT

The mailing address for the Nature Conservancy's Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve in southeastern Arizona has been changed. For information about this premier birding hotspot and sanctuary write to:

Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Sanctuary
PO Box 815
Patagonia, AZ 85624

Preserve manager Jeffrey Cooper extends a warm welcome to all birders who are planning to attend the sanctuary..

ROGER TORY PETERSON INSTITUTE

The Roger Tory Peterson Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to putting nature back in American education. RTPi focuses on bringing people closer to nature in order to foster concern for wild places and wild things. The Institute recently brought together leading nature center directors to participate in its first Round Table on American Nature Centers, an intensive but informal gathering which resulted in published guidelines for professionals and volunteers in the field.

To receive a free copy of the report, *American Nature Centers: Leadership for the Nineties*, and additional information about RTPi, contact Jeffrey B. Froke, President, ROGER TORY PETERSON INSTITUTE, 110 Marvin Parkway, Jamestown, New York 14701 (716) 665-2473 FAX (716) 665-3794

BIRDATHON '90 DONORS

Many thanks to all of the following members and friends who helped make our 1990 Birdathon the best ever.

Sabine & Ray Achlar	Frank and Jean Allen	Caroline Arnold
Gail Arnold	W. A. Baeff	Kristen E. Baird
Ruby Barry	Barbara A. Benkman	Vera G. Boyson
Eva T. Bressler	Lee Brown	Melvin R. Brown
Virginia Clifford	Frank & Lorraine Collins	Louella Costaglio
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Randy Lee Taylor	Rita Thonen	Julia Vallotti
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AND EVEN A FEW PREVIOUSLY UNACKNOWLEDGED
1989 WILD GOOSE CHASE SPONSORS

Loren Bishop	Audrey Eaton	Ernest Levinger	Patrick Sullivan
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BIRDING CLASSES

Two classes for persons interested in learning more about birds and sharpening their identification skills will be offered by Sequoia Adult School. The classes will be taught by Maryann Danielson, biologist, tour leader and photographer.

BIRDING BASICS: For beginning and intermediate birders. The fall quarter of this lecture/field trip series will concentrate on basic avian biology and identification and the natural history of our fall waterbirds. Ten slide lectures, starting Wednesday, September 12, will be held at the San Carlos Senior Center at 601 Chestnut Avenue in San Carlos. Registration is at the first class. The fee is \$25 for the lecture series. Field trips are arranged with an additional fee.

FOLLOWING BIRDS THROUGH THE FALL SEASON: For intermediate and more advanced birders. Major bird groups to be found in Northern California during the autumn months will highlight this fall lecture/field trip series. The identification and natural history of lingering summer birds and returning shorebirds, warblers, sparrows and waterfowl will be covered. Ten slide lectures, starting on September 10 will be held at Little House, 800 Middle Avenue, Menlo Park. Register at the first class. The fee is \$25 (lectures only). Field trips are arranged for an additional fee.

CLAPPER RAIL PREDATOR PROJECT

In 1984 the US Fish and Wildlife Service estimated 4000 clapper rails inhabited the San Francisco Bay shoreline. A winter high tide census in 1989 yielded 4-500 birds.

One factor contributing to the decline is the presence of non-native predators - rats, red foxes, cats and dogs. You can help establish a data base of predator sightings by contacting SCVAS and reporting these sightings. Call them at 329-1811 or mail the information to Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, 415 Cambridge Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306. Be sure to include your name, address, telephone number, the type and number of predators, where and when it was seen.

NEW BIRD AND GARDEN GUIDE

Sunset Books has just published another in their series of soft cover magazine format "how-to" books. This one may have a special interest to SAS members. It's called *An Illustrated Guide to Attracting Birds*.

Like all Sunset publications this one is slick and well done. It has sections on birdwatching, migration, taxonomy, binoculars, behavior and habitat; a guide to 80 of the most frequently seen feeder birds; landscaping and feeding tips; a discussion of various feeders, houses and bird baths; and even a page on the annual Christmas Counts.

Unfortunately like Sunset's Golden Guide, this book betrays a slight East Coast bias in its identification section. Black-capped and Carolina chickadees are included; Chestnut-backed and mountain chickadees are not. Eastern "specialties" outnumber western ones by eight; some of the West Coast selections are curious (i.e. Gambel's quail, but not California Quail); and illustrations of common birds inevitably show the eastern sub-species (dark-eyed junco, northern oriole, rufous-sided towhee, the screech owls). Indeed, some of the selections of illustrated back yard birds imply a very roomy and diverse back yard. Ring-necked pheasants, killdeer and belted kingfishers are ubiquitous and wide-spread but are not normally found in the back yard.

Nevertheless with all of these faults the book has more good than bad and is recommended for those who are interested in, but relatively inexperienced at, attracting birds to their yards.

A copy will be available at the general meeting.

GEORGE ELLMAN
ELECTED TO NAS BOARD

George Ellman, the President of Madrone Audubon Society has been elected to the Board of Directors of the National Audubon Society, representing the Western Region. He has been Conservation Chairman of both the Madrone and Marin Audubon Societies, has served on the board of several conservation organizations and was instrumental in forming the Bay Area Audubon Council.

In the '70s he served the city of Tiburon as Parks and Recreation Commissioner, City Councilman and Mayor. Regionally, he has been a Metropolitan Transportation Commissioner and a Bay Commissioner.

He is a Ph.D. in biochemistry and specializing in the study of nerve functions.

George was nominated by Madrone Audubon Society and his nomination was seconded by all of the Bay Area Audubon chapters including Sequoia.

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.

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Audubon Perspectives: Fight for Survival, a companion book to Audubon's TV Specials is available now in bookstores.

The book presents a deeper examination of the issues covered in all the TBS SuperStation Specials. For more information contact Audubon Television, 801 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20003

'ALALA NEAR EXTINCTION

The Hawaiian crow, also known as the 'alala, is rapidly approaching extinction. There are only an estimated 10 birds left in the wild on the big island of Hawaii and 10 others in the captive breeding colony at Olinda, Maui.

The captive flock has not fared well as reproductive success has not kept up with natural deaths in the adult population.

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